

# Middletown Springs Elementary School

## 2011-2012



## STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

### ***NEW This Year!!***

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### SCHOOL STARTING TIME

School will begin for students at 7:50 a.m. *A student arriving after 7:50 a.m. is considered to be late and must be signed in by a parent/guardian in the main office to obtain a late pass.*

### SCHOOL ENDING TIME

Pre-K: 11:45 a.m.

Grades K-6: 2:50 p.m.

\*Pre-K students staying for lunch should be picked up at 12:00 noon.\*

*Please be prompt in picking up your child at dismissal time. The teachers often have meetings or other assigned duties. Students in Pre-K who are not picked up on time will be brought to the main office at noon for pick-up.*

Student instruction (for grades K-6) ends at 2:50 p.m. The students will be leaving their classrooms shortly thereafter. They are to go directly to the pickup area in front of the school or walk (with supervision) to the crossing areas. Students are not to stay at the school unless they are participating in a supervised activity with parental permission. If your child must be excused from school before the regular session is over, please send a note to the office stating the reason and the requested time of dismissal. If there is to be a change from the normal way in which your child goes home or with whom your child will leave, please send a note explaining this. This will prevent confusion on the part of both the child and the school.

### ARRIVAL ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

The faculty and staff of the Middletown Springs Elementary School feel very strongly about student safety and know that you share this feeling as parents/guardians. A concern of ours, as well as yours, is what transpires between the time a child leaves home and arrives on school grounds.

Students may arrive at school and (*using the side entrance*) report to the multipurpose room no earlier than 7:15 a.m. for before-school supervision and/or breakfast. The front door of the school will remain locked until 7:45. Students arriving at 7:45 or later may use the front entrance. STUDENTS ARRIVING BEFORE 7:15 A.M. MUST BE SUPERVISED BY THE PERSON/S BRINGING THEM TO SCHOOL.

### PARKING/DRIVING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

When parking and/or picking up your child at the end of the day we ask that the following procedures be followed:

1. Parking near the playground area will be staff parking only.
2. Parking spaces on that side further towards the driveway will be parent and visitor parking. If you are picking up or dropping off your child and *plan to enter the building*, please park here.
3. The driveway loop is now separated into two lanes. At pick up time, if you are waiting for your child (ren) and are **not** entering the building, *park to the right* side (lane) of the loop—closest to the school entrance, leaving the left clear. Staff will accompany students to vehicles—*students will come to you*. When your child is ready in your vehicle, *use the left side* (lane) of the loop *to pull out and exit*.
4. If we all follow this system, it will allow you to enter/exit more quickly and, most importantly, maximize student safety.

Parents—please follow directional signs in the driveway and BEAR RIGHT when arriving at and departing from the school. Please drive slowly while on or near school grounds. In order to safeguard our students, vehicles should only be left in the parking lot if they have been turned off and the car keys have been removed.

### NO TREE NUTS POLICY

**\*\*\*NEW\*\*\*** Due to the presence of students in our building who have life-threatening allergic reactions to tree nuts and tree nut products, we ask that students do not bring anything containing tree nuts (EXCLUDES PEANUTS and PEANUT BUTTER) into the school at any time. This includes: breakfast, lunch, or snack time, during birthday or other celebrations, field trips, or afterschool program. This includes granola bars with tree nuts, and all store-bought or baked products that contain tree nut products. In the case of severe allergies, even coming in contact with a doorknob recently touched by someone who had eaten a food with tree nuts may cause a problem. Potentially, even the smell of tree nuts might trigger a reaction. **Therefore, Middletown Springs Elementary School has adopted a NO TREE NUTS policy.** *If any of our students develop allergies to peanuts, peanut butter or food products with peanuts, we will ask that these foods also not be brought to school.* Thank you for helping keep our school a safe place for every child. (Please note: we anticipate that, according to current information, peanuts, peanut butter, and peanut-containing products will not be allowed beginning with the 2012-2013 school year due to a life-threatening student allergy.)

### SCHOOL VISITORS



We welcome all parents and visitors to our school. We do ask that all parents, visitors and guests sign in at the main office upon arrival at the school. Former students who would like to visit or volunteer are asked to contact the school office before coming to the school.

### AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM/HOMEWORK CLUB

Students in grades 1-6 are eligible to attend the Middletown Springs After-School Program. The program runs from dismissal time (2:50) until 5:30 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays (when school is in session for a full day). Registration forms must be completed by the parent/guardian prior to student attendance. A snack and beverage are provided to each student daily, free of charge.

Attendance at the After School Program costs \$2.00 per student per day for any part of the program from 2:50 though 5:30 p.m. *Please submit checks made payable to "MSES."* Please note: ASP payments may NOT be combined with payments for meals, snacks, or beverages as these are two separate bank accounts. All fees should be paid on a weekly basis (paying in advance is preferred and encouraged).

If payment of these fees presents a financial hardship to your family, please contact the school office for an application for a Child Care Subsidy offered through the State of Vermont that can partially or fully pay your ASP fees, based on income and eligibility.

Physical activities will take place daily from 3:00-3:30 p.m. followed by Homework Club. Offered as part of the ASP, Homework Club provides an opportunity for students in grades 1-6 to receive supervision while completing their homework assignments. Homework Clubs are available to students Monday through Thursday from 3:30-4:30 p.m. (no HW Club on Fridays). Appropriate behavior is expected at all times.

### PARTICIPATION IN ASP & EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Certain responsibilities must be met by all students who participate in the Before/After School programs, extra-curricular activities, and athletic activities offered by the school. These responsibilities include respectful, responsible behavior and prompt, regular attendance at school. Therefore, students who are absent for half a day or more will not be permitted to participate in the Before/After School programs, extra-curricular activities, or sports events on the day of the absence.

Eligibility to participate in Before/After School programs and other activities may also be suspended for repeated infractions of school rules.

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards are distributed to students in grades K-6 on a quarterly basis. This year, report cards will be sent home on: November 4, January 27, April 6, and on the last day of school (currently June 8). Report cards are sent home via the student and should be returned, signed by a parent, as soon as possible. Interim notification is used to alert parents to areas of concern—these are sent out halfway through the marking period at each teacher's discretion.



## HONOR ROLL

Academic excellence is recognized in grades 4-6 through a High Honor Roll and Honor Roll system. The following criteria are used:

High Honor Roll: All A's

Honor Roll: All A's and B's

Honor Roll status will be announced at the end of each marking period and is published in "Friday Notices" and "The Magnet."

## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences may be requested by either party (parent or teacher) at any time during the school year and will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time. This year, school-wide conferences will be held during afternoon and evening hours on Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup> and during morning hours on Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>.

## TRANSITION MEETINGS

Near the end of the school year, Transition Meetings with parents and teachers will be held. These meetings will include the student's current teacher and next year's teacher. This year our Transition Meetings will be held during afternoon and evening hours on Thursday, May 17<sup>th</sup> and during morning hours on Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>.

## PARENTAL QUESTIONS/CONCERNS



There may be times during your child's educational experience when you have specific questions or concerns regarding best practice, curriculum, discipline, or any other topic.

It is important to address these problems directly with school personnel as soon as possible, beginning with your child's teacher. If an issue cannot be resolved at this level, it should be addressed next to the Principal, then (if necessary) to the Superintendent, and then (if necessary) to the School Board.

We want to be of assistance to you and expect the courtesy of hearing your concerns directly from you. Issues are designed to challenge our problem solving capabilities. As a child-centered team, we can and will resolve all issues.

### ART, MUSIC & PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES

The delivery model is for sharing programs with Tinmouth Elementary School with the following goals in mind.

- 1.) To allow stronger skill development in each of the areas of art, music, and physical education through a concentrated program.
- 2.) To increase the involvement of itinerant teachers in regular education units and thematic units.
- 3.) To increase community involvement in the schools in the areas of art, music, and physical education.

Under the new model, students will attend each special class every week throughout the school year (Art, Music, Physical Education and Library) according to the following schedule:

- Monday: Art
- Tuesday: PE
- Wednesday: Music
- Thursday: PE
- Friday: Library



### MUSIC LESSONS

Music lessons are available once weekly for approximately thirty minutes during school hours at no charge to students in grades 4-6. There is a fee for instrument rental (if necessary). A signed permission slip is required for students to participate in lessons.

## TECHNOLOGY

Students are introduced to appropriate software, often in conjunction with a classroom topic, and also use programs to learn "keyboarding" skills, conduct research, write reports, produce "multi-media" presentations, etc.

Each student will be assigned a user name and password. Students are not permitted to sign on to a computer using any other student's name. Instruction for students will include laws, "netiquette", safety, security, and consequences for irresponsible use.

*Students and parents will be required to sign an "Acceptable Use Procedures Agreement" in order for students to use the school/supervisory union electronic resources. These agreements were distributed in First Day Folders.*



The use of computers and networks provides our students with quality, equitable, cost-effective information and communication resources, and the opportunities for researching and reporting information in ways that are consistent with our district-wide educational goals. We believe that the valuable information and interaction available via the Internet or other networks far outweighs the possibility of users procuring material that is not in keeping with the educational goals of each school. An Internet filtering system has been installed on the school's computer network to block access to undesirable sites.

## LIBRARY

The Library program provides an opportunity for students to borrow books and learn about library organization and resources. They learn where different types of books are located (and why) and how to select and use appropriate materials for study and enjoyment. They also share a variety of literature and learn about selected authors.

Library classes take place once per week on Fridays. Pre-kindergartners and kindergartners may borrow 1 book for 1 week at a time and older students may borrow up to 2 books for 2 weeks.

Please remember to return all books when due so that more may be borrowed. Students in grades kindergarten through six also receive library numbers from the town library that may be used to borrow books.

### TEXT BOOKS

Students are required to cover each textbook issued to them. Lost or damaged books or equipment will be replaced at the student's/parent's expense. If a lost item is later recovered, the replacement fee will be refunded.

### OUTSIDE READING BOOKS

Any book brought to the Middletown Springs Elementary School must meet the same standards of excellence that a regular library book does before purchase. Its subject matter, vocabulary, and format must be appropriate for the maturity level of elementary school children.



Literature that does not meet these standards and guidelines will not be acceptable for free reading or book reports. Books of this nature will be taken from the student and sent home to be read under parental supervision and guidance.

### VIDEO/DVD USE

The choice of videotapes and DVDs for use at school is guided by our selection policy. All videos/DVDs are previewed by staff prior to use with students. The staff is selective and careful to prevent over-reliance upon videotapes/DVDs in the school setting. In some instances (i.e., sensitive health education issues or personal safety instruction), the staff may feel it appropriate to notify parents in advance of videos being shown.

### FOOD SERVICE

#### **IMPORTANT: NO TREE NUTS OR PRODUCTS CONTAINING TREE NUTS!**

If your child brings breakfast, snack, or lunch from home, it should be a healthy one. Do not send candy, soda, gum, caffeinated or energy drinks, or ANY TREE NUTS OR TREE NUT PRODUCTS (to protect our students with potentially life-threatening allergies). Peanuts and peanut butter are allowed in school this year.

The school will offer a healthy, nutritious breakfast, snack, and lunch for students in Grades Pre-K through six daily. Menus are sent home on a bi-weekly basis attached to "Friday Notices." Menus are also posted on our website: [www.middletownsprings.org](http://www.middletownsprings.org).

Breakfast will be served daily beginning at 7:15 and ending at 7:35 a.m. *Please note that breakfast will not be served after 7:35 a.m., so please have your child arrive on time if you wish to have him/her eat breakfast at school.*

Morning snack is available to students in all grades. Nutritious snacks are provided through the food service program at a cost of **.50** each. Skim, low fat, reduced fat chocolate milk and orange juice cost **.40** per container. Milk/juice may also be purchased separately to accompany a bag lunch from home. If you do not wish to purchase a snack or beverage at snack time, please feel free to send a nutritious snack and drink to school with your child for him/her to enjoy during snack time. ***Please note that soda, candy, gum, caffeinated or energy drinks, tree nuts and/or tree nut containing products may NOT be brought to school.***

Prices are as follows:

- Skim Milk \$ .40
- Low fat Milk \$ .40
- Chocolate Milk \$ .40
- Orange Juice: \$ .40
- Snack: \$ .50
- Full Price Student Lunch: \$ 2.00
- Reduced Price Student Lunch: \$ .40
- Full Price Student Breakfast \$ 1.00
- Reduced Price Student Breakfast Free this year!
- Full Price Adult Lunch \$ 3.00
- Full Price Adult Breakfast \$ 1.75

Unfortunately, the price of milk has increased to .40 per carton, so we had to increase our prices accordingly. The costs of all milk and juice this year will be .40 each. One beverage (milk or juice) is included in the cost of breakfast and lunch.

Forms for applying for free and reduced price meals will be distributed to each family on the first day of school and are also available in the school office. Completed and approved forms must be on file in order for students to receive free or reduced price meals. *You may apply at any time during the school year.*

We encourage all families to apply as student eligibility impacts the amount of federal funds and grants available to our school. Therefore, eligibility can benefit both the family and the school. All application information is confidential.

**Here are the billing procedures for the school meals program:**

- MSES requires meal accounts be pre-paid by cash or check payable to "MSES."
- ALL students are charged for morning snacks and/or snack beverages regardless of Free/Reduced Lunch eligibility.
- ALL students are charged for extra milk or juice at breakfast and lunch regardless of Free/Reduced Lunch eligibility.
- MSES will provide a current lunch bill to families every other week. Requests for an additional print-out of a current balance will be granted.
- When an account reaches a due balance of \$10.00, **non-Free/Reduced Lunch** eligible students will not be able to charge meals, snacks, or beverages and will receive a meal consisting of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and milk/juice.
- When an account reaches a due balance of \$10.00, **Free/Reduced Lunch** eligible students will still receive breakfast and lunch (including one beverage) as usual, but will not be able to charge snacks and/or additional milk or juice.
- If an account balance, including but not limited to: outstanding lunch bills, overdue library books, After-School Program fees, fundraising income, or loss of school property, is not paid in full by the end of the school year, all measures of collection may be pursued.

### RECESS

Recess is scheduled daily directly before lunch. All students will be required to go out for recess unless we receive a note from home requesting otherwise. However, we strongly urge parents to use this request sparingly. It is rare that a bit of fresh air will threaten anyone's health.

### **\*NEW: RECESS PLANNING ROOM**

**There will be a planning room available during recess. The planning room will be used as a safe place for students to go if they are having difficulties during recess and, where it would be a logical consequence for students, to complete schoolwork. However, our goal is to have students outside exercising and socializing with peers.**


### TOYS/PERSONAL ITEMS AT SCHOOL

Toys of any kind are not permitted at school with the exception of "Share" day. A toy brought in on a student's "Share" day must be given to the classroom teacher on arrival. The teacher will hold the toy for the day with the exception of the duration of the student's "Share" time. Students should not bring personal items (including electronic


devices) to school as they may prove to be distracting and/or be misplaced. Such items will be confiscated and returned to the student (or parent) at the end of the school day.

### BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are often a time for children to celebrate with classmates by bringing in goodies or handing out invitations to parties. Please inform the teacher if you are sending in birthday treats. The teacher may request to see the recipe or the cake mix box if you are baking or the package if you are sending in store-bought food. Due to students in our school with life-threatening nut allergies there can be **NO TREE NUTS OR TREE NUT PRODUCTS** in any food sent/brought into school. If this rule is not followed, the goodies may not be shared with classmates. An alternative idea is to send in small party favors, such as birthday pencils or erasers, etc., instead of food.

Parents; if your child is handing out birthday invitations at school, please be sure that  EVERY child in the class receives an invitation. If you are holding a small party and cannot invite all the children, please give/mail the invitations privately outside of school. Children's feelings can be easily hurt when they feel they have been excluded. Thank you for your sensitivity in this matter.

### NOTICES

School newsletters entitled *Friday Notices* are generated by the Principal's Office and will be sent home every other week of the school year on the last day of the week with the eldest child in the family. On alternate weeks a condensed newsletter entitled *All School News* will be sent home on the last day of the week. These are the major forms of communication between school and home. They include classroom, school-wide, district-wide, and community-wide news and notices. 

*Please take the time to locate these newsletters and read them thoroughly so that you are always informed of school activities. Friday Notices, All School News, and related attachments can also be found on the school website: [www.middletownsprings.org](http://www.middletownsprings.org).* Parents may choose to receive notices via e-mail or by having paper copies sent home, or may choose to simply access them on the website at their convenience.

### "NO SCHOOL" ANNOUNCEMENTS



It is sometimes necessary to cancel school due to weather conditions or other emergencies. We ask all parents to use their own discretion in deciding to send

children to school during a storm. Our school uses the "Alert Now" automated phone system to automatically notify families by telephone of a school closing or delay. We no longer use a phone tree.

In addition, school closing/delay information will be posted on the school's website at: [www.middletownsprings.org](http://www.middletownsprings.org). Announcements will also be made over the following radio stations: WVNR/WNYV, WEQX, WJJR/WHAN/WEBK/Cat Country, WSYB (AM) and KISS (FM). Announcements will also be made on the following television stations: Channels 15 and 20 (PEG TV), Channel 3 (WCAX), and Channels 4 & 22 (WVNY). When listening for announcements, please keep in mind that our school district is the Rutland **Southwest** Supervisory Union, not Rutland *South*.

Should it be necessary to close school once it has begun, the same radio and television stations will be contacted and information will be posted on our website. Every effort will be made to contact parents directly using the "Alert Now" automated phone system. We will use the alternate contacts listed on the student emergency cards in the event that a parent/guardian cannot be reached promptly. Therefore, it is very important that we have accurate phone numbers for parents and other emergency contacts.

### ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS

The educational progress of each student is directly related to regular classroom attendance. Whenever a student is absent or tardy, the value of the work missed is something that is difficult to replace by out-of-class work.

**Also, it is important that the student feels a part of their learning community which is achieved by participating in morning meetings at the beginning of the school day. Students are at a severe disadvantage when missing school or not starting the day on time with peers and teacher in a supportive group. Punctual school attendance is outlined in the state statutes and is ultimately a parental responsibility.**

Each student who is absent from school must have a WRITTEN excuse from his/her parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence. Excused absences include absence for the following reasons: personal or family illness, religious holidays, death in the family, medical or dental treatments, and reasons requested by the parent and approved by the Principal or Superintendent in extenuating circumstances. The written excuse must be brought to school on the day the student returns. We are required (by state law) to have a written excuse from parents/guardians each and every time a child is absent from school. If a student does not bring a note to school upon her/his return, the absence will be considered unexcused, and the following procedures will apply:

- Step #1: After three days of unexcused absence, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian informing them that their child is in danger of being declared truant.
- Step #2: After five days of unexcused absence, the truant officer will conduct a home visit to meet with the student and parent/guardian to encourage the student to return to school on a regular basis.
- Step #3: After seven days of unexcused absence, a truancy intervention meeting will be scheduled. The meeting will include parents, school personnel, connected teachers, the truant officer, and community agencies, such as SRS, PRIME, etc.
- Step #4: The truancy intervention meeting will be held.
- Step #5: If the family fails to attend the truancy intervention meeting and continued absences result in more than ten days of unexcused absence, the family will be notified that their case is being referred to SRS and an affidavit will be filed and sent to the State Attorney's office.

In the event that a student becomes ill while at school, one of the parents/guardians or one of the people designated as emergency contacts will be notified before a student will be allowed to go home. Please be sure that emergency contact names and numbers are current by contacting the school office with any changes as soon as they occur.

### PRIOR NOTICE OF ABSENCE

If you know in advance that your child/children will be absent (e.g., scheduled medical or dental appointment, other extenuating circumstances), please inform the office as far in advance as possible. This will assist the school and the teachers with scheduling of assessments, presentations, etc. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

### REQUEST FOR TRAVEL ABSENCE

Requests for excused absences for the purpose of family travel should be made in writing and addressed to: *Superintendent of Schools, RSWSU, 168 York Street, Poultney, VT 05764*, as far in advance as possible. Any requests sent to the school will be forwarded to the Superintendent's office for review.



## REQUESTS FOR SCHOOLWORK

Parents/guardians requesting schoolwork for their children to do at home (during absences, etc.) need to provide the teacher with 48 hours to fulfill the request. The teachers have limited, scheduled planning times available to them in order to prepare the schoolwork packets in addition to their regular classroom lesson plans, therefore it is not always possible for parents to receive work the same day as it is requested. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.


## DRESS

The appearance of any young person is primarily the responsibility of that individual and his/her parents. We expect students to maintain the type of appearance that is not distracting to teachers or to other students.

Here are some points to keep in mind:

- 1.) Label all clothing—this helps to avoid confusion and loss.
- 2.) Send other footwear for your child to wear indoors in winter. Students are required to wear footwear at all times while in school.
- 3.) Neatness and cleanliness pay off in improved attitudes and pride. Good personal hygiene is a must in the classroom.
- 4.) Clothing advertising drugs (including alcohol or tobacco) or containing inappropriate language or subject matter contradict and undermine our school and district goals, and may not be worn to school or during outside school activities.
- 5.) Clothing should be appropriately modest for children of elementary-school age. Please avoid sending students to school with spaghetti strap or midriff tops or with low-riding pants/jeans. Undergarments should not be visible. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

## BICYCLES

We recommend that students not ride their bicycles in winter if there is snow or ice on the ground. All bicycles should be placed in the bike racks available at the school. Students who ride their bikes to school should wear a helmet.  Bike riding on school grounds while school is in session is not permitted.

Students in Grades 4-6 may participate in bike-riding during recess in good weather with our PE teacher if a signed permission slip is on file at the school. Students are requested to bring their own bicycle and helmet to school (if available). Bicycles and helmets will be inspected and approved by our PE teacher before students will be permitted to use them.

A limited number of bicycles/helmets are available for student use. All students will be required to wear a helmet—please be sure to send one to school with your child.

### LOST AND FOUND



Lost and found items are kept in the school multi-purpose room. Every effort is made to reconnect owners with lost items. Items left for an extended period of time are disposed of as necessary.

### PHOTO/VIDEOTAPE PERMISSION

School is such an exciting time in a child's life that sometimes we like to share our classroom experiences through a photograph or videotape of our school activities that might include your child. Please sign and return the "Permission to Photograph" form consenting to the possibility of your child's picture being taken as part of our program.

### FIELD RESEARCH/TRIPS

Students will have the opportunity to go on field trips in connection with their instructional programs. Those trips are designed to enhance their cultural experience and improve their understanding and knowledge of age-appropriate information.

*NO TREE NUTS OR TREE NUT PRODUCTS may be sent on a field trip with your child whether in a bag lunch or as a snack, due to our No Tree Nut policy to protect our students with potentially life-threatening allergies.*

Advance notification and permission slips will be sent home. Signed, original permission slips must be returned in advance of the trip in order for students to participate. VERBAL PERMISSION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Students without permission slips will be supervised at the school for the duration of the trip or the length of the school day.

*Please note that children eight years old and younger are required by law to ride in an approved child restraint seat while traveling in an automobile. In the event that students will be traveling by personal automobile during a field trip, the parent/guardian will need to supply an appropriate car/booster seat.*

Our "hands on" approach to learning involves occasional use of the outside area near the school and around the town of Middletown Springs. One permission slip will be issued to cover these in-town walking trips for the year.

## SAFETY PATROL

The purpose of the safety patrol is to ensure the safety of all students crossing streets at or near the school. Students (supervised by a staff member) are posted at the foot of the school hill and at the four corners by Parker's Garage after school. Students will be walked to the four-way intersection and crossed to the village green (as needed). The patrol is on duty at 2:50 p.m.



The School Safety Patrol is comprised of responsible fifth and sixth graders under the supervision of a staff member. All elementary school students are expected to follow their directions in the interest of safety.

## FIRE DRILLS

Fire Drills are conducted to ensure that students and school personnel know the proper exits from the school in case of fire or other emergencies. Drills are conducted at least once a month. The children and staff are instructed in how to properly exit the school building, according to the Emergency Preparedness Plan. Since fire drills are not announced, children must have shoes on at all times. Children must remain quiet, stay in line, and follow instructions.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

The Middletown Springs Elementary School has an emergency preparedness plan to be used in the event of fire, bomb threat, civil disturbance, or severe weather conditions. Two methods of evacuation have been determined, mapped out, and regular practice drills will occur annually. The evacuation site is St. Anne's Church. The staff and children will walk to the church in the event that an alternative site is necessary.

Every effort will be made to notify parents that a school evacuation has occurred. If we are unable to reach a parent, one of the two alternate contacts on the child's emergency card will be notified.

## TITLE 1

Title I (pronounced "Title One") is a federally funded program designed to help all children attain Vermont's Framework of high content and performance standards in the areas of reading and math. The purpose of the program is to help students who are not meeting the standards or are at risk of not meeting the standards.

Title I services are provided in a variety of methods including: in-class, pullout, individual, small, and/or large groups. The service delivery is especially designed to meet the learning styles and special needs of each individual student.

Eligibility for the Title I program is considered if a student is not meeting the standards or is at risk of not meeting the standards, which is determined by in-class performance assessments and teacher recommendation.

A parent may recommend their child for Title I services. MSES will distribute a written parental involvement policy/agreement to parents of participating children.

### EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM POLICY

Each school in the district shall develop a comprehensive system of education services, including an educational support system, designed and implemented in consultation with parents, to assist teachers in accommodating children in the regular classroom to the greatest extent possible.

The system shall consist of an Educational Support Team (EST) composed of staff from a variety of teaching and support service positions, and shall incorporate a range of referral, support, and remedial services, as well as the means to determine the effectiveness of accommodations or services recommended by the Educational Support Team. Members of this team shall vary according to the needs of the individual student.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall ensure that the Educational Support Team will be integrated to the extent appropriate within the general educational curriculum, be designed to increase the ability of the general educational system to meet the needs of all students, be designed to provide students the support needed regardless of eligibility for categorical programs, provide clear procedures and methods for handling a student who disrupts class and shall include provision of educational options, support services and consultation or training for staff where appropriate. Procedures may include removal of the student from the classroom or the school building as appropriate, consistent with local policies and federal and state laws and regulations, and ensure collaboration with families, community supports, and the system of health and human services.

Each team shall be comprised of staff from a variety of teaching and support service positions, who will screen referrals to determine what classroom accommodations and remedial services have been tried, assist teachers in planning and providing services and accommodations to students in need of classroom supports or enrichment activities,

provide for a timely follow-up of student's progress, provide a procedure for timely referral for special education evaluation when eligibility is warranted, and maintain a written record of its actions. There is no individual entitlement or private right of action created.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Under the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Vermont Department of Education's Special Education Regulations, special education services are available to qualifying children between the ages of 3-21 and parents have specific rights concerning their participation in the special education process.

- You have the right to be notified about important decisions regarding your child's education.
- You have the right to give your consent before your child is evaluated, before your child receives special education and related services for the first time, and before confidential information about your child is released.
- You have the right to participate in meetings about your child's evaluation, eligibility for special education, educational program, and placement.
- You have the right to access your child's education records and to have those records kept confidential.
- You have the right to appeal decisions with which you disagree.

You must be given a copy of your "Parent's Rights in Special Education" when an evaluation or re-evaluation of your child is being planned, when a meeting takes place to discuss your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP), and when you or the school requests a due process hearing.

### DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment on the basis of sex, race, religion, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, marital status, color, sexual orientation or disability is prohibited by Federal and State Laws as a form of discrimination. Additionally, unlawful harassment is offensive, unprofessional, and adversely affects the entire educational community. Accordingly, the Middletown Springs School Board prohibits unlawful harassment and will attempt to maintain a school community free from it.

Title IX further requires schools to notify students and parents/guardians that discrimination on the basis of sex is prohibited by Federal and State law and that our

school does not discriminate on the basis of sex in educational programs and/or activities operated by the school.

Harassment means unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct of a persistent and offensive nature based on the person's race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability and which has a purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the person's educational or employment performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment. Sexual harassment is also a form of unlawful harassment and is more specifically addressed in Middletown Springs' Policy on Sexual Harassment.

Unlawful discrimination/harassment is prohibited. All persons associated with the District, including, but not limited to, the School Board, Administration, Staff and Students, shall conduct themselves at all times to provide an atmosphere free from unlawful harassment while acting as a member of the school community.

It is unlawful and shall be a violation of this policy for any person to retaliate against a person who makes a good faith complaint of unlawful harassment or cooperates in an investigation of unlawful discrimination or harassment. The Building Principal will process all unlawful complaints in accordance with adopted procedures. If a person alleges that the Building Principal him/herself is engaged in unlawful discrimination or harassment, the complainant may take their complaint directly to the Superintendent. A person who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action from a verbal warning up to and including suspension or dismissal/expulsion.

### HAZING POLICY

It is the policy of the Middletown Springs School District that its school shall provide a safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environment. Hazing has no place in the District's school and will not be tolerated. "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 that is affiliated with the District; 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" also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off school grounds.

Examples of hazing include:

1. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electrical shocks, placing a harmful substance on or in the body, or similar activity; or
2. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, or other activity that creates or results in an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student; or
3. Any activity involving consumption of food, liquid, alcoholic beverages, liquor, drugs, or other substance that subjects a student to an unreasonable risk of harm; or
4. Any activity that induces, causes, or requires a student to perform a duty or task, which involves the commission of a crime or an act of hazing.

Students who have reason to believe that an incident of hazing might or did occur shall report such belief to any coach of an extracurricular team, teacher, school nurse, guidance counselor, or school administrator. Staff members who have received such a report from a student or who otherwise have reason to believe that an incident of hazing might or did occur shall report such belief to the Principal of the school, or, in the event of the unavailability of the Principal, to his/her designee. The report may be written or oral. If the report is made orally, the receiver shall make a written record of the report.

### DISCIPLINARY PLAN

The Discipline Plan for Middletown Springs Elementary School is based on fostering mutual respect. Teachers in our classrooms have the right and obligation to teach; students have the right and obligation to learn without interruption. Discipline is a means by which students are held accountable for their actions and helped to understand the consequences of inappropriate behavior.

Any discipline form will:

1. Be related to the rules.
2. Teach or reinforce positive behaviors.
3. Encourage student responsibility.
4. Be designed to result in increased self-control by the student disciplined.
5. Maintain dignity for the student and the teacher.
6. Provide logical and natural consequences.

There are rule-breaking behaviors that are unacceptable at Middletown Springs Elementary School. These include:

- A. Blatant defiance—example: student refuses to comply with reasonable adult requests.
- B. Aggressive action—physical violence and/or hands-on actions, for example: hitting, slapping, kicking, punching, or pushing someone, throwing a book, raising a fist, jeopardizing anyone's safety, behavior that might result in danger to self or others.
- C. Disrespect—example: talking back to a teacher, mimicking, rolling of eyes.
- D. Intentional and deliberate use of profanity.
- E. Deliberate, continuous disruptions in class.
- F. Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
- G. Possession of weapons or dangerous items.
- H. Destruction of school property or theft—example: graffiti.
- I. Leaving school grounds without authorization or permission.

Students who engage in such behaviors will be disciplined. The Principal will be notified and will determine if further disciplinary action is warranted.

### DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The teachers and staff at Middletown Springs Elementary School use "Responsive Classroom" techniques to create a positive and respectful learning environment. They will use the following consequences to rule breaking behaviors. These consequences are sequential.

1. Time out/Take a break:
  - a) To be used if the student is disrupting learning, not on task, breaks classroom rules or displays unacceptable behaviors as stated in the Disciplinary Plan.
  - b) Students will take a break in the classroom in a spot away from the disruption.
2. Partner time out:
  - a) To be used if the student continues to disrupt learning, to not be on task, or continues to break classroom or school rules.
  - b) Students will take a break in another room where this is an adult present.
  - c) The teacher will privately process with the student before or upon their return to the classroom.

3. Principal Intervention:

- a) Students will be sent to the principal when a third offense occurs or when an offense is seen as severe, harmful, or threatening.
- b) Teachers will discuss with the principal why the student is being sent to the office.
- c) Parents will be notified of the student visit.
- d) An additional consequence will include loss of recess and lunch in the office for at least one day depending on the act.


4. Principal Suspension:

- a) Parents will be notified and given a 'hearing' prior to the suspension.
- b) In-school - Student isolated from peers, does not attend specials, recess, or lunch. A substitute teacher will be present. Students will work on school work.
- c) Out of school - Student is not allowed to attend school for one or more days.


5. Superintendent and/or School Board Expulsion:

Last resort

### ANIMALS IN SCHOOL/RABIES PREVENTION

 The Middletown Springs School Board is committed to ensuring the health and well being of all persons in the school. Because of the need for caution relative to rabies, the Board prohibits the bringing of wild animals or unvaccinated pets to school without prior written consent of the Principal. In addition, prior permission must be obtained before bring any pets or animals (vaccinated or not) to the school so that we can avoid potential allergic reactions on the part of students and/or staff members.

### SMOKING

 Smoking will not be allowed in any part of the school building or anywhere on school grounds. Any tobacco products found in the possession of a student on school property will be confiscated and appropriate referrals will be made to law enforcement authorities.

## DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

It is the legal and social obligation of the Middletown Springs School District to provide an established policy and guidelines to encourage and promote a totally drug and alcohol free school environment. Drug and alcohol abuse will be dealt with in accordance with the existing Drug and Alcohol Policy which states that the school will seek to prevent and will prohibit the possession, use and/or distribution of any drug, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia on school property, at school-sponsored events, on school buses, and en-route to and from school by any mode of travel.

All violations of this policy, which include the possession, the use, and the distribution of any drug or drug paraphernalia and being under the influence of any drug will be dealt with according to the procedures described herein. The consequences of such violations may ultimately result in expulsion from school and/or an arrest.

Recognizing that substance abuse may indicate other serious or underlying problems, every effort will be made to offer a student help and assistance. Help may include early identification, referral for treatment, and aftercare support. Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interests of the student, the school population, and the community in mind. The seriousness of an offense may require more severe consequences than are outlined in the following practices.

The rights of the student will receive due consideration. The questioning of a student on school premises will take place in the presence of a school official. A student's right to remain silent or speak through an attorney or parent/guardian may not be abridged. A school official will maintain a written record of all proceedings under the policy. This will be made available to the student.

## WEAPONS

It is the intent of the school to comply with the federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 and Act #35 of the 1995 session of the Vermont General Assembly requiring school districts to provide for the possible expulsion of students who bring weapons to school. The School Board adopted a policy on August 1, 1995 that is available for viewing in the school office by request.

## SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Desks, lockers, textbooks, and other materials or supplies loaned by the school to students remain the property of the school, and may be opened by school employees for

cleaning, maintenance, or emergencies. When prohibited items are found in the course of routine cleaning or maintenance, or in the case of emergency, they will be confiscated and a report will be made to the Principal who will determine whether further investigation is warranted.

School property may also be searched by school employees upon reasonable suspicion on the part of the Principal or Superintendent that a law or school policy is being violated. Searches of school property in the possession of students will not extend to areas or items not reasonably calculated to aid in the enforcement of specific policies or laws.

Searches of students' persons or vehicles will be conducted if there is reasonable cause to believe that a breach of school policy or law is being committed. Search of a students' person will be conducted by a school employee of the same sex in the presence of the parent, or the parent will conduct the search.

School employees are not the agents of law enforcement officials. Search and/or seizure by law enforcement officials on school property may occur when a warrant or other legal basis exists authorizing such search and/or seizure, and when the requirement of the Board's policy on interrogations by law enforcement officers has been complied with.

### HIV/AIDS

We believe all children in Vermont have the right to an education. As a general rule, a student with AIDS or infected with HIV should attend school in a regular classroom with the approval of the student's physician and should be considered eligible for all opportunities and services provided by law and local school district policy.

Reporting of AIDS or HIV infection to schools is not mandated. The student or the student's parents may choose to report the information. These are the only acceptable sources of reporting regarding HIV infection or AIDS. The superintendent shall be responsible for the consistent procedural implementation of this policy.

### CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

It is the policy of the Middletown Springs Elementary School for all school teachers, guidance counselors, nurses, principals, librarians, and school employees to fulfill their obligations concerning the reporting of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse and neglect will be dealt with in accordance with the existing policy.

## SCHOOL NURSE

School nursing is a specialized service to the process of education. The school nurse is part of the professional team aiding children to develop their full potential in health and education. The school nurse is present at MSES one day each week.



The school nurse, with the experience and knowledge of the changing growth and behavioral patterns of children, is in a unique position to assist children in acquiring health knowledge, developing attitudes conducive to healthful living, and in meeting their needs resulting from disease, accidents, and adjustment issues.

A health check will be made periodically on each child throughout his/her school years. This will include: vision and hearing testing, and personal hygiene reinforcement. Please note: Parents/guardians have the right to have their children "opt out" of hearing testing. Written notification must be given to the school of the family's choice to "opt out" of the hearing test. Please look upon the school nurse as a resource person and feel free to contact the school nurse with questions about your child's health.

## HEALTH

- 1) Children who complain of having sore throats, earaches, or have a fever usually benefit from spending a day at home. It also keeps contagious diseases from spreading.
- 2) Sometimes children do get sick during school hours, and it may be necessary to send the child home. It is important that we have a way of contacting someone. We are NOT equipped to supervise a child outside of the classroom for extended periods of time. We ask that you have a plan in place for these types of situations so that someone is available to pick up an ill or injured student promptly.
- 3) Parents, please advise the school when you are going away and make provisions for what should be done and whom should be contacted if your child becomes ill or injured.
- 4) A phone call on the day your child will be absent is requested and a note is required explaining the absence on the day of your child's return to school.
- 5) If a child is too ill to go outside for recess, he/she is too ill to be in school and benefit from it.

- 6) Each year the school nurse performs screening tests for vision and hearing difficulties. However, the parent may often be the first to notice the problem: squinting, sitting too close to the TV, volume too loud, talking in a loud voice, missing conversations (as opposed to not listening to instructions) and should act upon them immediately. A thorough check-up is recommended. Please feel free to contact the school nurse to discuss any concerns about your child's hearing and/or vision.
- 7) It is the school policy and a state requirement that all children be immunized in accordance with current Vermont Dept. of Health regulations. Records (including dates) of the immunizations or appropriate exemption papers must be on file at the school. If a child is found to be lacking the necessary immunizations parents will be notified. If the child is not immunized within a reasonable amount of time, he/she will be excluded from school until immunizations are brought up to date.

The current policy regarding *Prescription Medication* requires that:

- WRITTEN orders from a PHYSICIAN detailing the name of the student, the drug name and dosage, reason for giving, and the time the medication is to be given must be received by the school nurse, medical designee or building administrator BEFORE the medication will be given. *If written orders are not in place at the school, the parent/guardian will need to come to the school to administer the medication.* Renewal of a long-term medication order is required at the beginning of each year.
- **In addition**, written permission from the parent/guardian of the student requesting that the school district comply with the physician's order is required. "Prescription Medication" forms are available in the nurse's office and the main office.
- Students with chronic illnesses, (e.g. seizure disorders, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, asthma, etc.) who are responsible for self administering their medications should be allowed to continue this practice. Medications will be kept in the school health office or where designated by the building administrator. However, there are some students with asthma that carry personal inhalers with the knowledge and permission of the physician, parent/guardian, school nurse, medical designee, and building administrator.
- Medication must be brought to school in the original container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. Medication should not be transported back and forth on a daily basis, if at all possible.
- Medication will be stored in a locked cabinet.

- Unused medication shall be returned to the parent/guardian for disposition.

The current policy regarding the use of *Non-Prescription Medication* requires that:

- The school nurse, medical designee, or building administrator is notified if a non-prescription medication is to be used during school hours or school activities.
- Parents sign a "Non-Prescription Medication" form available in the nurses' office or the main office including: the name of the medication, time to be given, dosage, and reason for administration. The medication must be given to the nurse, medical designee, or building administrator in the original container and will be kept in the nurse's office.

*It is more desirable that all medications be administered at home if at all possible.*

### GUIDANCE

A Guidance program will be provided through the combined services of classroom teachers and a school-based clinician. Each will deliver unique services to result in a well-rounded guidance program.

The classroom teacher, in the context of Morning Meetings, will deliver whole class guidance services. Following a progression of topics established to meet the needs of each of the classes, teachers will implement a developmentally appropriate program that addresses social skills, emotional development, and career education.

The focus of the school-based clinician will be on specific children needing one-on-one counseling, and when appropriate, small group sessions. The caseload of the counselor will be limited to those students who show the most need and will be determined through collaborative decision making on the part of the staff and the clinician, with parental referrals valued in the determination.

The clinician will also work with families where and when possible to serve the needs of the child and act as a facilitator in connecting families with outside agencies which may assist in meeting the needs of the family as it affects the well being of the student being served.

The school-based clinician will act as a communication link between home and school, and when appropriate will assist classroom teachers in meeting the needs of children.

The clinician will act as a consultant to classroom teachers in assisting in the formulation of a classroom guidance program.

### PUBLIC USE OF FACILITY

The School Board encourages the use of the school facilities by community groups, including religious ones, provided that they do not interfere with school-related activities or result in damage to the building or equipment.

All organizations must complete the "Request for Use of Facility Form". Applications will be obtained from and returned to the office of the Principal. Organizations using the school facilities for profit will be required to provide a certificate of insurance and must pay a fee.

Additional charges may be assessed for custodial, supervisory, or security services as needed. The school district does not assume any liability for the acts of the organization using the facility and that organization must assume liability for any and all damages resulting from improper use.

All groups utilizing the facility shall comply with local, state, and federal laws, and will obey school regulations in regard to smoking and the use of alcoholic beverages. The behavior of all groups utilizing the school facilities will be appropriate to a school. Unruly behavior and language will not be tolerated. Adult leaders must properly supervise all youth groups.

The Principal will maintain and coordinate a calendar of scheduled use of the building. The School Board and Administration have the right to cancel or revoke building usage privileges due to change in school needs or abuse of these privileges.

### FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Parents or guardians have the right to inspect and review all the educational records of their child as well as receive copies of the records as provided by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). A parent or guardian desiring to review the student's records shall make such a request (in writing) to the Building Principal. Any such request shall be complied with within a reasonable amount of time, but in no case more than 45 days after the request has been received.

If the parent or guardian of the student believes that the information contained in the educational records of a student is inaccurate or misleading or violates the privacy or

other rights of the student, they have the right to request that the school amend these records. Such a request must be made to the Building Principal.

If the school refuses to amend the records of the student in accordance with the request, the parent or guardian shall be informed and advised of their right to a hearing under Section 99.21 or P.L. 90-247. The parent or guardian shall be permitted to place in the student record a statement commenting on information within the educational records.

The school shall not disclose personally identifiable information from a student's records without the prior written consent of the parent or guardian. The written consent required for disclosure of the records must be signed and dated by the parent or guardian, and must contain the purpose of the disclosure, and the party or parties to whom the disclosure is to be made. The written consent must be given to the Building Principal.

Parents and guardians have the right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the regulations of FERPA.

#### PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) requires the Middletown Springs Elementary School to notify parents that they have the right to (a) inspect any third-party surveys of students before they are administered, (b) inspect any instructional materials used in the curriculum, (c) be informed of any non-emergency, invasive physical examinations or screenings that are not otherwise permitted or required by State law, including those without parental notification, and (d) be made aware of the collection and use of personal information collected from students for the purposes or marketing that information (except for the purpose of developing educational products or services).

Parents may opt out of a survey or activity by contacting the school office. This requirement applies to any student survey, analysis, evaluation, or activity that concerns one or more of the following eight areas (protected information areas):

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/s;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;

5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent/s; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

### NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT (NCLBA)

As a parent/guardian of a child who attends a school that receives Title I funds, you have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher. Available information could include: (a) if the teacher has met state licensing criteria for the grade level and subject taught, (b) whether the teacher is teaching under a licensure waiver, (c) the teacher's degree major, and (d) whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

Parents must be notified if their child will be taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who has not met the federal requirements for "highly qualified teacher." Parents must also be notified if our school is identified as a school in need of improvement. This notice must explain what this identification means and what will happen as a result.

NCLBA provides that parents of students who are of limited English proficiency (English-language learners) be notified no later than thirty days after the start of the school year that their child has been identified and is in need of services.

### SCHOOL POLICIES

A copy of all school policies is kept in the school office and is available for reference.

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To contact a member of the MSES administration, faculty, or staff via e-mail;  
type the person's: *firstname.lastname@rswsu.org*

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