



Waitsfield School
Family Handbook
2018-2019

Waitsfield Engages in Responsible Choices that
are *Safe* and Kind;

WE ROCK!

WAITSFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MISSION

- **Support students in achievement of high academic standards; we believe that all students can master challenging academic material and we expect them to do so.**
- **Foster a safe, comfortable and challenging learning environment; help teach children respect for themselves and others, and teach them to accept responsibility for their actions.**
- **Enhance global awareness and acceptance of diversity.**

Please use this handbook as a source of information about our school, its programs, policies and the people who work here.

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Staff Directory

Staff Member	Position	Email
Katie Babic	School counselor	kbabic@wwsu.org
Allison Bataille	Physical education teacher	abataille@wwsu.org
Ann Beattie	Kindergarten teacher	abeattie@wwsu.org
Elizabeth Belknap	Grade 3 & 4 teacher	lbelknap@wwsu.org
Emily Church	Instructional assistant	echurch@wwsu.org
Daniel Greenleaf	Grades 5 & 6 teacher	dgreenleaf@wwsu.org
Ali Hale	Grades 3 & 4 teacher	ahale@wwsu.org
Jeremy Hill	Music teacher	jhill@wwsu.org
Taylor Hubbard	Grades 1 & 2 teacher	thubbard@wwsu.org
Cheryl Joslin	Lunch program coordinator/ Lead chef	cjoslin@wwsu.org
Susan Koeplinger	Support services teacher	skoeplinger@wwsu.org
Kaiya Korb	Principal	kkorb@wwsu.org
Nora McDonough	Art teacher	nmcdonough@wwsu.org
Eric Mongeon	Librarian/ Technology integrationist	emongeon@wwsu.org
Josh Morse	World language teacher	jmorse@wwsu.org
Kathi Orr	Administrative assistant	korr@wwsu.org
Keith Puffer	Technology coordinator	kpuffer@wwsu.org
Joe Robinson	Maintenance director	jrobinson@wwsu.org
Courtney Stearns	Instructional Assistant	cstearns@wwsu.org
Leigh Stockton	Speech-Language therapist	lstockton@wwsu.org
Lee Van Dine	Grades 5 & 6 teacher	lvandine@wwsu.org
Emily von Trapp	Preschool teacher	evontrapp@wwsu.org
Clayton Wetzel	Nurse	cwetzel@wwsu.org
Amanda Whitehead	Instructional assistant	awhitehead@wwsu.org
Kaitlyn Wimble	Preschool teacher	kwimble@wwsu.org
MJ Wright	Academic Interventionist	mjwright@wwsu.org
Tom Young	Grades 1 & 2 teacher	tyoung@wwsu.org

The Harwood Unified Union School Board meets bi-monthly, on the first and third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the school library. The public is always invited to join; meeting agendas are published in the school newsletter and through the [school website](#).

HARWOOD UNIFIED UNION DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS		
Christine Sullivan	4 year term expires 2020	csullivan@gmavt.net
Rob Williams	3 year terms expires 2019	rob.williams@madriver.com

PTA OFFICERS	Email
Elizabeth Schwartz, President	reachelizabethnow@hotmail.com
Ryan Kraman	ryan.liptak@gmail.com
<i>The Waitsfield PTA meets monthly on the second Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. in the school library. Community members are always welcome to join.</i>	

School Hours

7:40 a.m. – 2:25 p.m.

Students should arrive at school between 7:30 and 7:40. For security/supervision purposes, the school building is not open prior to 7:30; please plan accordingly.

Preschool:

8:00 – 12:30, T/Th/F for four year olds, M/W/F for three year olds

Home/School/Student Compact

School is an extension of the learning that begins at home. Successful learning is achieved through cooperation amongst school, home and the child. The Home/School/Student Compact clarifies the steps that parents and staff will make to assure educational success. Thank you for taking the time to review this compact as a family—we encourage you to reach out to the school if you have questions of how we are meeting the expectations outlined herein or for support in achieving the expectations laid out for your child and family. This compact is both our commitment to you and an outline of what students and families can do to make school a success. We look forward to working together to make a top-notch educational experience for your child.

HOME-SCHOOL COMPACT: Roles and Responsibilities

PARENTS	SCHOOL & TEACHERS	STUDENTS
Know what is expected of each of your children.	Communicate expectations.	Know what you need to do. Ask for help, if needed.
Help students organize time effectively – TV, friends, school work, chores, activities.	Help students be clear about work expectations.	Complete assignments. Return homework when due.
Send children to school ready to learn – child is rested, properly dressed, properly nourished, and arrives at school on time.	Provide a rich full day of learning	Go to bed at a reasonable time and get up on time.
Communicate questions and ideas.	Encourage families and students to ask questions and give input.	Support communication between school and home, including talking about and sharing work and ideas connected to school.
Know how your child is doing in school.	Communicate student progress.	Reflect on your time and growth at school; participate in family conferences
Make it a priority to attend school events and meetings relating to your child.	Schedule meetings in such a way that parents can attend.	Engage in school events.
Talk to your children. Listen to what they have to say.	Listen to children’s ideas and concerns.	Communicate with family and school staff.
Read at home with your child.	Encourage reading and provide books, as needed.	Read regularly.
Discuss with child and be clear about behavioral expectations at home and at school.	Communicate school’s behavioral expectations.	Engage with behavioral expectations.
Expect an appropriate quality education for your child.	Provide a quality education for each child.	Set high goals for yourself and strive to reach your goals.

Absences/ Attendance

Parents and guardians of students who are absent are responsible for calling the school. To help us ensure student safety, **we ask that you call the school before 7:45 a.m. if your child will be absent or tardy that day.** Your notification assures us that your child is safe and not missing. If your child is not in school and you have not called us by 7:45 a.m., we will attempt to contact you to confirm the absence. Any communications from a physician or health agency should be shared with the school nurse.

Vermont law requires regular attendance at school by children between the ages of six and sixteen. Per school board policy and state statute, when students are absent (excused or unexcused) for a total of 10 school days, the principal or designee may request a meeting of the student's parents/guardians, the child's teacher, and the principal to address this issue.

Being on time shows respect for the teacher and other students in the class; it is an important part of a student's (and parent's) job. **Please be certain your child is in his or her classroom and ready to join the group by 7:40 a.m. every day.** Missing the group work and sense of belonging and community built through early morning classroom meetings causes disruption both for the individual child and the class as a whole. In addition, **we appreciate your assistance in scheduling appointments outside of school hours.** There is a lot that we work to accomplish within the school day and we simply can't educate a child who is not in the building. If your child will be dismissed early from school, a written note is requested, or a phone call may be made in cases of emergency. Students will only be released to their parents unless permission is granted otherwise.

All planned absences of more than a day from school require pre-approval from the principal. To request pre-approval, please complete a "[Planned Absence Form](#)", included with this handbook and available on the school website. Please schedule family vacations during school breaks. **All absences totaling ten or more days must be approved by the superintendent.**

School policy [f25-R Student Attendance](#) can be found on the school website under school board: policy.

Afterschool Program

OH ASK (Open Hearth After School Kids) is a non-profit State licensed after-school program operated as part of the non-profit organization Open Hearth. While the program is based at the school building, is not run by the school. The program is a valuable resource to our community and the school works with this organization to support its success. Further information on the program, including a parent handbook and registration form, may be requested at the school or found as a [link on the school website.](#)

Behavioral Expectations & Discipline

*"We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit." ~Aristotle*

Waitsfield School is committed to providing a physically and emotionally safe learning environment, fostering academic, social and emotional growth and nurturing a sense of belonging in all. Waitsfield School implements a Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) approach to develop & sustain a safe and effective school environment. Within PBIS, emphasis is placed on prevention of problem behavior, development of prosocial skills, and the use of data-based problem solving for addressing existing behavior concerns. PBIS is implemented school wide; it is the backbone for approach in classrooms, the lunchroom, the hallways, the bus, and beyond.

PBIS methods are research-based and have been proven to significantly reduce the occurrence of problem behaviors. Key components of PBIS include:

- CLEARLY DEFINED, TAUGHT & CONSISTENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS
- SYSTEM OF ACKNOWLEDGING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
- CONSISTENT RESPONSES TO PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

The guiding philosophy of PBIS is that when students are taught clearly defined behavioral expectations and provided with predictable responses to their behavior, both positive and corrective, most of the students will meet these expectations. Those students not responding to our broad (universal) approach will receive additional support through group and individual interventions. PBIS implementation is overseen by a team comprised of staff members who meet regularly.

CONSISTENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Four core expectations guide behaviors across all settings at Waitsfield School. Everyone is expected to be: **ENGAGED, RESPONSIBLE, SAFE, KIND**. These core expectations can be remembered as **W**aitsfield **E**ngages in **R**esponsible **C**hoices that are **S**afe and **K**ind ; a.k.a. **WE ROCK!**

The core expectations are taught to all students across settings within the first few weeks of school. **Core Expectations defined across settings:**

CLASSROOM	
<i>Engaged</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Eyes on the speaker.● Interact with the task at hand.
<i>Responsible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Come with your materials.● Prepare by doing assignments.
<i>Safe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use materials in designed manner.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep body in control.
<i>Kind</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share materials. ● Encourage participation of peers.

HALLWAY	
<i>Engaged</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Go where you need to go.
<i>Responsible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use a quiet voice and a quiet body.
<i>Safe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Walk. ● Stay to the right.
<i>Kind</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be aware of others' personal space. ● Have a friendly manner.

PLAYGROUND	
<i>Engaged</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be active and play.
<i>Responsible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cooperate with others. ● Take turns. ● Follow the directions of the staff on duty. ● Return equipment to its proper location.
<i>Safe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use equipment as intended. (Slide down slide, swing on swing, etc.) ● Move at safe speeds and in safe areas. ● Dress appropriately for the weather. ● Ask permission before leaving area. ● Refrain from throwing snow and ice.
<i>Kind</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite others to join games. ● Share equipment.

CAFETERIA	
<i>Engaged</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Eat your food.
<i>Responsible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Speak quietly.
<i>Safe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay seated.
<i>Kind</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Allow others to sit with you. ● Use good manners

BATHROOM	
<i>Engaged</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get in, get out.
<i>Responsible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leave the bathroom as clean or cleaner than you found it.
<i>Safe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wash your hands.
<i>Kind</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respect others' privacy.

BUS	
<i>Engaged</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay in your own space.
<i>Responsible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use appropriate language. ● Support others in making good choices. ● Talk out problems.
<i>Safe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stay seated face forward. ● Keep your hands to yourself. ● Use a quiet voice. ● Actively listen to your driver.
<i>Kind</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use kind words. ● Use friendly tone of voice. ● Use appropriate language

SYSTEM OF ACKNOWLEDGING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

PBIS follows the maxim “that which you pay attention to grows.” Thus, a focus is upon POSITIVE acknowledgment of desired behaviors. Recognition begins first with liberally acknowledging appropriate behaviors with students whenever they occur. Additional acknowledgement and celebration of positive behaviors is supported through the “We Rock” system. The “We Rock” cards are intended to provide individual, tangible recognition to students while also supporting group celebration of consistent, measurable achievement of expectation. Through this system, individual students showing a desired behavior will also contribute to a larger sense of school community achievement as well.

This system includes:

- Individual recognition through distribution of a “We Rock” card when a student is noted as specifically meeting one or more of the four key expectations. (Students may also be recognized for appropriate behaviors without giving a “We Rock” card.)
- Group established goals and celebrations achieved by transferring “We Rock” cards into stones collected in a community cairn (the “rock man” in the school lobby). Cards are transferred to stones in classrooms and weekly, the containers from the classrooms will be emptied into a larger container in the main hallway.

The rock level within the larger container is visible to all in the school. Goals will be marked on the cairn. Achievement of these group goals results in a school-wide celebration.

- School-wide celebration ideas could include pajama day, crazy hair day, a whole school field trip, a carnival day, etc. etc. Students participate in generating ideas for the group celebrations.
- Public recognition of individuals exemplifying each of the core values (Engaged, Safe, Responsible, Kind) at each grade cluster will occur monthly at a school-wide assembly. Additionally, occasionally throughout the year, all individuals who have earned We Rock cards will be entered into a drawing. All students recognized will be able to select a “prize” from a menu of special recognitions. These assemblies/ recognitions are managed by the PBIS team.

Consistent Responses to Student Inappropriate Behavior

Discipline is a learning opportunity and a process that all students can learn to use independently. Responses to inappropriate behaviors are intended to enable students to be valued, contributing members of their community. When a student violates school expectations, faculty or staff members will use a set of skills and procedures designed to guide the student quickly and efficiently back to task.

Responses for student misbehavior might include:

- Positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.
- Supportive guidance for returning to task or choice of appropriate alternative activity.
- Logical consequences for misbehavior (for example, a student writing on desks might be asked to clean desks)
- Time out space in classroom or buddy classroom.
- Problem solving class meeting.
- Apology of action, where students develop plan for restitution.
- Loss of privileges.
- Development of a plan examining behavior in question and exploring future alternatives.

Not every incident of misconduct warrants parent contact. Staff members will contact parents when changing a student’s behavior requires parental support but does not warrant intervention by an administrator. The principal or his/her designee will contact parents when the student’s misconduct is severe (see below) or becomes chronic and is not resolved through interventions sought by other staff. Consequences for such behavior may involve in-school or out of school suspension.

Immediate administrative involvement occurs when major misconduct takes place. These behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying, Harassment & Hazing (See [policy on school website](#))
- Physical violence (trying to hurt others)

- Weapons (See policy on [Firearms](#), available on the school website)
- Substance abuse/possession
- [Technology Acceptable Use](#) Agreement violation
- Property damage
- A chronic issue for which additional supports are needed.

Please contact the school if you have any concerns about the behavior of your child(ren) or other students. We take the safety and welfare of our students very seriously.

Bicycles/ Skateboards/ Scooters/ Etc.

We encourage safe, human-powered methods of transportation. Students may ride their bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc. to and from school. As with all afterschool plans, please send a note from home indicating what your child will be doing. Children are encouraged to wear helmets when wheeling. Transportation tools must be walked onto and off school grounds. These transportation tools may not be used during the school day. The Waitsfield Elementary School assumes no responsibility for bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc. brought to school.

Building Use

Community groups and individuals are encouraged to make use of our building facilities. The facilities are available according to our [Building and Grounds Use Policy](#) (available on our school website). [Building use request forms](#) are available at the school office and through the school website.

Bullying

Bullying involves a range of misconduct that, based on the severity, will warrant a measured response of corrective action and/or discipline. Behaviors that do not meet the definition of bullying (provided below) may still be subject to intervention and/or discipline under another section of the discipline plan or a discipline policy.

Bullying means any overt act or combination of such acts directed against a student by another student, group of students or an adult which:

- occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity;
- is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
- is repeated over time.

Waitsfield School believes that students should have a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment and that bullying has no place and will not be tolerated in its school. To address bullying, we encourage students to report to teachers, administrators and other school staff acts of bullying. The school principal and guidance counselor are the designated respondents to all acts of bullying. Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying or receive student reports of bullying are required to promptly notify these designated personnel. Students and families are also encouraged to make direct reports to these personnel as well.

The school counselor and principal are designated to accept and review all reports of bullying. If after initial inquiry, a report appears to warrant further investigation, designated staff shall promptly continue with an investigation following an established process in compliance with our school policy. The families of both the victim and the person bullying will be contacted. School policy [F32-R Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students](#), can be found on the HUUSD website.

Bus

Waitsfield School, as part of the Harwood Unified Union School District (HUUSD) transportation system, contracts with First Student Corporation for bus service. Busses carry elementary, middle, and high school students. The bus barn number is 244-6422.

First Student requires that all kindergarten and younger students are met at the bus by an adult. If there is not an adult present, the children will be brought back to the school. Thank you for helping us prevent bus delays and keep children safe by complying with this expectation.

The daily transportation of WES students is a privilege available to each student. Bus expectations (included in the behavior section of this handbook) follow the core school principles: Engaged, Responsible, Safe and Kind. Each student is responsible for following the rules on the bus for the safety of all passengers and the driver. Initial infractions against these rules will be handled by the bus driver unless the issue is severe (examples of severe infractions include physical fighting, refusal to listen to a driver). Ongoing issues will be referred to the principal and, if the issue continues, can result in suspension from the bus. Other consequences, as deemed appropriate will be decided by the principal. Malicious damage to the bus will be billed to the responsible student's family.

Waitsfield School holds a policy on the use of cameras on the busses. Busses may be equipped with video recording devices, with the data from these devices accessed by school personnel only in specific situations. Please see school policy [E13: Cameras on Busses](#) on the school website or contact the school principal for further information.

Changes in afterschool plans

Any child not going home to his or her regular after-school location must have a note indicating where he/she is supposed to go. Please send in a note with your child, call the school (before 2 p.m.) or send an email (before 2 p.m.) with any changes in afterschool plans. We need to know of any changes prior to 2 p.m. in order to insure students get where they need to go. **We cannot permit a child to go to an unscheduled destination without a note/ parent permission.** A note is also necessary if you are picking up a child if he/she usually rides the bus. This will help us to assure that your child is ready and waiting for you. Your child's safety is our primary concern.

Complaints

On occasion, parents and school personnel may experience differences of opinion or concern. The proper channel for complaints involving instruction, discipline, or learning materials is as follows:

- Speak to the adult directly involved. Please talk to the staff member first. Remember, the story you hear at home may not be the full picture. If you feel there isn't a satisfactory solution,
- Ask to have a meeting with the adult and the principal. If you feel there is not a satisfactory solution,
- Ask for a meeting with the superintendent. If you feel there is not a satisfactory solution,
- Bring your concern to the school board.

Although no member of the community shall be denied the right to petition the Board for redress of a grievance, complaints will be referred back through the proper channels for resolution prior to investigation or action by the Board. Exceptions are complaints that concern Board actions or Board operations. Handling of complaints is guided by school board policy D8 which can be found on the school website.

Conferences/ Communication

Family conferences are built into the school calendar two times within the school year; once in late October and once in March (see the school calendar on the school website for specific dates). These conferences focus on goal-setting.. School staff work with students and their families to establish focus goals, based upon strengths, challenges and interests students have demonstrated. Academic, as well as social-emotional, proficiencies play an important role when establishing focus goals.

Progress on these goals, as well as general growth monitoring, is shared in report cards sent home in January and June. Teachers may share information regarding student strengths and challenges outside of these established communication cycles. Families are encouraged to reach out to teachers if they have questions regarding their child's progress.

Information regarding individual classrooms will be sent home at least monthly; specialist teachers will communicate about the work of their classrooms at least once a trimester. For further information on each classroom, please consult with each teacher's page on the school website.

Phone calls, notes, blogs/newsletters and homework logs are just some of the ways that parents and teachers communicate regarding student progress. If you feel additional conversation regarding student progress is needed throughout the year, please contact your child's teacher to schedule a meeting.

Curriculum

The curriculum at the Waitsfield School is based on state and national standards approved by the Vermont State Board of Education. Current curriculum frameworks which outline learning expectations across the grades can be found at the school and online; please consult the Harwood Unified Union website [wwsu.org](http://www.wwsu.org) and look under Departments> Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. For further information on Waitsfield instructional programming please speak to your child's teacher or contact the school principal.

Dress Code

The school dress code follows our core expectations to be engaged, responsible, safe and kind. Clothing (and/or lack of it) should not serve as a distraction from being engaged or safe. Thus, students are expected to bring appropriate clothing (including shoes) for physical movement on gym days and recess on a daily basis (in the winter, this includes hat, gloves/mittens, coats, snow pants and boots.) Messages on clothing should not promote illegal or unsafe behavior or contain unkind/insulting comments towards others. Clothing should cover undergarments. Students are asked not to wear hats inside the school building.

Emergency Closings

The School Board has authorized the Superintendent to close school, delay the opening of school, or cancel specific bus routes in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies which present threats to the safety of students, school staff members, or school property. In such an event, all families will be contacted by phone and email through our electronic notification system. Such closings, delays, and cancellations shall also be announced by radio stations serving the district (including WDEV 550 AM and 96.1 FM), on local television (including WCAX Channel 3) and also at <http://corp.sover.net/schoolclosings/index.phtml>. Snack, lunch and preschool occur even on delayed starts. Should there be a delay, it is our practice to have a two hour delay. In a delayed situation, bus routes will run two hours beyond their usual start time.

Educational Support Services

Our educational support system is rooted in the belief that all students can master challenging academic material and experience meaningful learning. Our goal is to engage and support ALL learners in a rigorous, comprehensive prek-12 curriculum. We offer a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) for all learners, recognizing that children are more confident and successful in school when we support their learning in a variety of ways. Further information on the various levels of our educational support services can be found on the [school website under student services](#).

These tiers include Tier 1: Universal level focused on meeting the needs of every learner in the classroom. Core curriculum and differentiated instruction are delivered by

classroom teachers using standards-based instruction and ongoing progress monitoring to adjust instruction as needed.

Tier II: Focused and targeted intervention for students not finding success within universal instruction. This is typically small group supplemental instruction for students at risk of academic or behavioral difficulties interfering with meeting grade level expectations. *(Tier II supports, if continued for more than 8-10 weeks, are referred for an Educational Support Team, or EST, plan)*

Tier III: Intensive level of intervention for students who are not making sufficient progress given high quality tier 1 and tier 2 instruction. Tier 3 interventions are supplemental, individualized and customised for a very small number of students. *(Generally, students receiving Tier III supports have been identified as eligible for special education services under federal and state law.)*

Our Student Support Services team oversees the implementation of our Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

Students are identified for tier II or tier III supports through universal screenings and teacher referral. If you have concerns about your child, you should begin by contacting your child's classroom teacher and discussing your concerns. The teacher, or you may request a meeting to discuss if additional supports and/or further evaluation are needed.

Special Education

A component of our MTSS is special education, as defined by [federal and state law](#). Through a formal evaluation process, students educational needs are identified and, if deemed appropriate, remedial services and accommodations are identified to allow the student access to and benefit from public education. A parent may request a special education evaluation for his/her student by contacting the child's classroom teacher or the principal.

Family Involvement/ Volunteering

There are many ways families can be involved in school life. A family's involvement not only builds a rich learning environment, but also shows a child that you value the work that he or she is engaged in every day. You will be contacted by your child's teachers regarding ways that you can volunteer in the classroom throughout the year. Additionally, there are opportunities through the PTA and special events that occur communicated through our school newsletter.

To support safety and security, and in accordance with state law, we do require that any volunteer who will be alone with students first complete a full background check, which includes processing of fingerprints through the state police. To initiate this process, please contact the school for further details. We are VERY appreciative of our volunteers

and thank you all for respecting this precautionary step designed to assure all that consistent standards are being applied to anyone with this sort of access to our students.

We recognize that work, family, and personal matters may make certain types of involvement difficult. Please feel free to contact your child's classroom teacher or the main office if you'd like to discuss how you might be further involved with the school. Please also refer back to the home/school/student compact found at the beginning of this handbook for ideas on the many things you can do, within your own home, to provide tremendous support to the work of your child and the school.

Field Trips

Parental permission for field trips will be obtained at the beginning of the year for school-sponsored trips. These permission forms will be kept on file at the school. Notes will be sent home informing parents when trips are occurring.

Food Service

Hot lunches cost \$3.25 per day and breakfast is \$2.00. Students bringing home lunches may purchase milk for \$.35. We ask that you pay by check (made out to the Fayston Lunch Program). Payment should be given to the school secretary; it can be delivered in person, mailed or sent in with your child. We ask that families keep sufficient funds in student accounts to cover weekly meal purchases. Families will be informed weekly of account balances; these are also available online (please check with the main office for information on how to do this, or see the food service section of the school website.

Applications for federal aid are available from the office and sent home at the beginning of each school year. Per our meal charge policy (see [F34: Meal Charge Policy](#)) all students will be provided with a meal regardless of their meal account status. "When an account has a negative balance of \$300 or more, or remains negative for 3 or more months, the account may be sent to collections." (see "meal charge policy/procedure from the new policy.") We ask that all funds owed to the food service program are paid in full by the last day of school.

Hazing

"Hazing" means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with any school or program operated by the School; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student. Hazing is not tolerated at Waitsfield School. **The school principal and guidance counselor are the designated investigators of hazing;** please contact them immediately if any acts of hazing are suspected. Our [school policy regarding hazing](#) is available online.

Harassment

Waitsfield Elementary School is committed to providing all students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. Harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination as well as disrespectful behavior that will not be tolerated.

“Harassment” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student’s or student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. A student who believes that s/he has been harassed, or who witnesses conduct that s/he believes might constitute harassment, should report the conduct to a school employee.

The school counselor, principal and librarian are the designated recipients of harassment reports at Waitsfield School; all staff members are trained in receiving and responding to harassment reports, and will pass along any reported or identified issue to the designated reporters. School policy [F-32R Prevention of Bullying, Harassment and Hazing of Students](#), can be found on the HUUSD website.

Health

School Entry Medical Requirements

Health History: A health history needs to be completed, by a child’s parent or guardian, for all students upon entering Waitsfield Elementary School. This health information is then also updated annually to support us in having the most current information about your child.

Immunizations: The Vermont Immunization Law requires all students in grades preschool-12th grade be immunized for school attendance unless exempted for medical or religious reasons. Questions regarding your child’s immunization status should be directed to the school nurse.

Medical Exam All kindergarten students and new students entering the Waitsfield Elementary School must have had a medical exam within a period of one year. Documentation must be provided by the child’s healthcare provider; forms are available from the school nurse or may be provided by the healthcare provider. The American Academy of Pediatrics “Bright Futures” initiative recommends well child medical screenings annually.

Health Screenings

Periodic health screenings are done according to state mandated schedules. Health screenings include but are not limited to hearing, vision, height, and weight. Screenings

in school should not be considered diagnostic. The school nurse will contact families of students whose screening results fall outside of normal limits. In accordance with state recommended practices, vision and hearing screenings are done in preschool, kindergarten, 1st, 3rd and 5th grades.

Illness / First Aid

Although it can present a difficult situation, families SHOULD NOT send ill children to school. Moderately ill children who come to school spread the illness to others and also do not receive enough rest to fully recuperate. As a result, illness may linger unnecessarily. Please refer to the guidelines in this section of the handbook on when to keep your child home as a result of illness.

Parents or guardians will be called when it is apparent that a student should not be at school due to illness. If a parent or guardian can't be reached, emergency contacts will be notified.

First aid provided at school is generally limited to care of injuries and sudden illnesses occurring during the school day or during any school sponsored activity. In case of accident or injury occurring at school, first aid will be given by the school nurse or her/his designee.

Medications

It is desirable for medication to be given in the home. However, if a child is required to take medication during school hours and the parent or guardian cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the school nurse or a designee will administer the medication in compliance with the regulations that follow.

Prescription Medications

- 1) **Written orders** from a physician detailing the name of the drug, dosage and time interval the medication is to be taken, and diagnosis and/or reason for giving the medication.
- 2) **Written permission** from the parent or guardian requesting the school district comply with the physician's order. (Please use our [prescription medication form](#), available from the school and on our school website)
- 3) Medication brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician.
- 4) **Delivery of all medications to the school is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or any other designated adult.** Students should not transport medications to and from elementary schools.

Non-Prescription Medications

- 1) **Written permission** from a parent or guardian detailing the name of the medication, dosage and time to be administered, and the reason for giving the

medication. (please use our [non-prescription medication form](#), available from the school and on our school website)

- 2) **Delivery of all medications to elementary schools is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or any other designated adult.** Students should not transport medications to and from elementary schools.
- 3) The medication should be transported in its original container.

Communicable Disease Control

Fever: A child with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher should not attend school. A child should also not attend school if he or she feels unable to play outdoors.

Colds and Coughs: A visit to a physician is recommended for a child who has thick, green nasal discharge, and/or a persistent cough lasting more than two weeks. Children who get red/blue in the face when coughing, or produce whooping or croupy noises after or while coughing, may not attend school until these symptoms are gone.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): Conjunctivitis is the inflammation (i.e., redness, swelling) of the thin tissue covering the white part of the eye and the inside of the eyelids. . There are several kinds of conjunctivitis, including:

- Bacterial
 - Red or pink, itchy, painful eye(s)
 - More than a tiny amount of green or yellow discharge
 - Infected eyes may be crusted or shut in the morning
 - May affect only one eye
 - Incubation Period: Unknown because the bacteria that cause it are commonly present in most individuals and do not usually cause infection.
 - Contagious Period: Ends when the course of medication is started or when the symptoms are no longer present. *NOTE: The role of antibiotics in preventing spread is unclear. Antibiotics shorten the course of illness a very small amount. Most children with pinkeye get better after 5 or 6 days without antibiotics.*
- Viral
 - Pink, swollen, watering eye(s) sensitive to light
 - May affect only one eye
 - Incubation Period: Sometimes occurs early in the course of a viral respiratory tract disease that has other signs or symptoms. *NOTE: One type of viral conjunctivitis, adenovirus, may be contagious for weeks after the appearance of signs or symptoms. Antibiotics for this condition do not help the patient or reduce spread.*
 - Contagious Period: The contagious period continues while the signs or symptoms are present.
- Allergic
 - Itching, redness and excessive tearing, usually of both eyes
 - Incubation Period: Occurs in response to contact with the agent that causes

the allergic reaction; it may be immediate, delayed for many hours or possibly even days after the contact.

- Contagious Period: No contagious period.

It is helpful to think of pinkeye like the common cold. Both conditions may be passed on to other children but resolve without treatment. We do not exclude for the common cold and pinkeye generally results in less symptoms of illness than the common cold. The best method for preventing the spread of pinkeye is good hand hygiene.

Children WILL be excluded from school if they are unable to participate and staff members determine that they cannot care for the child without compromising their ability to care for the health and safety of the other children in the group.

Strep Throat / Scarlet Fever: Strep throat is caused by group A *Streptococcus* bacteria. Some or all of the following symptoms may be present:

- Sore throat
- Fever
- Stomachache
- Headache
- Red and swollen tonsils, sometimes with white patches or streaks of pus
Tiny red spots on the area at the back of the roof of the mouth (soft or hard palate)
- Nausea or vomiting, especially in younger children

Sometimes a rash accompanies strep throat and is known as scarlet fever. The rash makes the skin feel like sandpaper and is usually more prominent in the armpits and groin area, often making the creases in the bend of the elbow and back of the knee pinker than usual. Strep throat is much less likely if a runny nose, cough or congestion are present. The illness is spread by contact with nasal or oral secretions from the infected person, on objects contaminated by infected persons or close contact with an infected person. The incubation period is 2-5 days.

If you think that your child has strep throat, he or she should be seen by a physician and have a throat culture done. If the culture is positive, the child must be treated with medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Additionally, the child must be able to participate in school and staff members determine that they can care for the child without compromising their ability to care for the health and safety of the other children in the group. NOTE: The bacteria that causes strep throat also can cause impetigo.

Impetigo: Impetigo is a common skin infection caused by *streptococcal* or *staphylococcal* bacteria. Symptoms include small, red pimples or fluid filled blisters with crusted yellow scabs found most often on the face but may be anywhere on the body.

Incubation Period: Variable. Skin colonization is common and minor trauma may result in infection.

Contagious Period: Until the skin sores are treated with antibiotics for at least 24 hours or the crusting lesions are no longer present. . A child who is thought to have impetigo needs to be seen by a physician. If the diagnosis is positive, the child must have had antibiotic treatment (topical/oral). As long as the lesions are covered, the child can return

once treatment has started (oral or topical antibiotics) AND the child must be able to participate in school and staff members determine that they can care for the child without compromising their ability to care for the health and safety of the other children in the group.

Diarrhea: A child who has three loose stools beyond what the child normally has in a 24-hour period, or loose stools persisting for more than 48 hours, should not attend school. A child may return to school after being diarrhea-free for a full 24 hours.

Vomiting: Children who have vomited may not attend school until they are able to tolerate solid food and/or they have not vomited for 24 hours.

Chicken Pox: Chicken pox is characterized by an itchy rash of small red blisters, usually beginning on the head and then moving to the trunk and limbs. The blisters open and drain, and then form scabs. An airborne virus spreads chicken pox, and the incubation period is 14-21 days. The child is contagious from 24 hours before the rash appears until all of the blisters of the rash have dried up. A child may return to school after all lesions have scabbed over.

Head Lice

While Pediculosis (head lice) presents no threat to the health or safety of children, we recognize that it presents great disruption and challenges to families. The treatment of a child's head lice is the responsibility of the family; the school will work with parents to support their efforts to treat an occurrence of lice in their child(ren). The school follows an established, adopted procedure and policy around response to head lice; please contact the school nurse if you have any questions regarding this policy and related practices.

Homework

We ask students to work hard during the school day! Additionally, we appreciate that a range of activities outside of the school day are good for the body and brain.

In kindergarten - 4th grade, students are asked to read regularly outside the school day, but not generally to complete additional tasks (unless they have been left undone by the student during the school day.) At 5th and 6th grades, students are asked to practice organizational skills, responsibility, self-confidence, and independent work/study habits through homework. This work should not exceed 60 minutes, maximum, per evening.

Families can support homework by scheduling a regular time and place, free from distractions, for your child to do his/her work. While it can be helpful to give your child feedback, we ask that you do not take responsibility for the work; this is a time for your child to practice independent responsibility. If a child doesn't know/understand something, it is important for the teacher to know; if a student can't independently

complete his or her homework, please encourage your child to let the teacher know and or contact the teacher yourself.

Family Recommendations:

- 1) Provide a place where your child can work, equip place with needed materials.
- 2) Limit interruptions while your child is working.
- 3) Help your child get started or give feedback if you wish after work has begun, but do not do your child's work.

In cases where a student is often frustrated by the assigned homework, the parent should contact the teacher to discuss strategies for relieving the tension over homework. Homework should not be a dreaded time at home; let us help problem solve if this is an issue.

Lost & Found

Lost and found items are stored in labeled bins under the benches in the hallway outside the gym. Anything not picked up by the end of June will be donated to local thrift shops.

Music Instruction

In addition to weekly music classes, band is available to all students in 4th, 5th and 6th grades. Students involved in the band program have the opportunity to play weekly in an ensemble, as well as to receive small group lessons in their individual instrument. Instrument rentals are organized through the school; some scholarship is available through the PTA. Both band and lessons are scheduled during the school day.

Students in 5th and 6th grade can also join chorus. This program gives interested students a focused opportunity to develop their individual and group singing skills with an emphasis on preparing material for our winter and spring concerts.

Newsletter

The Waitsfield School newsletter is published weekly on Thursdays. The purpose of the newsletter is to communicate the activities and events of the school. Thank you for reading it to stay informed! It is available in both a print and electronic format. Announcements in the newsletter will be restricted to school events and activities that are of interest to children and their families as approved by the principal.

Notice of nondiscrimination

The Waitsfield School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. We do not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Within the school, the principal is designated to receive and appropriately investigate any concerns regarding discrimination.

Additionally, the principal coordinates compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, with the HUUSD Director of Student Services overseeing. Any concerns/grievances regarding the application of 504 non-discrimination should be directed to the HUUSD Director of Student Services.

Physical Education

All excused participation from physical education must be in writing or through conversation with the school nurse. All children are expected to participate in the gym program; physical education is an important component of growth and development. Extended excusal must be accompanied by a doctor's note.

Physical Restraint & Seclusion

Waitsfield School follows an adopted [policy and procedure around the use of physical restraint and seclusion](#) (see policy F26, located on the HUUSD website). WES maintains a commitment to a positive and safe learning environment. Restraint & seclusion are only used when a child presents a significant danger to himself/herself or others. Additionally, it is only completed by individuals who have been trained in its use. Family notification occurs whenever such an unusual incidence occurs. For further information on school practices and procedures in this area, please contact the school principal.

Placement, Promotion And Retention

Placement, promotion or retention decisions shall be made in the best interests of the student after a careful evaluation of all the factors relating to the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative and in consideration of social, emotional, physical and mental growth. Placement is completed in accordance with school policy [G-9R Grade Advancement: Retention, Promotion & Acceleration of Students](#) which can be found on the school website. In evaluating retention or promotion of a pupil, consideration will include not only the child's academic achievement and needs, but also the child's age, social and emotional maturity. Final authority for placement, promotion, and retention rests with the superintendent.

Placement, from year to year is the result of a thoughtful process. We are committed to having balanced classrooms. We know from experience and research that diverse and balanced classrooms benefit all students. Families are asked for input through a placement survey. However, requests for specific teachers cannot be accommodated.

Families disagreeing with the school's placement decision may file an appeal with the principal. Placement changes will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The principal may request a meeting with families to explore their rationale and reason for the request. Families will be notified of their child's placement at the end of the school year.

Playground

The public is invited to use the playground at times when school is not in session. It is expected that those using the playground will treat the equipment and grounds with respect and care.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The Waitsfield PTA, an approved non-profit entity, is a vital and important part of our school. It sponsors informational meetings for parents and staff and raises funds for many special activities and equipment. Their support enables children to participate in many enrichment activities including field trips and artist residencies. There are many ways to be involved with the PTA; you can attend the monthly meeting or get involved with any of their many projects. Notification of PTA activities (and needs) generally comes through the school newsletter. The PTA has a section on the web site (www.waitsfieldschool.org) and posts their meeting schedule and minutes there.

Recess

We have outdoor recess daily unless it is raining or, generally, if the temperature/wind chill is below 10 degrees. Students need to bring clothing that is appropriate for the season (i.e. jackets, boots, hats, raincoats) and shoes for running and playing outdoors. *Please also make sure that students have shoes to change into in school so they don't wear boots/outdoor shoes all day.*

The healthiest place for most students is outdoors, and students' afternoon school participation is greatly helped by midday physical activity and fresh air. A note from a physician, or prearranged agreement with the school nurse, is required when a child needs to stay indoors for recess.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued two times per year, in January and June. Report cards are standards-based and indicate student progress relative to state adopted standards. These reports are intended to provide a general summary of student growth and progress.

School Board

The meetings of the Harwood Union Unified Board of School Directors are open to the public, who are invited. Wee [HUUSD website](#) for specific meeting dates, location and agenda). Meetings are also televised through local MRVTV; a link to these broadcasts, which can be viewed online, can be found on the [HUUSD webiste](#), along with meeting agendas and minutes.

Sexual Abuse Prevention

Act I (Vermont's Sexual Abuse Response System) requires schools to:

(1) provide instruction to students on how to recognize and prevent sexual abuse and

sexual violence;

- (2) ensure that adults employed in schools receive orientation on the prevention, identification, and reporting of child sexual abuse and sexual violence, and
- (3) provide parents, guardians, and other interested persons the opportunity to receive orientation, identification, and reporting information on sexual abuse and sexual violence.

We are committed to keeping our students and schools safe from sexual abuse and violence. Age appropriate instruction is incorporated into our health and guidance program. Please let us know if you have any questions regarding how we meet our obligations in this area.

Smoking

State law prohibits smoking throughout school facilities and on school grounds at any time.

Student Safety

The safety of every student is a matter of serious concern at all times. To assure the safety of children while attending school or under school supervision:

- 1) School buildings and equipment, including buses, will be regularly inspected for health, fire and safety hazards.
- 2) Children will be supervised in class, on the playground, during recess and lunchtime, and during activities sponsored by the school.
- 3) Rules will be made to prevent accidents in the building and on the playground.
- 4) Reasonable precautions will be taken to assure children's safety on the way to school and on the way home from school. The school, however, cannot assume responsibility for students other than on the school busses or on school property during school hours.
- 5) The school and district each maintain a safety/crisis response team tasked with reviewing and improving safety and security measures throughout our schools.

Technology

A variety of technology tools are used to support student learning. It is expected that students will have the support needed to gain proficiency in using IT skills to solve problems and effectively communicate and create. In addition, students are provided specific instruction in media literacy and citizenship.

As part of the school's [Technology Responsible Use Policy](#) (see school policy found on the HUUSD website), students and their families are asked to complete a responsible use agreement outlining the expectations for use of technology, including internet access. Families should be aware that some material accessible via the internet may contain items that are illegal, inaccurate or offensive. Even though student use of the Internet will be

carefully structured and supervised, it cannot be guaranteed that undesirable sites will never be viewed. Students are instructed to report any such visits, intentional or unintentional, immediately.

Personal electronics (computer, phone, ipod, etc.) may be used during the school day **only** with prior permission from a teacher and for a purpose that supports student learning. If a student brings personal technology into school, he/she is responsible for it.

Telephone

Each classroom has a telephone. All teachers and administrators have voice mail. We have designed the system so you will speak to a “live person” when you call during school hours. If you receive voice mail it is because all lines are busy or we are temporarily unavailable. In this case we will get back to you as soon as possible. Teachers, however, are not available to take calls during instruction.

The staff will use their judgment about how often to allow students to use the telephone to ask family to bring forgotten items to school or other similar details. We believe that responsibility and planning ahead are better learned when students experience the logical consequence of a day without an item.

The school telephone is not to be used to make social arrangements for after school time. Students must make these arrangements at home and have communication from a parent (email, phone, etc.) stating where they will be going after school. It is important that your child be clear on where he or she is going after school. If there is an emergency change in plans, please call the school as soon as possible.

Toys

Students are discouraged from bringing toys or special personal items in unless they are included as part of a planned “share” in class.

Visitors

Visitors are always welcome. Visitors must notify the principal or school secretary of their presence in the building. Parents picking up a child early from school should check in at the office upon arrival.

Weapons

No weapons are permitted in the school or on school grounds, as per state legislation. Our [firearms policy](#) can be found on the HUUSD website.