Elementary, Middle, High School Student/Parent/Community Handbook 2014 –2015

Please read and review this handbook. It is intended to present procedures, rules, and regulations of the Rochester Elementary, Middle and High Schools. It also includes Vermont education Laws and related policies adopted by the Rochester Board.

Please note that revisions to any section of this handbook can be made at any time, at the discretion of the Rochester Elementary, Middle and High School administration and Windsor Northwest Supervisory Union.

Mission

“At Rochester school we believe the qualities of a life-long learner to be: Respect, Ownership, Cooperation, Kindness, Education, and Teamwork.

Respect: Honor personal space and ideas
Ownership: Pride in our environment and belongings
Cooperation: Listening and following directions
Kindness: Being polite and good to others
Education: Value learning and accept challenges
Team: Share, care and work together

Home of the “Rochester Rockets!”
## Rochester School Directory

**Administration Phone:** 767-3161; **Fax:** 767-1130  
**Elem. Bldg. Phone:** 767-4632; **Fax:** 767-3356

Elementary, Middle and High School Starts at 7:45 am, Monday through Friday  
Breakfast Served from 7:30 – 7:45am

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Knight</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Linda Shaw</td>
<td>Special Educator 7-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dea Kimball</td>
<td>Guidance, K-12</td>
<td>Java Hubbard</td>
<td>Elementary Aide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Blair</td>
<td>Admin. Asst./ Bookkeeper</td>
<td>Renee Mongeur</td>
<td>Special Ed. Reading Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meg Allen</td>
<td>Admin. Asst./Registar</td>
<td>Kelley Foy</td>
<td>Title 1 Reading Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary-Ann Schulze</td>
<td>Sped Para-Educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shelley Vanderwende</td>
<td>Special Educator K-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeannette Bair</td>
<td>Library/Media Services, K-12</td>
<td>Kristi Fuller</td>
<td>Food Service Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Braun</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>Julie Taylor</td>
<td>Food Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Bretschneider</td>
<td>Math/Science, 9-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Cruikshank</td>
<td>Grade 3/4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda Gendreau</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shawn Lenihan</td>
<td>Science, 6-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer Matrick</td>
<td>ExCel After School Site Director</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Holly Mugford</td>
<td>Music, K-12</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenna Plouffe</td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelly Stubbins</td>
<td>Math, 7-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cynthia McPhetres</td>
<td>Art, K-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Cole Mason</td>
<td>Industrial Arts, 5-12</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>George Molz</td>
<td>Social Studies, 7-12</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Morse</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terry Paquette</td>
<td>Physical Education, K-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valerie Paul</td>
<td>FCS, Health Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faye Severy</td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kay Stringer</td>
<td>English/Social Studies/Math, 6-8</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Lambert</td>
<td>IT Technician</td>
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### Student Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linda Shaw</td>
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### Food Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kristi Fuller</td>
<td>Food Service Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Taylor</td>
<td>Food Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Custodians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bob Steventon</td>
<td>Maintenance Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Eller</td>
<td>Custodian, full-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenny Settlers</td>
<td>Custodian, part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Potter</td>
<td>Custodian, part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse Potter</td>
<td>Custodian, part-time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For email, place first initial and last name, followed by @wnwsu.org at end of it.

## Windsor Northwest Supervisory Union

Phone: 234-0264 Fax: 234-0261

Superintendent: Meg Allison Powden  
Director of Special Education: Warren Uzzle  
Principal: Catherine Knight  
Director of Information Technology: Jon Gallo

### Rochester School Board

Jolanta Labejsza, Jeff Sherwin, Doug Gorton, Jeff Sherwin, Frank Russell, Amy Wildt

*The Rochester School Board meets the third Tuesday of every month at 6:00pm in the Middle/High School building.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rochester School Mission Statement</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Of Non-Discrimination and Affirmative Action</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice Of Non-Discrimination</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary, Middle and High School Bell Schedule</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrival</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absence/Tardy</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Absences</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absences Will Be Classified As Follows</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absences – Both Excused/Unexcused</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance Review</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truancy Protocol</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missed Conference Concerning Absence/Truancy</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Reasonable Time” for Make-up Work</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dismissal</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Dismissal Procedures</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delayed Opening, Closing &amp; Activity Cancellation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Transportation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randolph Technical Career Center Students</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Drivers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles, Rollerblades, Scooters, etc.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bus Schedules</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning Run Bus Schedules</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon Run Bus Schedules</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food Services</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Life</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed Campus</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication – Classroom Questions</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custody Issues</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Procedures</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Privileges</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students 18 Years of Age or Older</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Rules for Student Activities</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dances</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Service</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Form</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness/Injury</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunizations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Excuses</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medications In School</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Behavior</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screenings</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Physicals</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discipline Procedure</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol, Drugs, and Chemical Abuse</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying/Harassment/Hazing</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyberbullying</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuum of Behaviors</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats and Threatening Behavior</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Abuse and Mandated Reporting</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Support</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 504 Of The Federal Rehabilitation Act, 1973</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Find</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Services</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Education Services</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academics</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Integrity</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics and Homework</td>
<td>32-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Documents Online</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Online Grades</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Problems</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterms and Finals for High School</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades and Report Cards</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Obtain Homework During Absences</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incompletes and Grades</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Honor Society George E. Lamb Chapter</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Honor Society Selection Procedure</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling Changes: Adding/Dropping Classes</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Records</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Hall</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook and School Materials</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School District Policy Graduation Requirements</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course credits</td>
<td>38-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guidance Department</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counseling Office</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extra-Curricular Activities, including Athletics 42

- Philosophy 42
- Goals and Beliefs for Rochester Teams and Students 43
- Basic Student Prerequisites for 44
- Academic Eligibility 44
- Extracurricular Eligibility Agreement 44
- Academic Make-up Work 45
- Homework Club 45
- Training Rules 45
- Health & Safety 46
- Equipment 46
- Student “On/Off Campus Misconduct Policy” 46
- Safety of Student Participants 47
- Commitment to Extra-Curricular Activity 47
- Uniforms 47
- Travel 48
- Varsity Letters, Awards, and Athlete Recognition 48
- Summer/”Off-Season” Athletics 48
- VPA Misconduct Rules 48
- Local Misconduct Rules 49
- Confidentiality 49
- Adult Facilitator’s/Coach’s
  - Responsibility to Parents/Caregivers 49
- Coaches and Practices 49
- VPA State Tournament Participation 49
- Volunteer Protocols & Procedures 49-51

Web Publishing Guidelines 51

Computer Network Acceptable Use Policy 51

School Board Policies 53-56

Additional Information Required for Handbook 57

Federal Items 58
Rochester School Mission Statement

The Rochester School promotes excellence in education by providing innovative, diverse, and challenging educational opportunities for each student. A quality education is delivered in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support among students, faculty, staff, families and community members, allowing students to develop to their fullest potential both academically and socially.

ROCHESTER SCHOOL COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS:

Facility and staff agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of their ability:

- To encourage a lifelong interest in learning.
- To teach academic skills in reading, literacy, writing, math, science, and social studies.
- To appreciate individual learning styles.
- To develop independence and responsibility.
- To have students learn to get along with others.
- To develop communication skills.
- To teach students to learn to make decisions and choices.
- To foster problem solving skills.
- To develop technology skills by using computers and other electronic devices.
- To understand and appreciate other cultures and individual differences.
- To become aware of world issues and the influences on all of us.
- To understand our responsibility to respect and preserve the natural environment.
- To develop an appreciation of music and art.
- To have students learn about good health, including personal health, and alcohol and drug awareness.
- To develop physical fitness skills.
- To learn good sportsmanship.

Student agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of their ability:

- To come to school ready to learn and work hard.
- To bring necessary materials, completed assignments, and homework.
- To know and follow school and class rules.
- To communicate regularly with my parents and teachers about school experiences so that they can help me to be successful in school.
- To limit TV watching and instead, study or read every day after school.
- To respect the school, classmates, staff, and families.

Families agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of their ability:

- To provide a quiet time and place for homework, and monitor TV viewing.
- To read to my child or encourage my child to read every day.
- To ensure that my child attends school every day, gets adequate sleep, regular medical attention, and proper nutrition.
- To regularly monitor my child’s progress in school.
- To participate at school in activities such as school decision making, volunteering, and/or attending parent-teacher conferences.
- To communicate the importance of education and learning to my child.
- To respect the school, staff, students, and families.
Policy Of Non-Discrimination And Affirmative Action

It is the policy of the Rochester School not to discriminate on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, age, or handicap in its educational programs, services, activities, or employment practices as required by the statutes and laws of the State of Vermont, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Inquiries regarding compliance with any state or federal statues or laws may be directed to Catherine Knight, Principal, Rochester School, 222 South Main Street, Rochester, VT 05767 in writing, or by calling (802) 767-3161, or to Meg Powden, Superintendent of Schools, Windsor Northwest Supervisory Union, P. O. Box 830, Pittsfield, Vermont, 05762, telephone number (802)746-7974. You also have a right to contact the Regional Director, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, J.W. McCormack P.O.C.H. Room 222, Boston, Massachusetts 02109-4557.

Notice Of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of the Windsor Northwest Supervisory Union (Bethel, Granville, Hancock, Pittsfield, Rochester, and Stockbridge Town School Districts) that no otherwise qualified person shall be deprived of employment or education by reason of handicap. These Town School Districts do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs and activities.

Any person who is or believes himself or herself to be a qualified handicapped person or is the parent, guardian, foster parents, or surrogate of a person believed to be a qualified handicapped student in need of special services to assure a free appropriate public education should identify said student or self to the 504 Coordinator (Superintendent of Schools) for assessment and placement. The Coordinator will refer the request to the appropriate building Instructional Support Team (IST). The IST will follow standard procedures in assessing the request.

Anyone who believes that he or she or a qualified handicapped person has been denied free appropriate public education may request a copy of the 504 Grievance Procedure from the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent, Meg Powden, may be contacted at the Windsor Northwest Supervisory Union Office, P.O. Box 830, Pittsfield, Vermont, 05762 or by telephone at (802)746-7974. The 504 Coordinator will respond within the time period prescribed by statute.

Inquiries concerning the application of nondiscrimination policies may also be referred to the Regional Director, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, J.W. McCormack P.O.C.H. Room 222, Boston, Massachusetts 02109-4557
**Elementary, Middle and High School Schedule**

**School Schedule for Monday – Friday**

Students **MUST** be in their 1st Period Class at 7:50 am to **NOT** be considered tardy or absent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>8 – 8:39 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>8:40 – 9:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Break</strong></td>
<td>9:15 – 9:25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9:27 – 10:17 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10:19 – 11:09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>11:11 – 12:07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Lunch</td>
<td>12:01 – 12:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K – 5 Lunch</td>
<td>12:08 – 12:38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>12:38 – 1:28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>1:30 – 2:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b</td>
<td>2:15 – 2:58 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Arrival**

Students are expected to arrive between 7:30 and 7:45 am. Breakfast is provided between 7:30 am and 7:45 am for both the Elementary and Middle/HS each school day. **Children who do not ride a bus should arrive at school no earlier than 7:30 am, the school doors won’t be open until 7:30.**

Elementary, Middle/HS students **MUST** be in their first period by 7:45. Students arriving after 7:50 am are considered tardy and must check in at the School office.

If you are late to school, you should present a note from your parents explaining why you were late. Reasons for excused lateness are the same as for excused absences. If you do not have a written excuse or the school has not received a phone call, your lateness will be marked “unexcused”.

**Any student who has 3 unexcused tardies will automatically receive a detention to be served after school or at recess.**

**IF YOUR CHILD IS GOING TO BE ABSENT OR TARDY, PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL ANY TIME BEFORE 7:50 A.M.**

Call: 767-4632 or the Main Office: 767-3161 (This procedure is not only to inform us but also confirms your child’s safety)
State Statute § 4321 of the General Laws of Vermont requires a minimum of 175 days of regular school attendance by persons under the age of sixteen. Specific legislation notwithstanding, the administrations and faculty of Rochester School believe that regular school attendance is necessary in order to maximize student achievement and the overall learning experience.

You may be required to supply the school with physician’s certificates for all absences due to illness. Your parents will be notified of your excessive absenteeism, and they will be invited to work with the school to improve your attendance at school.

**Attendance VT Public Law § 1121. Attendance by children of school age required**

A person having the control of a child between the ages of six and 16 years shall cause the child to attend a public school, an approved or recognized independent school or a home study program for the full number of days for which that school is held, unless the child
1. Is mentally or physically unable to so attend; or
2. Has completed the tenth grade; or
3. Is excused by the superintendent or a majority of the school directors as provided in this chapter; or
4. Is enrolled in and attending a postsecondary school, as defined in subdivision 176(b)(1) of this title, which is approved or accredited in Vermont or another state.

**IF YOUR CHILD IS GOING TO BE ABSENT OR TARDY, PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL ANY TIME BEFORE 8:00 A.M.**

Call: 767-4632 or the Main Office: 767-3161 (This procedure is not only to inform us but also confirms your child’s safety)

**Absence/Tardy**

It is our shared responsibility to be sure that every student is safe and accounted for on every school day. Students are considered tardy if they are not present in classroom by 7:50am. Students arriving after 7:50 am are considered late and will be marked tardy. **Parents and guardians are asked to call the school secretary between 7:30 – 7:50 AM if their child will be tardy or absent for the day.** If your student arrives late or will be leaving early they must bring a note from home and sign the in/out log provided at the office. A **SPECIFIC** written explanation of absence must be submitted to the school office within two (2) days of a student’s return to school.

If your child is not in school and we cannot contact a parent/guardian, we may report the unverified absence to the appropriate authorities to ensure the student’s safety and prevent truancy.

**NOTE:** Students with an unexcused absence for any part of the school day will not be allowed to participate in any school sponsored activities during that day or evening.

**Extended Absences**

Families of students in grades K – 12 should contact the Principal to request permission for an excused absence for family emergencies or trips.

1. You need to make arrangements for a planned absence well in advance. Approximately one week before your first day of absence, you need to get a **Leave of Absence** form from the office secretary. This form is to be completed by you, your parents, and your teachers before it is submitted to the office. Every effort should be made to get assignments in advance of your planned absence, and to complete the required work while you are away from school.

2. When you return, you are responsible for checking with your teachers to be sure that you have completed all work missed during the time of your absence.

3. Work missed must be completed by the end of the first week (5 school days) following your return to school, unless special arrangements are made with your teacher(s).
4. Even if all work is made up, it is very possible that your grades, as well as your future comprehension of course concepts, may be adversely affected by an extended absence.

**Absences Will Be Classified As Follows**

**Approved Absences:** Absences as deemed appropriate and/or necessary. For example: absences caused by illness, death in the family, medical appointments, or religious observances that cannot otherwise be scheduled after school hours; however, these are still subject to approval.

**Truancy (unapproved absences):** Any absence that does not fit into the approved absence category outlined above shall be considered truancy. In addition, if parents/guardians choose to remove their child from school for a non-approved reason, that absence will be considered unapproved.

- Five tardies are equal to one absence for elementary students, and three tardies are equal to one absence for middle/high school students.
- For students marked present for the day, any unauthorized or unapproved absence from class or study hall (i.e.: cutting/skipping) will result in a detention.
- School-related activities that cause a student to miss an academic class will be considered excused absences.

**Absences – Both Excused/Unexcused**

**Three absences:** Start the truancy process for semester long courses with a letter issued to the family and a teacher conference with the student.

**Five absences:** Start the truancy process for year-long courses and elementary students with a letter issued to the family and a teacher conference with the student.

**Seven absences:** The truancy process continues for full year courses and elementary students, with a letter issued to the family and a request for doctor’s note(s) for any future absences and teacher conference with the student. A parent meeting may be requested with appropriate school personnel. In addition, for half year courses, an official attendance review is initiated.

**Ten absences:** The truancy process continues with a letter issued to the family, if appropriate, a student/parent conference is scheduled with administration, teachers and representatives from outside agencies and programs to review attendance.

**Twenty absences:** The truancy process continues with a letter issued to a family. At this time, a referral may be made to the Department of Students and Families (DCF). A final review of absences will be made with administrator, teacher and representatives from outside agencies and programs. Loss of credit will be determined.

**Dependent on the DCF Assessment:** Affidavit goes to Windsor County State’s Attorney.

**Dependent on the State’s Attorney assessment:** The State Attorney makes the decision whether the case should go to Windsor County Family Court or District Court.

**Dependent on the Court’s decision:** The District Court has the option to give the family a $1000 fine or develop another alternative sanction, which could mean the family is court-ordered to be involved with DCF.

**Attendance Review**

Rochester School recognizes that under certain circumstances students will be absent from school. All absences will be subject to review by the Attendance Review Committee, which will be made up of Administration, teachers, guidance counselor and nurse. Rescinded credit can be reinstated upon the recommendation of that committee.

This Committee, after consultation with the classroom teacher, in reviewing a student’s appeal, may recommend to:

- deny course credit and provide the student with an alternate assignment for the remainder of the year
- deny course credit but allow the student to remain in the course under an attendance contract
- allow a student to continue to attend a class for credit under a strict attendance contract
- grant the appeal

**Truancy Protocol**
This truancy protocol utilizes a team approach, if necessary, to explore with the student and family what obstacles are hindering school attendance. An individualized plan may be developed to increase school attendance. Follow-up steps may be set to assess if the plan is working for the student and the family. Records are kept in school files of all contacts related to this protocol made with the family of the student.

**Team Membership:** The protocol initially relies on school staff to ensure attendance. If needed at a later stage, staff from state and community agencies, as well as parent liaison supports will assist.

### Missed Conference Concerning Absence/Truancy

If a parent missed an attendance review conference regarding tardiness or absences, a follow-up letter will be sent. If the conference is not rescheduled and attended within 10 days of the originally scheduled meeting, DCF may be contacted.

### “Reasonable Time” for Make-up Work

For any absence from class, it is your responsibility to make the necessary arrangements to make up any work that you missed. You have two days to make up your work for each day of absence.

**Approved Absence:** It is the student’s responsibility to meet with/contact teachers to make up all the assigned work in accordance with the make-up police outlined below. Failure to make up work will result in zeros from classes missed, if deemed appropriate by the teacher.

**Unapproved Absence:** A teacher may, but is not obligated to, provide an opportunity to a student who has an unapproved absence to make up the work in the classes missed.

### Dismissal

Dismissal is at 2:50pm for students in Pre-K Kindergarten through 12. Student drivers cannot leave the school property until after the buses have departed. Elementary parents are asked to park in the high school lot and come to the elementary school to pick up their child.

The school district employs the use of AlertNow, an automated telephone service which calls staff and students’ families for notification of emergency school closings. School closings will be announced over the following radio stations: WCVR-FM (102.3) WDEV-AM (550) WJJR-FM (98.1) (103.9), WZRT-FM (97-1). Technical Center buses will not run from Rochester if the School is closed. The Rochester Road Commissioner will inform the Superintendent of adverse road conditions. Even if school is open:

1. Buses may not run their complete route if drivers determine that hazardous conditions exist.
2. Parents have the right to keep their children home if conditions are hazardous in their area.

### Early Dismissal Procedures

If you need an early dismissal from school, abide by the following procedures:

1. Bring in a note from your parents requesting an early dismissal. The note should specify the reason for the early dismissal and the time you need to be released. The note should be given to the office as soon as you arrive at school in the morning.
2. You will be given a pass to report to the office at the appropriate time for dismissal. Wait for the office to call to release you. Only after you have properly signed out via the office, are you excused to leave school. Once you have signed out, you must leave school grounds.
3. If you return to school the same day, you must report directly to the office to get signed in.
Delayed Opening, Closing & Activity Cancellation

In the event that school or other activities must be delayed or closed due to inclement weather or other emergency situations you will receive telephone notification by the Alert Now messaging system. This information may be broadcast on the following radio/television stations as well:

- WJJR (FM): Rutland (98.1)
- Z97 (FM): Rutland (97.1)
- WDEV (AM) (FM): Waterbury/Warren (550) (96.1)
- FROGGY (FM): Barre (100.9)
- WCAX: Channel 3
- WPTZ: Channel 5

If school is delayed for one (1) hour, bus pick will be one (1) hour later than usual. If school is delayed for two (2) hours, bus pick up will be two (2) hours later than usual.

Transportation

Bus Transportation

Bus Routes: For homes beyond the immediate one-mile downtown area surrounding the school there are several bus routes. The full schedule is available in the office.

Bus transportation is a privilege available for students who are not within a safe walking distance to school. Children assigned to a particular bus are not permitted to ride a different bus or get off at a different stop without permission from a parent/guardian and school authorities. **Please call or send in a note to request a change in your child’s bus or bus stop.**

1. The driver of the bus is the adult in charge; all directives given by the driver pertinent to the safety of the students and the maintenance and cleanliness of the vehicle are to be obeyed promptly and with courtesy.
2. Except in cases where physical harm or severe damage is involved, the driver of the bus will adhere to the following steps in addressing violations of the established school behavior guidelines:
   a. Verbal warning
   b. Disciplinary notice written by the driver and sent home to the parents by the Principal
   c. Suspension from the bus for a designated period
3. In situations where physical harm or severe damage is involved, the driver has the authority to immediately suspend a rider from the bus; the number of days of the suspension will be determined through consultation with the Principal at the earliest possible opportunity following the infraction.
4. Students and their parents are financially responsible for vandalism or intentional damage to the school bus.

The Principal may suspend a student from bus service and/or school at any time for inappropriate behavior.

Randolph Technical Career Center (RTCC) Students

Students riding the Technical Center bus may not drive a car to the Technical Center unless prior written permission has been granted by the Administration. If a student is driving to RTCC, he/she may take another student passenger only if both sets of parents give written permission. Required forms are available from the RTCC office. Students must follow RTCC procedures regarding taking or being passenger(s).

All RTCC students are expected to remain in a designated area while waiting to board the bus to attend RTCC. Morning announcements will be posted on the office window, please make sure you read them.

Upon returning to Rochester from RTCC, these students will either transfer to their regular school bus or leave school grounds via private transportation.

RTCC students are discouraged from driving their cars to the Randolph Technical Career Center. They may do so only with parental permission and permission of the administration from each school. Passengers are not allowed to ride with these students without expressed, written permission from the parents of the students involved and
Student Drivers

The Administration reserves the right to regulate the use of cars and to enforce these driving rules on the school grounds. Speed limit on school grounds – 10 mph. Drivers who drive dangerously or who violate the rules listed below will be prohibited from driving on school property.

• Student drivers must complete an application for a parking permit and submit copies of their insurance and driver’s license with it. Students are expected to have the parking permits on their cars while on school grounds.
• Students are NOT to drive off school grounds during the school day without permission of the Administration. Signing out is “NOT” considered permission.
• Students must park in the student area and take everything needed for the day with them. Permission for students to return to parked cars will be given by the staff only in the event of an emergency.
• Cars without parking permits will be investigated.

Bicycles, Rollerblades, Scooters, etc.

Students are allowed to ride their bicycles to school with parent/guardian permission. Scooters and bikes must be “walked” on school grounds during school hours, approximately 7:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Vehicles should be in safe condition, and helmets are required.

Bus Schedules

Morning Run Bus Schedules
• Mr. Downs – Route 100/Stockbridge/Pittsfield/River
  Mr. Downs’ will leave the Pittsfield Village Green at 6:35, leave the Stockbridge School at 6:50, Jerusalem Hill at 7:04, Austin Hill (Rte 73) at 7:10, Bingo at 7:17, Corporation Road at 7:20 and will arrive at school at 7:25.
• Mr. Schulze – Hill/Route 125/Hancock/Granville
  Mr. Schulze’s morning route will start at the Town Line Road – top of Quarry Hill at 6:35, the Granville Post Office Hill Road at 6:53, Bowl Mill at 6:55, Route 125/Hancock Hotel at 7:04, then Route 125 to foot of Hancock Mountain at 7:10, then back down to Route 100 at 7:15, then Deerings at 7:18, arrive at the school at 7:25.

Afternoon Run Bus Schedules
• Mr. Downs – Route 100/Stockbridge/Pittsfield/River
  Mr. Downs’ bus will leave the Rochester school at 3:05, is at Austin Hill at 3:09, Bing at 3:15, Corporation Road at 3:18, Jerusalem Hill at 3:26, Pittsfield Village Green at 3:40, and he will arrive at the Stockbridge School at approximately 3:50.
• Mr. Schulze – Hill/Route 125/Hancock/Granville
  Mr. Schulze’s bus will leave Rochester School at 3:05, arrive at Churchville Road at 3:13, Hancock Hotel at 3:18, Route 125 Turnaround at 3:26, Bowl Mill at 3:35, top of Quarry Hill Road (Town Line/Oak Lodge) at 4:00, then back to school.

If you have any questions or would like to see if your child is scheduled to be picked up, please call either Harvey Downs at 767-4295 or Dick Schulze at 767-3201.

Food Services

It shall be the policy of the Rochester School to comply with the federal rules and regulations prescribed for the operation of child nutrition programs (i.e. school lunch, breakfast) as stipulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and related state rules and regulations as stipulated by the Vermont State Department of Education.
Current rules and regulations are on file in the office of the Superintendent of Schools.

The Rochester Nutrition Program will operate with a procedural set of guidelines established annually by the Rochester School Board. Payment for breakfast and lunch servings will be required at the time a student receives a meal. To avoid accumulation of charges, which can lead to large deficits for the School Nutrition Program, students and families are expected to maintain a positive balance at all times. If a student's balance becomes low or falls into negative numbers, a bill will be sent home.

Forms for reduced price and free meals are sent home in the first day of school packet and are available in each office throughout the year. All information on the free or reduced application is kept confidential. Eligibility is determined by the amount of money earned in the household and the number of people living in the household. All information on the free or reduced application is kept confidential. Please take advantage of this program if you qualify. A lunch menu is given to each elementary student to take home, and also placed on the Rochester website (www.rochesterschool.org). Middle and High school students can pick a copy of the menu up in the high school office.

Students are expected to:
- wait in the serving line quietly.
- treat themselves and others with respect at all times.
- sit at tables and eat breakfast/lunch quietly and remain seated until they are dismissed.
- leave the table and the floor/ground near them clean and free of litter both inside and outside.
- clean up after themselves, which includes wiping the tables before leaving the cafeteria.
- pay for breakfast/lunch before or when they receive it.

No food or drink is allowed outside of the cafeteria at anytime, unless specific permission has been granted by a teacher or administration. Bag lunches carried to and from lockers are exceptions to this general rule. Every effort will be made to support this practice.

The price for meals is as follows:

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<tr>
<td>Student break</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>Student lunch</td>
<td>$3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult break</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>Adult lunch</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Lunch</td>
<td>$.40</td>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>$.30</td>
</tr>
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Beverage and food consumption is NOT allowed in classrooms, hallways, auditorium or the Library.

**Student Life**

**Closed Campus**

Rochester School is a closed campus. Students are NOT permitted to leave the school building or grounds during school hours. Elementary students will not be permitted to leave the school building during school time unless they are signed out at the school office by their parents or a person designated by their parents, or they are with school personnel. Middle/High school students are not permitted to leave the school building during school hours unless his/her parent(s)/legal guardian(s) provide a signed note explaining why the student needs to leave and the note is previously approved by the administration. The student must officially sign out when leaving the building and sign back in upon returning to the building on the form provided in the office. Students who have been granted the 18-year old right according to procedures outlined in this handbook must also adhere to the regulation referenced above. If a student leaves school property on his/her own accord the parents will be notified, and if necessary, law enforcement will be called.

Please **DO NOT** send notes or telephone for your child to walk or drive off campus for lunch, snacks, or any other purpose other than prearranged appointments (such as doctor, dentist, etc.).
Communication – Classroom Questions

If you have a question or concern regarding your child, your child’s classroom, or his/her progress, please talk first with the teacher, then to the Principal. Should you have further questions, please bring your concerns to the attention of the Principal. Should your concerns continue after this level of discussion, you are encouraged to bring them to the attention of the Superintendent and, ultimately, the School Board.

Custody Issues

If there are any safety concerns or changes in guardianship regarding your child, please notify the school office. If there are any legal documents (i.e., court custody documents, restraining orders, etc.) that the school should have on file for the safety and well-being of your child, please bring these to the school office. Please be aware that non-custodial parents are legally to be kept informed of a student’s progress, any special meetings, and school events.

NOTE: Non-custodial parents are legally to be kept informed of a student’s progress, any special meetings, and school events.

Daily Procedures

Libraries and Computer Center: The Libraries and Computer Centers are places for research, study, and reading. Students will use these Centers under the supervision of an adult. The school has established the following rules for the Libraries and Computer Center:

- Respect other people
- Keep volume of talking low
- Respect property
- Check out all materials
- No sitting on tables

Borrowing books from our Libraries is a privilege given to all Rochester students. To insure that the collection is fully available to all our students, it is required that all materials be checked out and returned when due. You may check out books for a two-week period. Books may be renewed twice or for a longer period of time if the books are needed to complete a specific assignment.

Some books may not be removed from the Libraries and Computer Centers. Certain magazines, reference books, and encyclopedias may be checked out overnight. These must be returned to the library media center the morning of the next school day, before first period.

AV equipment and software may be issued to you but are subject to teacher and librarian approval. Library privileges will not be granted to those students owing books to the school from previous semester until those books are returned or paid for. You are responsible for all books checked out in your name. If a book is lost, it should be reported to the library staff immediately. If it is not found, you will be assessed a reasonable fee based on the current value of the book. If the book turns up at a later date, a refund will be given to you.

Lockers: Lockers and books are the property of the school and are loaned to the students for their use during the school year. Use of lockers is a privilege, not a right. It is the responsibility of the students to treat this property with respect. If at any time during the school year a student fails to do so, he or she will immediately be billed for the damage caused. To better protect possessions, the school strongly suggests that lockers be kept locked at all times when they are not in use and that students:

- do not reveal their combinations to anyone;
- should not put anything in lockers that is against the law or school policy. The administration has the right to search a locker if there is reasonable suspicion that it contains anything that is illegal or that might threaten the health or safety of students, faculty, or staff;
- the school, administrators, faculty, and staff are not responsible for any items lost from lockers.
Notices/Posters: Non-school notices may be circulated and/or posted in the buildings with the permission of the Principal or his/her designee. The initials of the Principal or his/her designee and date must appear on all posted material. District-wide notices must have the approval of the Superintendent.

Pets in School: In general, pets or animals should not be brought to school. Any potential animal visits must be cleared through the school nurse and administration.

Playground/Play Structures: During school hours, the playground and play structure are for the use of the Kindergarten through grade 5 students. Middle School students may use the swings before school and at lunch.

Right to Constitutionally Protected Prayer & Religious Beliefs & Practices: Neither the Rochester School District nor the Windsor Northwest Supervisory Union has any policy or practice that restricts participation in constitutionally protected prayer. The school neither influences nor interferes with students regarding religious beliefs and practices. Religious groups or clubs may utilize the school on the same basis as non-religious groups and clubs.

School Property – Books and Materials: Textbooks are provided by the school for use during the year. All textbooks are to be neatly covered by students and care should be taken to prevent damage and excessive wear. Students will be held financially responsible for books lost or damaged. Please make every effort to take care of materials assigned to you.

Student Assistance Program: Numerous services and programs are available in school to assist students and their families with academic, social, and emotional issues. Comprehensive guidance and counseling services are available to all students in grades K-12. The Principal, nurse, counselors, teachers, and support staff are all available to listen to students and provide guidance as appropriate.

Telephone Use: School telephones are for school business and emergency use only. Students may not use the school phone for personal business.

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REMINDER: Cell phones may be used before school, during lunch, or after school. Cell phones WILL NOT be used in a classroom unless permission is expressly granted by the teacher for educational purposes. If a cell phone is taken out in class without permission, the teacher is required to take the cell phone from the student for the remainder of the class. Upon second offense, the teacher will turn the phone in to the office for the remainder of the day.

The student will then be able to pick up the cell phone at the end of the day.

Visitors: At Rochester School we welcome and encourage parents to visit. If a parent wishes to talk with a teacher, please make arrangements in advance so the educational day is not interrupted. Each visitor must report to the office to register and to obtain a visitor tag to wear. Visitor tags must be visible at all times. Each visitor will sign out when s/he is ready to leave the school. Middle/High School students who plan on having a visitor must complete a visitor request form 24 hours in advance of the requested visit with all teacher signatures. Visitor request forms can be found in the high school office. Individual visitors intending to be present for more than one day will require permission from the principal.

Volunteers: We encourage parent and community volunteers in school. There are a variety of ways that volunteers can assist at school such as assisting teachers with projects, reading with students, typing stories for students, and helping in the library are a few examples. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, contact the school or your child’s classroom teacher.

Senior Privileges

Senior Privileges are decided at the beginning of the school year. Each year, it is the responsibility of the Senior
Class to draw up a petition to the Administration and Staff describing and requesting Senior Privileges. The Board has given the School Administration sole authority over these privileges for approval. Seniors must be in good academic standing (i.e., passing all classes) each week to continue to use Senior Privileges. Staff members are responsible for advising the parent and cc’ing the senior advisor AND the principal via e-mail (or letter if no email) when a student is not passing their class and have given them ample opportunities to do so. The privileges will be revoked until the principal receives e-mail notification from the teacher of the failing class that the student is in good standing. IF this happens twice in one quarter, all privileges will be suspended for the remainder of that quarter. Tier 2 Behavior Referrals can also stop senior privileges temporarily.

**Students 18 Years of Age or Older**

Parents/guardians who would like the school to accept the signature of their 18-year-old daughter/son in lieu of their own signatures should contact the Principal in writing. Prior written authorization is necessary. Such an authorization releases the school from its obligations to contact the parents or guardians regarding grades, attendance, or conduct of the 18-year-old.

The school will deal directly with the 18-year-old student regarding these matters. However, the school will continue to furnish any information to the parents/guardians upon their written request. A listing of 18-year-old students who have met the above-referenced requirements will be maintained in the school office.

The school district’s discipline policy, rules of conduct, academic eligibility standards, and attendance requirements shall apply to all students regardless of age. Except as provided in this policy, report cards, discipline reports, and other communications from the school will be provided to responsible parents or guardians of all students regardless of the age of those students.

Permission slips for participation in field trips or other school activities may be signed by 18-year-old students. Eighteen-year-old students may sign their own absence and late notes, but parents will be notified of absences and tardy incidents for their 18-year-old children on the same basis as other students.

Students who are 18 years old or older may request in a manner designated by the Superintendent that all communications from the school be made to them and not to their parents. These requests will be granted by the Superintendent or his or her designee only when the student’s responsible parents or guardians agree in writing or when the student shows that he or she is not a dependent student as defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code.

The rules and regulations at Rochester School are applicable for all students. However, when a student reaches the age of 18, the rights accorded to and the consent required of the parent or guardian shall thereafter only be accorded to and required of the student, except the record of a dependent eligible student (as defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code) may be disclosed to the parents or guardians of that student without the consent of that student. Eligible students may sign all school documents ordinarily requiring a parent/guardian signature.

**Basic Rules for Student Activities**

Student conduct at school functions must reflect good citizenship. All existing school rules and regulations remain in effect. Any student whose behavior is disruptive, dangerous, or detrimental to the Rochester School community shall forfeit participation in or admittance to such events for a length of time to be determined in conference between the principal, the student and the parents/legal guardians of the offender. This includes athletic, social, and cultural events, or on a bus transporting students. It shall be within the discretion of the principal to place a student on probation for a first offense. Subsequent infractions of a similar nature by a student will result in further disciplinary action which could include temporary or permanent removal of bus privileges and/or school-related function attendance/participation privileges.

1. The behavior of all students and guests is subject to school rules. This includes all outside areas, such as the parking lot. Smoking and the use of drugs and alcohol are illegal and are, therefore, prohibited.
2. If a student placed on out-of-school suspension, he/she is not permitted to attend or participate in school activities or athletic events until his/her suspension has been cleared following a successful conference.
involving the student’s parents, and the Principal.
3. All school rules, regulations, and policies that apply to on-campus functions and activities will also apply to Rochester-sponsored functions and activities that are held away from the school. Such activities or events include, but are not limited to, away games, the Prom, field trips, etc.
4. On the day of the activity, the student is required to be in school and attend all scheduled classes. If the student needs to be absent for all or part of the day, she/heneed to obtain prior written approval from the school administrator to do so. If the dance or activity is scheduled for a weekend or other non-school day, the student must have attended school and all of his/her classes the last school day before the event in order to be eligible to attend or participate. If the student misses school or classes because of a suspension, he/she will be considered absent, and the requirements above will be applicable.
5. Refreshments may be served in the lobby. No food or drink is to be taken into the auditorium.

Dances

We limit student’s guests to middle and high school-aged people only (no out-of-high-school aged guests), with the exception of Prom.

School dances and other school-sponsored social activities are encouraged at Rochester School. We expect appropriate behavior from our students at these events according to the guidelines set forth below.

1. At least two weeks before the dance, a student representing the group wishing to sponsor a dance will consult with the Principal to obtain a tentative date.
2. At least one week prior to the date, a list of at least four adult chaperones will be submitted to the Principal for approval. The chaperone list must include the name(s) of two of the teachers sponsoring the group. Only staff members can be chaperones. Only after this list is approved, can the dance be publicized. Chaperones will be on duty throughout the entire dance.
3. Students must sign in at the dance with the time they arrive and must indicate the time they leave. The school is NOT responsible for calling the parents/guardians when the students leave. No student who leaves may be re-admitted to the dance. A directory with all student phone numbers and other emergency information will be obtained from the school office by the sponsoring teacher chaperone, maintained through the evening of the dance, and returned to the school office the following school day.
4. Unless otherwise announced, a student may bring one (1) guest who attends another school to a school activity. In order to bring a guest he/she must pre-register him or her at least two days before the activity, and accept the responsibility of ensuring that he or she follows established rules.
5. A law enforcement officer or school administrator is to be present at all school dances, but does not count as a chaperone.
6. Students will not be admitted after 8:00pm unless permission from the administrator or designee has been received. When students leave the dance, they must leave the school grounds and will not be readmitted.
7. No smoking or drinking is allowed at a dance either inside or outside the building by either students or adults.
8. Students who come to a dance under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be detained until their parents pick them up and will be subject to disciplinary and legal action. Any student who brings alcohol and/or drugs into a dance will be subject to disciplinary and legal action.
9. Chaperones must leave on approved alternative lighting throughout the dance.
10. Dance committees must make arrangement with class advisors and/or custodians for clean-up following the dance.
11. Dress worn to dances must be consistent with the school dress code.
12. Hours: Students must be in school the entire day of the evening that the dance is scheduled in order to attend. Certain exceptions may be granted with the prior approval of the Principal. The times for evening events are as follows: Dances: 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Other Events: As announced. Note: It is important that you arrange for rides in advance and that the person who will take you home is at the school at the time the event ends.
   a. Class or organization-sponsored dances must not exceed 3 hours and must end by 11 p.m.
   b. The Junior Prom will not exceed 4 hours and will conclude by 12 midnight.
13. Once you have entered a school event, you may not leave until it is time for you to go home. If you leave an after-school or evening event, including dances, you may not return, even if you are willing to pay a
second admission. Once you leave the event, you are to go home; you are not permitted to hang around the school grounds waiting for friends to join you.

14. No middle-school students shall be in attendance at the Junior Prom.

15. Invited guests shall be required to abide by all school dance regulations as described above. If a student would like to invite a guest (any non-Rochester School student) to a dance, he/she should submit in advance the guest's name, his/her parent's name, and phone number to the Principal for approval.

16. All hallways will be closed during dances. Entrance will be through the elementary school lobby. You will not be permitted to go to your locker during a dance. Any areas of the school building that are not being used for the dance or activity are off-limits. Loitering in the parking lots or on other areas of the school grounds is not permitted.

17. Proceeds from the dance must be locked by a Staff member securely at school and turned into the office by lunch on the next school day or future dances will not be approved.

Health Service

The State of Vermont requires that a school nurse be a Registered Nurse with a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing. The Rochester School Nurse is a full time position that covers the K-12th grade students. The role of the school nurse includes, but is not limited to the following: providing health services for illness and injuries, administering medications, performing mandated hearing and vision screenings, developing and implementing individual health care plans, maintaining student immunization and health records, working with the Department of Health to manage reportable communicable diseases, and being a health education resource for students, staff, and parents/guardians.

The school nurse serves as a direct link between physicians, families, and community agencies to assure access and continuity of health care for the students. The primary goal of the nurse is to maintain the health, safety, and wellness of the entire school community.

Emergency Form

1. At the beginning of every school year, parents/guardians are asked to fill out an Emergency Form for each of their students who will be attending school. As well as contact information, it is very important to fill out the following sections: health concerns/allergies, the name of the medications and the dosages that a student takes regularly, emergency medications if applicable, health insurance information, permission to administer “as needed” medication, the names and contact numbers of both their physician and their dentist as well as the date of the last exam for each, and a signature giving permission for emergency room treatment if we are unable to reach you.

2. This information is confidential and is kept in the nurse’s office. Please report any change of contact information immediately to the school secretaries (Elementary 767-4632 and High School 767-31361) so that we can always reach you in case of an emergency.

Illness/Injury

1. Students should remain at home if they have a high fever, a persistent cough, an undiagnosed rash, symptoms of a contagious disease, or are vomiting. Please inform the secretary as early as possible if your child will be absent (or tardy) for the school day and the reason for the absence.

2. If an illness or injury will cause a prolonged absence from school or from the physical education class, please have the physician write a note to the school nurse with the diagnosis, the treatment, and if applicable, the anticipated duration of restricted activity. Please remember that a second note from the physician will be needed when they are able to resume the physical education class.

3. Parents/Guardians are asked to notify the school nurse if your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease or has been put on antibiotic therapy. Some examples of communicable diseases or conditions are: Chicken Pox, Mononucleosis, Pertussis, Strep Infection, Ringworm, Conjunctivitis (pink eye), Scabies, Impetigo, Measles, Mumps, Influenza, Fifth Disease, and Lice.

4. If a student becomes ill or injured at school, a parent/guardian will be notified to transport the student home. If
a parent/guardian is unable to be reached, then the next contact name on the Emergency Card will be notified.

5. In the case of an emergency when a physician’s care is deemed necessary and a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the school nurse will either transport the student to the Emergency Room at the Gifford Hospital Medical Center or call the White River Ambulance depending on the situation. Every year Parents/Guardians are asked to sign the emergency treatment section of the Emergency Card, which allows the hospital to treat the student without the parent/guardian present.

**Immunizations**

According to the VT Department of Health regulations, all students must have either received the State mandated immunizations, be in the process of receiving them, or have a signed Immunization Exemption Form on file in order to attend school. The nurse will notify parents/guardians if an immunization update is needed for your student’s school health record. In order to help keep the health records current, parents/guardians should inform the nurse when a student receives a mandated immunization at the physician’s office. If you have any questions concerning immunizations for your student, please feel free to call the school nurse or contact your student’s pediatrician.

**Medical Excuses**

Any student wishing to be released from Physical Education class for a medical reason should submit a note signed by the family doctor to the school nurse in a timely fashion. This note will be submitted to the Physical Education office and then filed for future reference in the student’s permanent record.

**Medications In School**

While it is more desirable for a medication to be given at home if possible, there are students who need to receive medication during the school day. The nurse (or designee when needed) will administer the medication in compliance with the following state regulations:

**Prescription Medications:**

1. A signed prescription medication order and permission form from a physician must be provided to the nurse detailing the student’s name, the name of the medication, the dosage and the time to be given, and the reason for giving the medication. A parent or guardian needs to sign this form as well, which gives the school nurse permission to comply with the physician’s order. A new permission form is needed every school year for medication that is given regularly to a student. These forms are available in the physician’s office and in the school nurse’s office. If the physician forgets to fill out the form for school, please don’t hesitate to remind them!

2. The medication must be brought to school in a container labeled by the pharmacy or the physician and given to the nurse. The container must have the student’s name, the name of the medication, the dosage and the time to be given, and the name of the physician who prescribed the medication. Whenever possible, please request two labeled containers from the pharmacy so that one may be kept at school and one kept at home.

3. Delivery of all medications to the school nurse is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or a designated adult except for those students who have authorized written permission to carry emergency medication (see number 4). Students should not transport medication to and from school or carry medication in school in order to protect every student from accidental ingestion and to prevent the medication from being misplaced or lost.

4. In 2008, Act No. 175 was passed in Vermont “permitting students with life-threatening allergies or asthma to possess and self-administer emergency medication at school, on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, on school-provided transportation, and during school-related programs.” Parents/Guardians need to provide the school with a parent authorization form (available at the school) and a medication order and permission form from the student’s physician detailing the student’s allergy or asthma condition, emergency medicine, protocol, implementation capability, and instruction received. With this information, the parents/guardians will develop an Action Plan with the school nurse.
5. Inhalers for Asthma: All students who have an inhaler either in the nurse's office or carry one with them need to have a medication and permission form and a Vermont Asthma Action Plan filled out by their physician at the beginning of every school year. All inhalers need to be labeled with the student's name. All asthmatic elementary students should keep an inhaler in the nurse's office throughout the school year, even if they already carry one in their backpack. All students who carry an inhaler with them need to have a parent authorization form, a medication order and permission form, and an Action Plan as mentioned in number 4.

6. Epi-Pens for Allergic Reactions: All students who have an Epi-Pen for a life-threatening allergy either in the nurse's office or carry one with them need to have a medication and permission form filled out by their physician at the beginning of every school year. All Epi-Pens need to be labeled with the student's name. All students who have an Epi-Pen as an emergency medication should keep an Epi-Pen in the nurse's office throughout the school year, even if they already carry one in their backpack. All students who carry an Epi-Pen with them need to have a parent authorization form, a medication order and permission form, and an Action Plan as mentioned in number four.

Non-Prescription Medications:
1. There is a section on the Student Emergency Form that asks parents for permission to administer Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen (Advil), or Benadryl for bee sting reactions. A “Parent Permission Form” in the nurse’s office needs to be filled out for every other non-prescription medication that you would like administered to your student.
2. All non-prescription medication needs to be in a labeled container with the student’s name and will be kept in the nurse’s office.
3. Delivery of all medications to the school nurse is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or a designated adult. Students should not transport medication to and from school or carry medication in school in order to protect every student from accidental ingestion or to prevent a medication from being misplaced or lost.

Screenings

In order to address potential health problems that are barriers to learning or symptoms of underlying medical conditions, the school nurse often engages in screening activities. Screening activities may include vision, hearing, postural, height and weight (body mass index), and blood pressure depending on concerns or referrals. The revised mandated screenings from the Vermont Department of Health for the 2010-2011 school year are as follows:

- Hearing: Grades K, 1, 3, and 5.
- Vision: Grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 12.

When there appears to be a need for further evaluation, the nurse will send a written referral to the parents/guardians. It is requested that the results of the follow-up evaluation be reported to the nurse.

Sports Physicals

Every student needs to have a current physical on file in the nurse’s office before participating in extracurricular sports. The sports physical will cover the student for two years from the date of the physical exam. If you have any questions concerning the physicals, please contact the School Nurse or the Athletic Director.

Student Behavior

The following rules and guidelines are designed to foster an atmosphere in which teaching and learning can coexist with extracurricular and other important school activities.

Everyone is expected to be responsible for her or his own behavior. Everyone is expected to follow class schedules and the rules of our school community.

Rochester students will:

- do their very best at all times;
• not engage in behaviors such as cheating, dishonesty, or destruction of property that negatively affect the school community;
• be a positive and active member of the school community and will conduct themselves with a high level of integrity at all times;
• do their best to find ways in which they can help strengthen the community both inside and outside the school building;
• do everything in their power to help make the school a positive place for all.

Alcohol, Drugs, and Chemical Abuse

All students have a right to receive an appropriate education in an environment free of the effects of substance abuse. In addition, students benefit from learning activities which emphasize the dangers of substance abuse. It is the policy of the Rochester School District that no person shall knowingly possess, use, sell, transmit or be under the influence of any illegal drug or prohibited substance and/or have in their possession any drug paraphernalia on school property or at any school-sponsored activity away from school premises. Please refer to Rochester School Policy Student Substance Abuse for details about prevention programs and description of resource for use.

Bullying/Harassment/Hazing

• “Bullying” means any overt act or combination of acts directed against a student by another student or group of students and which is repeated over time; is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity.
• “Unlawful harassment” means verbal or physical conduct based on a student’s race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability and which has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance or creating an intimidating hostile, or offensive environment.

If you feel there is a problem, please report the difficulty to our school Nurse, Guidance Counselor or Principal, who shall investigate the verbal or written complaints within 24 hours and recommend further action within ten days. The school district will communicate in writing any findings to the parents of the involved party/parties. There shall be no retaliation permitted of those who report incident(s).

In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a harassment complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a harassment complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the addresses noted in the procedures accompanying this policy.

Cyberbullying

Students today use multiple electronic digital devices which provide multiple means of communicating with each other and multiple avenues of access to the worldwide Internet. While these devices can and should be used as positive tools in educational and other settings, unfortunately, these devices are also sometimes used in very unsafe and irresponsible ways. When students resort to bullying and harassment via the Internet and other electronic communication devices, these behaviors are called “cyberbullying.”

Cyberbullying and cyberharassment are now explicitly included in Vermont’s statutory definitions of bullying and harassment. When a school can establish a clear link between any off-campus internet activities and on-campus impacts (on a school-wide level or on individual students), schools can and must follow the procedures for investigating and responding to incidents of cyberbullying and cyberharassment as established in their bullying and harassment policies.

Cyberbullying is against the law in Vermont. It falls under the Disorderly Conduct via Electronic Communication Statutes title 13 VSA 1027: disturbing peace by use of telephone or other electronic communications. The fine for the first offense is $250 and/or 3 months in Juvenile Detention and for the second offense, $500 and/or 6 months in Juvenile Detention.
As of May 2011, Cyberbullying was added to the legal definition of bullying and Cyberharassment was added to the legal definition of harassment.

What are some examples of Cyberbullying?
- Sharing inappropriate pictures or videos of someone without permission
- Taking pictures of other students without their permission
- Sharing private conversations with others, sometimes referred to as ’outing’
- Posting mean comments
- Creating hate sites
- Stealing someone’s password

### Continuum of Behaviors: Generic bullying and harassment

#### Rude, disrespectful behavior
- Ignoring someone
- Talking down to someone
- Making faces at someone
- Rolling your eyes at someone
- Sneering at someone
- Laughing at someone

**Bullying (legal definition)**
- **Student to student ONLY**
- Weight
- Clothes
- Where you live
- Height
- Hair
- Perceived low/high intelligence
- Socioeconomic status

**Harassment (legal definition)**
- **Student to student AND between students and adults**
- Based on **ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED** student’s or student’s family member’s membership in a protected category:
  - Race
  - Creed (religion)
  - Color
  - National Origin
  - Marital Status
  - Sex
  - Sexual Orientation
  - Disability
  - Gender Identity

**Criminal behavior**
- Physical/sexual assault
- Hate crimes
- Cyberbullying

A school can contact the police or advise parents to contact the police but the school should also do its own investigation of bullying or harassment complaints that may have a criminal element.

#### Threats and Threatening Behavior

Harassment and/or making threats of any kind are not acceptable behavior. Threatening behaviors, including, but not limited to verbal and physical threats, will be taken very seriously. If you make verbal or physical threats against others, your threats will be promptly reported to your parents, and perhaps the police, and you will be subject to firm disciplinary actions.

#### Child Abuse and Mandated Reporting

According to 33VSA § 4913, Rochester School staff members are “mandated reporters.” Any staff member who has reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected must report within 24 hours to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). If anyone suspects a child is being abused or neglected they can report to DCF by calling 1-800-649-5285.
- All staff members are mandatory reporters.

### School Discipline Procedure

All students, parents, faculty and administration of Rochester School will strive for each student being provided the best possible learning environment. Student behavior that disrupts student learning must be addressed immediately in order to develop and maintain an excellent learning environment. Each student is responsible for participating positively in regular and extracurricular school activities within the following behavioral guidelines. If a student chooses to be inappropriate, we will work in assisting him/her to understand why he/she made that choice and how he/she can take responsibility for his/her actions. When the student is unable to make responsible choices, or the behavior threatens the safety and/or success of our learning community, the student will be removed from normal activities within the school community. The student will not be allowed to reenter the regular school community until he or she responds in a responsible manner and demonstrates the desire and ability to be a member of our exceptional student body.
Guiding Principles

- Accept ownership of your words and actions.
- Treat people as you would like to be treated.
- Demonstrate excellence in courtesy, manners, and sportsmanship.
- Maintain a safe and orderly environment.
- Support and encourage the efforts of others as they strive for excellence.

Our school needs to be a safe and comfortable learning environment. In order for this to happen, we must support a discipline program where the school community:

- Develops and demonstrates the aforementioned guiding principles.
- Understands the consequences when a member chooses to behave below the community standard.

To be effective, the school needs consistent, open and frequent communication with parents. When parents are contacted regarding discipline matters, the intent is to include them in discussions regarding their son/daughter’s choices. The goal will be for the community (parents, students, and school personnel) to support and assist the student to strive for excellence.

I. Minor (Tier 1) Misbehaviors: The classroom teacher, duty teacher, or other school personnel will deal with minor misbehaviors. The goal of each faculty or staff member dealing with the minor misbehavior will be to have the student be successful in settling the issue.

II. Significant (Tier 2/3) Misbehaviors: When standards/norms are not met, students will receive a forty-five minute detention. Parents will be given twenty-four hour notice for a detention. Involved students and parents are responsible for transportation arrangements. If a student fails to serve a detention, two additional detentions will be given. Failure to serve either of these two detentions will result in suspension as indicated on page 28 in #13 on the list of infractions resulting in suspension.

Sample of student behavioral choices that may result in detentions:

- Any behavior or violation of school rules that disrupts the positive learning environment of our school community.
- Unapproved absence from any scheduled school activity without parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or school permission.
- Inappropriate behavior in the cafeteria or during student passing time.
- Disrespect to any adult supervisor (including paraprofessionals, substitutes, cafeteria workers, school bus drivers, and or custodial staff).
- Cutting a class.

**Detention**: Detention is assigned to students by a school employee in response to your involvement in unacceptable behavior while at school or during school-related events. Parents will be informed by letter when detentions are signed.

III. Infractions Resulting in Suspension: The administration has the right to suspend a student immediately and have him/her picked up by parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and removed from the school premises if the well-being of that student or others is deemed to be in jeopardy. The administration will exercise discretion in determining any other student behavior (other than listed below) that results in suspension. The student’s parents and school counselor will be notified in writing of the suspension. Also, at the discretion of the administration, parents must meet with the administration, counselor, student, and any other directly involved school personnel, prior to the student’s return to a normal school day. The following infractions will result in suspension from school beginning the following day and from all school activities for the duration of the suspension:

1. Use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs on school property or in connection with any school-sponsored activity (school board policy) will result in a mandatory 3-day suspension on the first offense. It will result in a 5-day suspension on the second offense and an immediate and indefinite suspension on the third offense with referral to the School Board. (See Board
Drug and Alcohol Policy adopted June 2008 for particulars).

2. Use or possession of tobacco, or tobacco products, in any form, on school grounds.

3. Fighting and physical or sexual assault, abuse or harassment of another student or school personnel on school grounds. Police and/or Social and Rehabilitative Services Personnel may become involved.

4. Behaviors characterized by unwelcome sexual advances or requests of sexual favors, which has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student’s school performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment.

5. Theft of school property or the personal property of another student or school personnel. Student and/or parents must replace or pay for stolen article(s). Police personnel may become involved.

6. Vandalism or willful destruction of school property or the property of another student or school personnel. Student and/or parents must replace or pay for the damaged article. Police personnel may become involved.

7. Failure to comply with a reasonable request by administrators, faculty or staff.

8. Behaviors that compromise or potentially compromise the health, safety and/or general welfare of the school community.

9. Verbal abuse or use of profanity in an abusive manner toward another student, school personnel, or any individual on school grounds.

10. Possession of weapons and other devices deemed to be potentially harmful to students, school personnel or property and/or the use of a threat of use of such weapons or devices toward an individual. Police and other appropriate personnel may become involved. Bringing firearms, knives or other weapons on to school grounds is a violation of state law and board policy. The school will take action to the full extent allowed by law.

11. Truancy – being out of school without parent(s)/legal guardian(s) permission.

12. Leaving school grounds without permission of administration or designee and parent and/or guardian or designee.

13. Failure to serve a “second notice” behavioral detention.

14. More than three detentions in any single academic marking period.

15. Forging of permission slips, absence notes, or any official school document.

In general, for students in grades 9-12, a first suspension in a given academic year will be served in-school. All subsequent offenses may be served out-of-school unless otherwise arranged. Generally speaking for students in grades 7-8, all suspendable offenses will be served in-school unless otherwise arranged. The administration reserves the right to use discretion in all cases of suspension.

Progressive Consequences for Suspendable Behavior
(Other than that covered in the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy)

First Offense: Immediate one- or two-day suspension in-school (unless otherwise arranged). Administrative discretion will be used in a fair and consistent manner.

Second Offense: Same or different infraction – immediate one to three day suspension out-of-school (unless otherwise arranged).

Third Offense: Same or different infraction – immediate one to four day suspension out-of-school (unless otherwise arranged).

Fourth Offense: Same or different infraction - immediate, indefinite suspension (not to exceed 10 school days). The student and parents must appear before the School Board to determine whether the student will be allowed to remain in school. School administration and other school personnel will make a recommendation to the Board at that meeting.

When a student is suspended for any of these offenses, parents will be notified immediately by phone, if possible, and in writing. The administration will meet with the student(s) involved. All student rights to due process will be protected and enforced. The administration reserves the right to contact all appropriate personnel (including police) as the disciplinary situation warrants and will pursue all necessary courses of action to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the school community.

School suspensions are considered school-related absences from class (see also Minimum School Attendance Policy and Make-up policy).
Guidelines for In-School Suspension

1. The suspension will be served in a room designated as the In-School-Suspension Room, monitored by a supervisor, on the date and time assigned by the administration. The dates assigned are not negotiable.
2. The suspension will be served from 8:00 AM to 2:45 PM. Entry into the ISS room will not be granted after the first period bell. Failure to report, ON TIME, will result in a penalty (i.e. Detention, sent home, etc.) and reassignment of the original suspension.
3. Students are responsible for bringing all books, assignments, school related materials/supplies with them before entering the ISS room. There will be no locker visits.
4. The supervisor in charge will inform all teachers of the students serving in-school-suspension, via e-mail, during the first period. Those teachers are required to forward school work/assignments for their students. Teachers may visit their students in ISS to discuss/explain assignments, pick up completed work, etc.
5. NO ELECTRONICS of any kind (CD/tape/MP3 players, I-pods, radios, computers, pagers, beepers, hand held games, etc) are allowed in the ISS room. ALL OF THOSE ITEMS WILL BE TAKEN ON SIGHT
6. ALL CELL PHONES are to be turned off and given to the ISS supervisor upon entering the room.
7. Student serving in-school-suspensions cannot leave the ISS room unless accompanied by a faculty member. Bathroom breaks are granted as needed, and all students will leave ISS room escorted by the supervisor.
8. Students are encouraged to bring a bag lunch of "appropriate" food items with them. Students will have the opportunity to purchase lunch from the cafeteria, and bring it back to the ISS room. There will be no talking, visiting or loitering during this exercise. Lunch will be eaten in the ISS room.
9. Students will conduct themselves in an appropriate fashion during the entire suspension. Normal classroom behavior is expected. There will be NO TALKING, “NOISE MAKING”, DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR, SLEEPING, RESTING permitted. Failure to comply with any of the ISS Rules could result in the student being sent home. If a student is sent home, or leaves the ISS room without permission, he/she will be counted as unexcused and that day will not count toward fulfilling the assigned detention. Students must satisfactorily complete the suspension before they may return to classes. An absence for any reason will not excuse the suspension.

Expulsion

Occasionally the school will exhaust all of its resources and procedures in dealing with a student. The school is also occasionally faced with an infraction which is so serious that it cannot be dealt with effectively using detention or suspension. As a last resort, the school considers expulsion.

Vermont State law is very clear on when expulsion may be considered. "A pupil may be expelled when a pupil’s misconduct makes the continued presence of the pupil harmful to the welfare of the school. The Principal may immediately remove a pupil from the school who poses a continuing danger to person or property or a pupil who represents an ongoing threat to the academic process of the school." Students under expulsion procedures will be notified in writing by the Administration as to the cause and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The parents/guardians will be given written notice of the time for a hearing before the School Board. At this hearing, the pupil and parents/guardians may be represented by counsel provided that they notify the school administration of their intention to do so at least 3 days before the hearing. The hearing shall be in executive session unless requested to be in open session by the parents or guardians. Following the hearing, the School Board will give their decision in writing to the student and parents or guardians within 5 days of the hearing."

Discipline

Discipline will be consistent and support a safe atmosphere with respect for all. To create a positive learning environment, everyone is responsible for his/her own behavior and for the consequences. The Rochester School follows the Three-level System Guidelines of the Vermont Department of Education.

- Level One (inappropriate verbal interactions, inattention to classroom work, inappropriate internet use, etc.) behavior has the primary responsibility by the teacher or supervising adult (inappropriate verbal interactions, inattention to classroom work).
- Level Two (disrespectful or bad language, physical altercation, repeated warning, sharing passwords,
False Alarms

It is illegal to pull a false alarm. The school will prosecute anyone found guilty of pulling a false alarm. Rochester School will employ all legal means available against anyone who causes a major disruption to the educational mission of the school by making a bomb threat or otherwise causing the evacuation of the school under false pretexts. Such actions by the school will include, but will not be limited to, suspension from school pending a review of an expulsion request, the filing of charges as specified by local, state, and/or Federal laws, and the filing of civil suits to recover any damages or losses resulting from the false alarm or report.

Fighting

Fighting is not an appropriate behavior. Fighting in school, on school grounds, on buses, or during school-sponsored activities is forbidden. If you elect to involve yourself in fights, physical assaults, or verbal assaults or threats; or if you encourage or assist others to engage in such activities, you will face strong administrative action.

“Just Playing Around”

As you interact with your schoolmates, you need to be aware of the effects that your behaviors might have. Calling someone names, spreading rumors about a classmate, pushing or punching another student (even in jest), taking or hiding another student’s personal belongings, chasing another student in the hallway or classroom are all examples of “just playing around,” that can lead to more serious problems. “Playing around” behavior can result in similar consequences as other disruptive behavior.

Non-compliance may result in parental involvement, detention, or other consequences.

No Smoking Law

Smoking by all employees, visitors, and guests on school grounds, in the school building, and at school functions is prohibited by state law. This includes all persons who use the school grounds and facilities for non-school activities.

Public Display of Affection

Excessive and inappropriate public displays of affection (PDA) make other students and staff feel uncomfortable and may result in disciplinary consequences.

Rochester School Dress Expectations

A respectful appearance is required for students at all times. This same expectation is in place for all school sponsored activities. Students and adults are expected to dress in a manner that contributes to a respectful
atmosphere that shows respect for yourself and others.

Be sure that clothes are clean, neat, free of offensive language, suitable for the weather, and not distracting to other people. Bare feet, stocking feet, halter tops, spaghetti strap shirts, the showing of undergarments such as boxer shorts, muscle shirts, night gowns/pajamas, ripped clothes with unsightly holes, and shirts that expose a person’s midsection are considered inappropriate school dress. The acceptable hem length for shorts, skirts and dresses must fall below the wearer’s middle fingertip.

Students whose attire violates the dress code will be asked to change before returning to class. Students refusing to change will be sent home after their parents have been notified.

Students cannot wear clothing:
- with inappropriate language or designs, such as, but not limited to, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexual connotation and that which would violate one’s civil rights;
- clothing, including shoes and/or jewelry, that is a safety hazard or causes interference with the educational process;
- clothing that allows a student’s underwear/buttocks to show;
- that is ripped or tattered in a blatant manner;
- shirts that allow midriff to show in a normal standing position and or a neckline that shows cleavage;

If a student’s attire is disruptive in any way to others, the Principal has the right to amend these dress code guidelines.

Violations of the dress code standards will be addressed with the student being required to change. If the student does not have something appropriate to change into and the school does not have appropriate alternative clothing, the student’s parents will be contacted and requested to bring appropriate clothing to school. The student will wait in the office until he or she is dressed appropriately.

Weapons

Any student who brings a weapon to school shall be brought by the Superintendent to the School Board for an expulsion hearing. An expulsion hearing conducted under this policy shall afford due process as required by law. A student found by the board to have brought a weapon to school may be expelled for, at most, a calendar year. However, the board may modify the expulsion on a case-by-case basis when it finds circumstances such as, but not limited to:

- The student was unaware that he/she had brought a weapon to school.
- The student did not intend to use the weapon or threaten or endanger others.
- The student is disabled and the misconduct is related to the disability.
- The student does not present an ongoing threat to others and a lengthy expulsion would not serve the best interests of the student.

In addition, any student who brings a weapon to school shall be referred to a law enforcement agency. Any other person found in violation of this prohibition shall be subject to removal from school premises and any further action as allowed by law.

Note: A rifle which the owner intends to use solely for sporting, recreational or cultural purposes is considered as a weapon and is prohibited on school premises. The definition of weapons includes, but is not limited to, firearms, knives, explosives, implements which may inflict physical harm.
Rochester School offers extra support to students, teachers, and parents when special needs exist in educational, social, or emotional areas. Circumstances which affect learning, health, and/or behavior are studied and evaluated. Teams of support staff are formed around students with special needs. Requests for support services can be made by teachers, parents, or students. Requests should be made to the classroom teacher.

**What is the Educational Support System?**
The Educational Support System is a school-based system designed to help all students improve their school performance and help them grow academically, behaviorally, socially, emotionally and physically. The system provides a way for school staff to address students’ varying needs in school. Each Vermont school is required, by law, to develop an Educational Support System (ESS) and Educational Support Team (EST).

**What is the Educational Support Team?**
The EST is a group of school staff who meet, to review individual student referrals to recommend needed changes in the student’s program. Teams can be made up of classroom teachers, a school counselor, the school nurse, consulting teachers, and/or others as members. The team may recommend developing a support plan. Parents are encouraged to be members of the team.

**Who can make referrals?**
The answer is anybody. It is anticipated that most educational support referrals will be made by teachers, but parents, administrators, guidance counselors or support staff can also make referrals.

**What is the referral process?**
A brief referral form is available from the classroom teacher or guidance counselor. Completed referral forms should be submitted back to either the classroom teacher or the guidance counselor.

**What will the EST do for my child?**
If your child is having difficulties in school, and the EST recommended that an Act 230 Plan be developed to support your child’s learning, your child’s teacher will invite you to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns you or the school have. Parents are considered active partners with the school. At the meeting, the team will discuss services and/or accommodations that might assist your child in the school setting. Examples include extended time to complete tasks, a behavior plan, small group instruction, additional individualized or differentiated instruction provided by the teacher, and services of the school nurse or community agencies. If, after 6-8 weeks of interventions, the team feels it would be helpful, a referral may be made for a comprehensive evaluation which is part of the special education process.

**Have Educational Support Systems replaced Special Education?**
No. In fact, the state statutes which cover Educational Support Systems clearly indicate that they are "...not a substitute for the special education evaluation" (R 2360-Revised).

However, to be eligible for a special education, a student must have a disability and must demonstrate a clear need for methods and services which are not typically available to all students. It is hoped that our Educational Support Systems will increase and improve the capacity of general education to meet the needs of all our students, thus decreasing the needs for a special education. Special Education Programs will continue to be available for those students who need them.

**Will others know about the concerns the school or I have?** Others may need to know about the concerns the school or you have. In order to contact community agencies and services, you would need to give the school your permission by signing a Release of Information form. The school is required by law to keep personally identifiable information about your child confidential.

**Will any community agencies be involved with my child?** The team may provide you with information about community agencies that may be helpful to you and your child. Community services might include assistance with health care, counseling, housing, financial assistance, parenting issues, child care, etc. The team may decide to refer your child and family to one of the community agencies that assist with these issues.
Section 504 Of The Federal Rehabilitation Act, 1973

Any parent, teacher, administrator, support staff member, or student can make a referral to the EST for consideration of a 504 evaluation if they suspect a child has a physical or mental disability that substantially limits one or more of the major life functions (self-care, breathing, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, learning, performing manual tasks, and working.) A student who has a history of a disability or who needs to be treated as though he or she has a disability are also protected by 504. Written notice will be sent to the parents of children being referred. This notice will request parental input. The EST will develop an evaluation plan and a case manager will be appointed. Components of an evaluation may include but not be limited to: observations, interviews, record reviews, letters from doctors, or formal testing. A student will receive support services as determined by the results of his or her evaluation and the team’s recommendations.

Child Find

Rochester School have an obligation to provide a free and appropriate public education to handicapped children. If you know of any handicapped child between the ages of birth and 21 who is not receiving services through our schools, please contact the superintendent’s office.

Special Education Services

Special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the individual needs of eligible students.

- **What difficulties may require special education?** A student whose ability to learn in a regular classroom is adversely affected by impairment or delay in learning, a specific learning disability, a visual impairment, a hearing impairment, a speech/language impairment, an orthopedic impairment, chronic or acute health problems, and/or emotional behavior disability, autism, or TBI may require special education.

- **How does a student become special education eligible?** A student is referred to the Student Support Team by teachers or parents. The Evaluation Planning Team (special educator, regular teacher, administrator, guidance counselor, speech pathologist and other educational personnel) will review the referral and if necessary will recommend the student be evaluated.

The parent must give signed permission for this evaluation. A decision concerning eligibility will be made after the evaluation is completed based on the Vermont Special Education Regulations.

- **Are related services and special education the same thing?** No. Related services could include special transportation, psychological services, physical or occupational therapy, or other support services that are provided, at no cost, to help a student benefit from special education.

- **What happens if my child is found eligible for special education services?** You will be asked to meet with your child's teachers, special educators and others to write an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The parent must provide consent before the initial provision for special education.

- **What is an individualized education plan?** An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is a written document that determines the type and amount of special education and related services given to a student with special needs. It specifies educational goals and objectives, the services of teachers and professionals necessary to meet the stated goals, and any accommodations or adaptations necessary in the classroom.

- **What happens if I disagree with any or all of the assessment or IEP?** As a parent or guardian of a student who is eligible for special education you have protected rights under federal, state and local regulations. You will be given a copy of your rights. Read it carefully.

If you have any reason to believe your child may need special education, contact your local school principal. If you have any questions or concerns about special education services offered by the Windsor Northwest Supervisory Union call the superintendent’s office at (802) 234-0264.
Supplemental Education Services 2014-15 Gr. K-6

Rochester staff takes their jobs seriously when it comes to teaching basic skills to our students. Our school is making adequate yearly progress for many students according to our state administered tests. However, like many schools in VT, we are not making enough adequate yearly progress in reading and in math for all students as indicated by the 2013 NECAP Tests.

Therefore, we are required to send you this notice about Supplemental Educational Services that you can access for your child if you are eligible. This letter will explain how to access services and also offer you ideas about how you can be involved with our school.

You may be aware of the many things that our school is currently doing to help students make adequate yearly progress such as our after school homework club, literacy and math support classes for all grades, small classroom sizes to name a few.

Who is eligible for Supplemental Educational Services? Only children who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals can participate in this program. If you have not previously applied for the free and reduced-price federal meals program, please return the free and reduced-price meals application along with the application for Supplemental Services Application form.

Who are the service providers? The Vermont Department of Education has the 2014-15 approved providers’ list including, the services they offer, their qualifications, and the addresses where service can be provided. You cannot use a provider who is not on the list. Transportation to the providers’ location of service is your responsibility.

Who pays? Schools are required to pay for Supplemental Educational Services—extra academic assistance/tutoring to improve our child’s academic performance. If you are eligible and if you choose to participate, you’ll be able to select a service provider that best fits your child’s needs.

Who decides? One of the most important features of Supplemental Educational Services is that families are the ones who will make the choices for their children. You can choose among the different types of services, given by different service providers at different locations. Remember, there is no obligation to enroll your child for Supplemental Educational Services.

Is the program limited? Only a limited number of spaces are available. As a result, we may not be able to enroll every child whose parent applies. In compliance with federal law, we will give first priority to the lowest achieving students, as determined by NECAP scores; we will select by lottery in case of equal scores.

What’s the deadline? If you are eligible and if decide that you want to enroll your student in the Supplemental Services program, you must submit an application to Rochester School by Fri., Oct 3. We will let you know by October 14, if we have approved the application to have your child participate in the Supplemental Educational Services program. After that you will be contacted directly from the Tutoring Service Provider. If the Oct. deadline is missed, services will again be offered to sign up early January. Forms and deadlines will be provided before December break.

When does the tutoring occur?
The tutoring is “supplemental,” therefore, it must happen after or before school hours, on days when school is in session.

Who can answer my questions? If you have questions about the Supplemental Educational Services program or would like help in choosing a provider, please contact Cathy Knight at c knight@wnwsu.org.

How can I become involved in my child’s school? We need your involvement to continue improvements for Rochester School students. Parents are critical to a child’s success. From time to time, we will ask you to be involved with your child’s class or team or to participate in a meeting to help update our schools’ action plan. You
can learn about these opportunities by talking with your child’s teacher, reading the weekly blog, the Rocket Remarks, reading your child’s class newsletter, or checking the schools’ bulletin boards.

What’s happening to improve academic outcomes in our schools?

- Free on-line test taking strategies for students
- Hiring reading and math tutors during the school day to help students work on skill needs.
- Have curriculum and assessment teams look at school results and to advise staff about areas of need;
- Staff attends high level professional development through our district
- Administrator works with staff to analyze the actual test items that have been released to determine student concept misunderstanding.
- Rochester administration meets regularly with other Vermont principals to learn new strategies and programs that are designed to improve student performance;
- Tracking low student performance on report cards and the number of goals students have met on IEP’s.

**Academics**

We subscribe to and seek to enact the Vermont Framework of Standards and Common Core State Standards (CCSS):

1. Increase students’ skill in the use of inquiry, investigation, and experimentation in all areas, but with an emphasis upon mathematics and science.
2. Improve students’ communication skills, especially through written language.
3. Integrate technology into class instruction.

We will seek to:

1. Develop students’ high level reasoning skills analysis, interpretation, and problem solving.
2. Increase students’ ability to utilize information technology to enrich and enhance learning.
3. Promote students’ personal development and increase their sense of civil and social responsibility.
4. Provide learning opportunities that promote learning and foster success for all students.

**Academic Integrity**

**Cheating:** Participation in any activity in which a student misrepresents actual achievement in a course will be viewed as cheating. When a teacher has reason to believe a student or group of students is behaving in such a manner, the teacher will share that conclusion with the student, the parent or guardian, the counselor, and administration.

**Plagiarism:** Taking someone else’s ideas and materials, whether spoken or written, and presenting them as one’s own is plagiarism. Work that is paraphrased or quoted must be properly cited according to the format assigned by the teacher.

- First Offense: Consequences are left up to the discretion of the classroom teacher. They may include loss of credit for the assignment and an opportunity to redo the work for partial credit.
- Second Offense: Will result in failure for the class for that marking period where the first offence was committed.

Complete integrity in all manner personal and academic is expected of each student. Truthfulness, even in the face of social pressure, is one of the values the school most wishes to establish. Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic breaches of this standard. Just as we hope that you will take pride in your ideas and work, we expect that you will respect the endeavors of other students and scholars and that you will not want to take credit for any work that is not entirely yours. This standard allows for trust and the free exchange of ideas necessary for a climate of learning. For this reason, plagiarism and cheating are serious abuses of the privileges offered by the community and will be viewed as a breach of faith.

All cases of academic dishonesty will be treated seriously. Some first-time offenses, such as copying homework will be handled by the classroom teachers. The teacher will discipline you and send a note to your parents and the Principal. Other offenses, including not citing sources on a project, copying verbatim from reference sources
or another person’s work, cheating on quizzes and tests, and second offenses will be documented by a referral to the Principal. The Principal will meet with you, your teacher, your parents, and the Guidance Counselor to discuss the infraction. The Principal will recommend appropriate sanctions, which may include, but not be limited to the following:

1. The requirement that you make-up the work by resubmitting a revised version of the project in question, within a specified time frame, and with all work being completed on your own time.
2. Assigning a grade of zero for the work in question.
3. Failure of the class.
4. Suspension or expulsion from school.
5. Inclusion in your school records of a description of the situation.

**Academics and Homework**

We strive to live up to the description of the school as being a community of learners in pursuit of excellence. We are committed to providing opportunities for all students to grow, learn, and perform at their highest level of ability. We believe that a cooperative and collaborative spirit that brings together students, parents, and school personnel to work toward shared goals offers the best opportunity for all students to achieve their personal best.

The following suggestions will assist you to succeed in your personal pursuit of excellence:

1. Bring textbooks, notebooks, paper, pen, or pencil and other necessary materials to class.
2. Attend school and each of your classes regularly. There is a strong correlation between regular attendance and success in school.
3. Become an active learner by participating in discussions, listening attentively, taking notes, and asking questions.
4. Take charge of your learning by assuming personal responsibility for reading required texts, studying and reviewing class notes, completing assignments on time, and keeping track of your performance in each class.
5. Be sure you understand your assignments before you leave the class.
6. Establish and stick to a schedule at school and at home that provides adequate time for studying and completing assignments, along with time for relaxation, work, and participation in out-of-school activities that are of interest to you.
7. **Study!** Review class notes, reread difficult assignments, reflect on what you have learned or read, and strive to make connections between new information and material you have already covered.
8. Homework Clubs are available for both Elementary and Middle/High School students. Homework Club for Elementary students will be held in the ExCEL program; Homework Club for Middle/High School students will be held in the Mrs. Stubbs' room. Both will be Monday through Thursday between the hours of 3:00 – 5:00 pm. Students may choose or be requested by a teacher to attend a Homework Club session.
9. Actively pursue excellence. Strive to do your best. Do not be satisfied simply to get by. Achieve for your own sense of well-being rather than to meet the expectations of others.

**Academic Support Block**

If a student is assigned an academic support class to work on an on-line class, then it shall be treated as a class and the same rules and procedures apply. It should be done under the supervision and with the assistance of the teacher assigned to that location. At NO time should students be on any other websites EXCEPT the on-line course website and its links. Violation of this protocol can result in loss of technology privileges.

**Access Documents Online**

http://rochesterschool.org/pdp

Internet Explorer 8.0: Click on the "Continue to this website" link.
Firefox: Click "I understand the Risks" link and then click the "Add Exception..." button that is displayed.

Safari: Click the "Continue" button.

Access Online Grades

1. Go to: www.rochesterschool.org/gradereport
2. Enter the four digit school year - i.e. 2012. By default, the current school year is already entered.
3. Enter the marking period: 1,2,3, or 4
4. Enter the Student ID. This can be obtained from any of the student's teachers or the Front Office.
5. Enter the student's online grade report password (not their RHS network password). Again, this can be obtained from any of the student's teachers or the Front Office.

Note, if you don't see a particular course listed, then the teacher has not entered any grades to date. Also, if you receive a message that "no records" were returned, the problem is most likely a 'bad' password or student ID.

Classroom/School Staff Problems

If you are experiencing problems in any of your classes, take these steps to assist you in resolving them:

1. Identify the nature of the problem. Is the subject too easy or too difficult? Is the class different from what you had expected? Are you having problems with your classmates or with the teacher?
2. Don't let the problem grow and get out of hand. Act upon your concerns.
3. Begin by talking with your teacher: he/she may very well be able to help you with your problems in class.
4. If you do not feel comfortable talking about your concerns with your teacher, make an appointment to meet with the Principal or Guidance Counselor.
5. Don't forget to let your parents know what is going on. Discuss with them the nature of your problems and tell them what you have been doing to resolve them. Your parents can give you advice, and they can contact the teacher, Principal or Guidance Counselor to assist you.
Procedure For Addressing Problems:

There is procedure at Rochester School that provides an effective way for handling problems or complaints. The problem or complaint should first be addressed to the person who is directly involved. For example: A parent who has a complaint with a teacher should first contact the teacher to try and resolve the problem. If unsuccessful, the School Administration should be contacted. From that level, the procedure continues to the Superintendent and finally to the School Board.

Problems/complaints that occur between students: If you, as a student, are having a problem with another student and do not know how to handle it, you have several options:

- Talk with another student who is a friend, or seek advice from students who might be trained to handle these situations.
- Talk with a teacher or staff member with whom you feel comfortable in seeking advice.
- Make an appointment to see your school counselor.
- If the problem relates to harassment or bullying, see the school harassment and bullying officers.
- See the Principal if the problem, in your opinion, will require administrative assistance.

You must understand that each of these individuals will make every effort to get the person with whom you have the problem directly involved in the solution process.

Problems/complaints that occur between student and teacher or parent and teacher: Try to deal directly with the teacher first. If no satisfactory solution results, then consult with the school counselor and/or the Principal.

Midterms and Finals for High School

Exams will be given during a regular class period at the end of each semester, with no more than 2 exams per day. Exams and mid-terms should be proficiency based and can be developed in various formats in order to accommodate all students' learning styles. Exam grades will be calculated as follows:

For a full year course:
- Quarter 1 grade will count as 20% of the final grade
- Quarter 2 grade will count as 20% of the final grade
- Final exam of semester will count at 10% of the final grade
- Quarter 3 grade will count as 20% of the final grade
- Quarter 4 grade will count as 20% of the final grade
- Final exam of semester will count at 10% of the final grade

For a half year course:
- Quarter 1 grade will count as 40% of the final grade
- Quarter 2 grade will count as 40% of the final grade
- Final exam of semester will count at 20% of the final grade

Midterms will cover 1 semester and Finals will cover 2 semesters.
Middle school will have midterm and Final activities during their assigned class periods.

Grades and Report Cards

Report cards for students in grades K-5 will be published in approximately (3) 12-week increments.

For Middle and High school students the academic year is divided into two semesters, two quarters each. We have 4 marking periods, each approximately 9 weeks in length. Middle and high school report cards will be sent home with students at the end of each 9-week term for parents to sign. Progress reports will be mailed home at the mid-point of each marking period.

Each teacher will provide a syllabus at the beginning of each course and will describe his/her system of grading and course content. The numeric grade, which appears on the report card, can be interpreted according to the following system:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Equivalent of numeric grade)</th>
<th>Numeric grade on Report Card</th>
<th>(Equivalent of numeric grade)</th>
<th>Numeric grade on Report Card</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>99-100</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-98</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>70-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-87</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>64 or below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A grade of 70 or higher is required to receive credit for a Rochester course. Honor Roll status can be achieved each grading period in two categories:

- High Honors: all grades A and A-, (90 or above), no incompletes.
- Honors: all grades A, A-, B+, B, and B-, (80 or above); no incompletes.

**Homework**

1. Homework is an important part of school work. Home assignments are meant to be completed at home, often as logical follow-ups to classroom presentations and activities, sometimes as introductions to new material. The ultimate goal of homework is to assist students in developing the habits and skills to become lifelong, independent learners. Not all homework requires written responses or projects to be handed in and graded. Studying, reviewing notes, reading, and reflecting upon information are vital components of homework and should be included in your daily schedule.

2. A general rule of thumb is 10 minutes of homework per year in school. Elementary homework could include reading to or by adults to math and spelling procedures.

3. The school will provide each student in grades 5-12 a student planner in order for students to write down assignments and important dates.

4. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand the nature of the assignments that you are to pursue at home, to complete on time, and to schedule time for review and study.

**How to Obtain Homework During Absences**

- For Elementary Students: Please contact your child’s teacher directly to arrange for class work and homework.
- For Middle and High School Students: For absences of one or two days, you will normally be back in school before homework assignments can be sent from the teacher to the Guidance Office. In such cases, you are encouraged to phone classmates to find out what you missed and what assignments are due the following day. You or your parents should contact your teachers.

If you have been absent from school 3 or more days, you should contact the Guidance or Main Office in order to request homework assignments from your teachers. Since it takes some time to gather assignments from all of your teachers, ask the Main Office Administrative Assistant when the work can be picked up. You should arrange to have someone pick up your assignments before 3:30 p.m.

**Incompletes and Grades**

Incomplete grades earned each quarter must be made up within 5 days following the end of the semester. Arrangements may be made with the teacher to extend the day’s time period. Incompletes not satisfied will be replaced with the grade earned during that quarter.

**National Honor Society George E. Lamb Chapter**

The purpose of the National Honor Society (NHS) is to honor students who are outstanding in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. Membership is an honor and privilege, not a right. The motto of the society, "Noblesse Oblige" (nobility obligates), requires that members accept responsibility for maintaining high standards. The Faculty is charged with maintaining the integrity of the NHS and the school. A student must
have been in attendance at Rochester School for at least one semester to be considered for membership to the NHS. Membership will be open to qualified sophomores, juniors, and seniors. The academic requirement is a cumulative grade point average of 3.30, 2 years of a foreign language, Algebra II and Geometry, and either Chemistry or Physics. A student's course load will also be considered.

Leadership, service, and character are significant criteria for admission. To aid in the selection process, academically eligible students will be asked to give the Faculty a list of their activities regarding their leadership and service experience in the school and community. All Rochester faculty will have the opportunity to comment on the proposed members prior to the Faculty vote. Appeals of the Faculty decisions may be made to the Principal, then the Superintendent, and then the School Board.

National Honor Society Selection Procedure

1. A council of five faculty members approved by the principal chooses the candidates to be invited into membership.
2. The Council reviews Student Activity Information Forms submitted by students in grades 10, 11, and 12 whose academic averages are 88 or above.
3. The Council can consult faculty members for input, but the Council alone decides who shall be invited into membership.
4. The Council reviews student information for outstanding evidence of the qualities of character, leadership, and service. Examples of guidelines for these criteria are:
   - **Character:**
     - takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
     - consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
   - **Leadership:**
     - is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and making suggestions
     - demonstrates leadership in promoting school activities
   - **Service:**
     - is willing to uphold scholarship and maintain a loyal school attitude
     - participates in some outside activity: Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, church groups, volunteer services for the aged, poor or disadvantaged, family duties

The above are only a few examples of guidelines for each category, not a complete list.
5. The Council makes clear to new members that actions questionable under any of the four categories can result in a warning; flagrant violations of school rules or civil law can result in immediate dismissal without warning. There is no re-admission into the Society. A student whose academic cumulative average falls below 88 will be placed on probation for one marking period. A second consecutive marking period of a cumulative average of 88 or below will result in dismissal from the National Honor Society. An appeal to the administration may be undertaken. Administration decisions are final.
6. The Council stresses that membership in the Society is a privilege, not a right.

Scheduling Changes - Adding or Dropping Classes

Because schedules are developed to meet the provisions of students’ four-year high school plans, and because the school commits resources based on your class selections, changes in schedules will only be made after careful and thorough consultation with your parents and guidance counselor.

**Procedure for adding a class:**
1. Your choice must meet your personal learning plan.
2. There must be space for you in the new class.
3. No classes may be added to your schedule if the requested class has been in session for more than 7 school days.

**Procedure for dropping a class:**
- You must meet with the Guidance Counselor and do a Transcript Review.
- A consultation with the teacher of the class and your parents may be necessary to review your Graduation Requirements and your personal learning plan.
Student Records

A cumulative record folder is maintained for each student during the time that he/she attends school. These folders are kept in the secretary’s office and contain information that is pertinent to the student, such as copies of report cards and standard test scores.

Parents may review the cumulative record folder by making arrangements one day in advance with the school principal. The examination of records must be done in the presence of the principal or his/her designee. These records are confidential and are available only to staff members requiring access to them. Access logs are maintained in each folder indicating who has had access to the folder.

Records shall not be released to a third party, such as another school, without the written consent of the parents. Appropriate forms to be used for this purpose are maintained in the office.

Student “Teacher” Assistants

LIST OF CHARACTERISTICS FOR HIGH SCHOOL ASSISTANTS

• Caring students who are responsible and have the desire to make a commitment.
• Good communication skills, including listening skills.
• Patience to work with students who may not grasp ideas quickly.
• Positive attitude, enthusiasm, and a willingness to share part of themselves with younger students.
• Students who exhibit good citizenship and moral character, in and out of school.
• Willingness to help others.
• Academically responsible and maintain at least a “C” average.

Students who complete the necessary “TA Agreement” and turn in weekly timesheets and reflection journals will be awarded up to a .5 elective.

Textbook and School Materials

The school supplies you with textbooks for your classes and may, at times, provide other specialized materials of instruction. When you accept these textbooks and school materials, you do so with the understanding that you are responsible for taking care of them while they are in your possession. We ask that you cover your textbooks to extend their usefulness.

School District Policy Graduation Requirements

FOR 2015 STUDENTS: A Rochester High School diploma is designed to be earned in four years. Twenty-three (23) credits are needed to graduate. Students are encouraged to consider a challenging academic course load and take full advantage of all the educational and extra-curricular opportunities available to them in order to be more fully prepared for their post-secondary experience. The Rochester High School diploma will be granted to a student who has completed the requirements below. Participation in graduation ceremonies will be allowed only for students who meet these basic requirements which may be met through courses or independent study.

FOR 2016 STUDENTS: A Rochester High School diploma is designed to be earned in four years. Twenty-seven (27) credits are needed to graduate. Students are encouraged to consider a challenging academic course load and take full advantage of all the educational and extra-curricular opportunities available to them in order to be more fully prepared for their post-secondary experience. The Rochester High School diploma will be granted to a student who has completed the requirements below. Participation in graduation ceremonies will be allowed only
for students who meet these basic requirements which may be met through courses or independent study.

\[
\begin{array}{|l|c|}
\hline
\text{2015 Course credits} & \text{2016 Course credits} \\
\hline
\text{English} & \text{English} \quad 4.0 \text{ credits} \\
\text{Social Studies} & \text{Social Studies} \quad 3.0 \text{ credits} \\
\text{Science} & \text{Science} \quad 3.0 \text{ credits} \\
\text{Math} & \text{Math} \quad 3.0 \text{ credits} \\
\text{Physical Education} & \text{Physical Education} \* \quad 1.5 \text{ credits} \\
\text{Arts} & \text{Arts} \quad 1.0 \text{ credit} \\
\text{*Technology (embedded)/Digital Portfolio} & \text{*Technology course and} \\
\text{Senior Project} & \text{Digital Portfolio} \quad 1.0 \text{ credit} \\
\text{Health} & \text{Senior Project} \quad 1.0 \text{ credit} \\
\text{Electives} & \text{Health} \quad .5 \text{ credit} \\
\text{Electives} & \text{Electives - OYO} \quad .5 \text{ credits} \\
\text{Total Credits} & \text{Electives} \quad 5 \text{ credits} \\
\hline
\text{Total Credits} & \text{Total Credits} \quad 23 \text{ credits} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

• Students will be required to present their digital portfolio once a year as a Sophomore, Junior and Senior.

**Course Selection:** Students are encouraged to seek the advice of their parents, teachers, and the school counselor to make proper course selections. Parents/guardians are reminded that they have a strong responsibility to ensure that their students are enrolled in the most challenging courses according to prerequisite preparation. Students and their parents/guardians will meet with the personal learning plan coordinator, school administration, or guidance counselor/advisor to design a Personal Learning Plan and update it at least annually after having a PLP team meeting.

**Personal Learning Plans** – Every student grade 9-12 will develop a Personal Learning Plan and meet at least quarterly with their PLP Advisor during the 2014-15 school year. The PLP coordinator will facilitate meetings and training in the implementation process. Grades 6-8 will be in place by the 2015-16 school year.

**Independent Study/Internship/Foreign Exchange:** Consistent with our philosophy of encouraging self-directed learning, motivated students are urged to embark upon Independent Study projects/Internships. A completed Personal Learning Plan/Independent Study Contract must be approved and designed by the student, parent/guardian, guidance counselor, teacher advisor, and principal. Credits for these initiatives will be determined by the administration with input from the student’s support team.

**High School Courses taken outside RHS:** There are many benefits in taking courses offered outside RHS in terms of supplementing a student’s course of study through personal enrichment or advanced standing. High School courses taken outside RHS that receive credit by that institution will count for credits toward Rochester’s graduation requirements. The grades for these credits will be averaged into the student’s Rochester GPA.

Examples:
- Approved high school courses from another high school
- Correspondence courses
- “On-line” courses
- Courses taken at affiliated technical centers (ex. RTCC)

**College Courses:** Rochester High School maintains agreements with several local colleges so that 11th and 12th grade students may take college courses at reduced tuition rates. Students wishing to take additional course work must obtain approval through the RHS administration. College courses will be noted on the student’s transcript. Grades earned for college courses will not be averaged into the student’s RHS GPA. Courses taken at colleges will be at the student’s expense. Students may request, in writing, to the principal, a $200 reimbursement award toward each approved and successfully completed course. Students are responsible for completion of all
necessary paperwork in order to take college courses. Students are also responsible for arranging transportation at any classes taken off-campus.

- Students may access a free course waiver for a course taken at any Vermont State College by successfully completing the Introduction to College Studies Course through CCV.
- Vermont Technical College (VTC) will allow Rochester students to enroll as non-degree students in any VTC course(s) for which the student has the necessary background. VTC maintains the right to be the sole judge of the student’s qualification.
- Vermont Academy of Science and Technology (VAST) is a dual enrollment program offered by Vermont Technical College (VTC) to high school seniors. RHS students may apply, and if accepted, spend their senior year earning college credit. They may also choose to graduate high school from VAST. Students planning to graduate from RHS are required to have 24 credits, and may use VTC courses to satisfy RHS course requirements. VAST classes can be counted for RHS credit when needed to satisfy a RHS graduation requirement, but these grades will not be averaged into their RHS GPA. Students enrolling in VAST their senior year will use their six (6) semester GPA to qualify them for class rank and scholarship. This means students will use the GPA calculated at the end of their junior year. VAST students will be expected to meet all RHS Senior Project requirements to graduate from RHS. Graduation from VAST will be noted on the student’s transcript.

Transfer Students: A student transferring to Rochester High School will, upon receipt of an authorized transcript, be given appropriate credit and the accompanying grades for all courses completed. The guidance counselor will inform the student and his parent/guardian of any remaining requirements. Transfer students must satisfy all RHS course requirements for graduation. A student must have completed three (3) consecutive semesters at Rochester High School before he/she can be eligible for the top two honor positions: Valedictorian and Salutatorian.

Summer Remediation: Students may enroll in summer school and night school, on-line or correspondence courses approved by the RHS administration in order to make-up for courses failed during the school year. As with all courses, students must receive a passing grade of at least 65 or better to qualify for credit. Both grades will appear on the student’s transcript, but only the passing grade will be averaged in the student’s GPA.

Promotion Requirements: Students will typically enter their freshman year with no high school credits, but students who have passed high school courses before entering high school will have those credits entered into their transcript when they enter the 9th grade and become a freshman. These grades will be averaged in to the student’s GPA. A student must have the following minimum credits to be promoted to the next grade and be considered a member of the class.

- To be considered a sophomore you must have 12 credits
- To be considered a junior you must have 18 credits
- To be considered a senior you must have 20 credits
- To graduate you must have 25.5 credits for the 2015-16 school year.
- Note: Juniors will be expected to have at least 24.5 credits with at least 1 foreign language or world culture credit.

Early Graduation: Students, who plan to complete graduation requirements before their senior year and want to graduate early, must meet with the guidance counselor to discuss their plans, review their transcript, and complete and submit to the principal the Application for Early Graduation. Applications must be completed and submitted to the guidance counselor by September 30th of the school year in which the student proposed to graduate to be counted as a senior for class rank and valedictorian/salutatorian honors. RHS administration will make the determination of early graduation and put this decision in writing to the student and their parents/guardians.

G.P.A. (Grade Point Average): GPA is a numerical calculation determined by a student’s grades and credits earned. All courses accepted for graduation requirements are un-weighted. Grades of “P” (Pass), Audit, and classes in progress are not used in calculation GPA. In the event that a course needs to be retaken because of failing, the higher grade for the course will be used in computing GPA.
Class Rank: A student's class standing will be determined by their GPA, and is formally computed at the end of each academic year, with the exception of the senior year when the GPA will be computed and recorded at the end of the 3rd quarter and 4th quarter. Numerical values for letter grades are awarded as follows:

- A = 4.0
- A- = 3.7
- B+ = 3.3
- B = 3.0
- B- = 2.7
- C+ = 2.3
- C = 2.0
- C- = 1.7

Valedictorian & Salutatorian: The Valedictorian is the highest ranking member of the senior class. The Salutatorian is the second highest ranking member of the senior class. Both honors are selected after the completion of the third quarter of the senior year based on the student's cumulative grade point average. A student must have completed three (3) consecutive semesters at Rochester High School before he/she can be eligible for these top two honor positions. Rochester will factor to the hundredth place to determine Valedictorian and Salutatorian. If students GPA’s are tied at the hundredth place there will be co-valedictorians or co-salutatorians.

UVM Green and Gold Scholarship Nomination Process: UVM requests that each Vermont high school nominate the academically strongest Vermont student in the “rising” senior class. The nominee should be chosen without regard to the nominee’s potential interest in attending the University of Vermont. The student who has attained RHS’s highest academic distinction by the end of the junior year will be the nominee. Achievement in course work completed in three years of high school will guide the selection; standardized test scores may not provide the sole determination of excellence. The nominee must be a Vermont resident as defined by the University’s residency regulations. To receive the Green and Gold Scholarship, the nominee must apply for admission to the University of Vermont by January 15 and meet general admission requirements. If the nominee is admitted and chooses to enroll, he or she will be awarded a full-tuition scholarship for eight semesters provided full-time enrollment and the maintenance of a 3.00 grade point average.

Vermont State Colleges Salutatorian Scholarship: Castleton State College awards the Salutatorian of Vermont’s high school’s a full-tuition scholarship for eight semesters provided full-time enrollment and the maintenance of a 3.00 grade point average.

Other Scholarships: Rochester community offers a generous array of scholarships to graduating students. Each spring, the guidance counselor will distribute the Local Scholarship Application Form to 12th grade students. All students are encouraged to apply for these scholarships. Other scholarships may be awarded earlier in the school year. For example, the Park House Scholarship must be applied for and used throughout the senior year. The guidance counselor maintains a scholarship listing in the Guidance Office and on the Guidance Web page. Rochester students can actively work toward receiving scholarships by earning high grades, becoming involved in community service, and joining a variety of sports teams and clubs.

Guidance Department

The Guidance Counselor is dedicated to providing the guidance and counseling services needed to ensure that students will be able to maximize their potential and be able to achieve their educational and career goals. The Guidance Counselor provides a comprehensive developmental counseling program, which includes information about college, job placements, financial aid, technical study, work/study programs, and schedules for various tests. Several of these programs and activities of the Guidance Department are provided in group or classroom settings. A student can also meet privately with the guidance counselor to discuss education, career, or personal issues. The guidance counselor routinely requests appointments with students to review educational and career plans or to discuss issues that are of concern. The guidance counselor also assists students in planning their program of studies during the course registration process.

The Guidance Counselor also maintains a resource center with a wide variety of career information materials, catalogues, and videos of colleges and universities; and information on the Armed Services program is also available for student use.
We look forward to welcoming parents and community members into our school’s daily and extracurricular activities. We are proud of our school, students, and staff, and look forward to an exciting year of learning and new discoveries.

In order to accomplish our mission, the school counseling staff believes that the program must:

1. consult with faculty, staff, parents, and community members to coordinate resources and provide services to meet the needs of each child.
2. be an integral part of the educational environment, and be planned and managed to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum for all children.
3. support a positive school atmosphere so that school is an emotionally healthy place for all children and staff.
4. maintain an ongoing program of needs assessment and evaluation, with appropriate program modifications.
5. include individual and group counseling, class instruction and activities, coordination, and consultation components.
6. provide opportunities to help students understand and feel good about themselves, and develop a positive self-concept.
7. enable students to learn to solve problems, make appropriate decisions, develop coping skills, take responsible risks, handle life transitions, utilize effective organizational skills, and develop responsibility for their behaviors and resultant outcomes.
8. help students develop appropriate social skills such as assertiveness, friendship-making, and effective communication in order to get along with and understand others.
9. enable students to develop, organize and revise their personal, educational, and career goals.
10. foster students' educational success.

**School Counseling Office**

The school counseling office and school counseling services are available to all students. The office operates under an open door policy. Students and parents/guardians are welcome at any time to consult with the school counselor regarding personal, academic, college, and career issues.

Individual counseling is available to all students. The school counseling staff welcomes the opportunity to help students with personal issues. Should the concern warrant referral to outside agencies, the student and parent/guardian will be consulted. Confidentiality is strictly observed and a signed release is required before any information is passed between agencies.

Group counseling is also available at the request of students, teachers, and parents if the topic is in accordance with the developmental nature of the program, or at the discretion of the counseling staff. Periodic groups around important topics will be offered by the school counselor and outside agencies that come into the school for the benefit of the school community. Since this program is a recognized part of the school curriculum, parental permission is not required in order to participate in groups. Parents/guardians will however, be notified if their child has opted to attend a particular group. Should there be any concerns, the parent/guardian should contact the school counseling office.

Academic counseling is an integral part of the school counseling curriculum. All students in ninth grade will work with the school counselor to develop an appropriate four-year plan of courses. Four-year plans are designed with the individual student’s academic goals in mind. Each year, students will re-evaluate their plans and build their academic schedules accordingly. The goal of academic counseling is to best prepare students for chosen post-secondary endeavors.

College counseling is another major focus of the program. Many resources are available in the school counseling office to help college bound juniors and seniors plan for their post-secondary education. Classroom presentations are given in order to share with students information on all aspects of the college application process and in-school resources. On occasion, outside agencies such as VSAC also give pertinent presentations to students and their parents. College-bound students are encouraged to come to the school counseling office and make use of the extensive resource materials available. Students should also see the school counselor individually for the
purpose of developing an appropriate post-secondary application plan.

Career issues are another emphasis of the school counseling program. Through the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, Job Description File, and other career reference materials, students can become more knowledgeable about various careers, job opportunities and salaries. Much of this material is also incorporated in the classroom by Rochester School faculty and staff. Other resources are also available in the school library.

Throughout the course of a student’s school career, the school counselor will make every effort to know each individual student with respect to his/her aspirations, abilities, needs and desires, and will assist the student in fulfilling his/her immediate goals as well as those for the future.

Community Service Learning

In order to prepare students to be college, career, and citizen ready for the global society in which they will live, Rochester School requires Community Service Learning hours for graduation. Our community supports our school in countless way, so “giving back” to the community is vital. Students are expected to earn at least the following number of hours per year:

- Freshman – 15 hrs.
- Sophomore – 15 hours
- Junior – 10 hours
- Senior - 10 hours

TOTAL: AT LEAST 40 hours required for graduation

This community service must be documented on the school approved form and a reflection log must be completed with it. Community service must be pre-approved and be done OUTSIDE the school day UNLESS participating in an approved school community activity (table captains at lunch). The guidance counselor will review your CSL on an annual basis with students and will post possible CSL opportunities for students.

Extra-Curricular Activities, including Athletics

This handbook is designed to serve as a policy and information manual for extra-curricular activities at Rochester School. It delineate the roles and responsibilities of the school administration, coaches, activity advisors, students, parents, community members in contributing to a competitive, positive, extra-curricular activity program at the school. The handbook will also provide an overview of how these programs operate.

All Rochester School student participants in extra-curricular activities are required to read and understand this handbook and to follow rules and policies contained herein.

The Athletic Eligibility Form, which must be signed by both the student participant and his/her parent/guardian, acknowledges the student’s and parent’s responsibility to know the rules and policies and to follow them. “Not knowing” is not an excuse for breaking rules or disregarding policies. The Athletic Eligibility Form is located on the school’s website.

Additional rules or polices may be set by the coach who will put them in writing and have them sanctioned by the Athletic Director. These rules will be presented, in both written and oral form, to the team by the coach.

Philosophy

The Rochester School’s basic philosophy is that extra-curricular activities play an essential role in the overall school program. Extra-Curricular Activities thus represent very important, complex educational experiences, enhancing lessons learned in the regular classroom. Social, emotional, physical, and moral developments are particularly important factors deriving from the programs. While striving to achieve excellence in terms of individual and group success is a key goal, cooperation and participation are equally significant objectives.

Rochester students will be welcomed in all of our extra-curricular activities. No student will be “cut” or denied the opportunity to participate. Prior mastery of skills or physical attributes are not pre-requisites. Students may be ruled ineligible to participate due to other considerations, such as behavior or academic performance.
Rochester School strongly believes that academics come before extra-curricular activities. Every student’s primary responsibility is in the classroom – extra-curricular activities do NOT come first. This is frequently a difficult distinction for adolescents to make, and all adults in the school community need to be vigilant in emphasizing this reality. It is a priority of the Rochester School to ensure that any student requiring additional help/time to complete schoolwork is excused from extra-curricular activities in order to fulfill academic responsibilities.

Students have the legal right to their education. Although we believe that extra-curricular activities are an important aspect to that education, participation is a privilege, not a right.

In addition, it is essential that all students understand that they represent our school AND our community when they agree to participate in Rochester School extra-curricular activities. Responsible citizenship is required of all Rochester students.

With regard to athletics, the Vermont Principals’ Association (VPA) governs interscholastic athletic competition as well as other school-sponsored activities in the state of Vermont, regulating everything from the length of the season and number of games, to equipment requirements. Based upon student enrollment, the VPA has classified Rochester High School as a Division IV school for tournament play. 8th graders are allowed to play varsity sports if the school has fewer than 50 students per gender in grades 9 – 12, as per VPA guidelines. More information can be found at the VPA website, http://www.vpaonline.org

Rochester offers the following organized athletic programs, when student numbers allows:

- **Fall**: Boys and Girls Soccer (both Varsity and Middle School). X-Country running is offered on a year to year basis, according to interest.
- **Winter**: Boys and Girls Basketball (Varsity, Junior Varsity and Middle School - Grades 6, 7 & 8)
- **Spring**: Golf, Baseball, and Softball (Varsity and Middle School – Varsity golf and Middle School softball and baseball is offered on a year-to-year basis, according to interest).

**NOTE**: Little League and Babe Ruth baseball/softball, as well as elementary soccer and basketball teams are community-based programs, they are NOT affiliated with Rochester School. At the high school level, Rochester is a member of the Central Vermont League (CVL). Depending upon the sport, officials for games are assigned by either a regional or state supervisor.

**Goals and Beliefs for Rochester Teams and Students**

Rochester School believes that participation on interscholastic teams is an invaluable experience for every student, one that encourages healthy activity throughout one’s lifetime.

Athletes and teams should make it their goal to compete to the utmost of their ability in every game or race. However, player development is also an important consideration to address, posing coaches with the challenge of how to balance individual playing time with the development of the most competitive team possible.

As a result, the athletic department believes that, at the varsity level, coaches should try to arrange for each team member to participate in every game or race, with the understanding that this may be impossible due to the circumstances or competition. The principle guiding playing time for athletes at the varsity level should be that players should participate in situations in which they can succeed, and help the team succeed. Coaches are NOT expected to grant seniors preferential treatment in regards to playing time and starting positions, with the exception of “Senior Day/Night” (the last regular-season home game for each team).

While winning is also important at junior varsity, middle school and elementary level games, player development and participation are the primary goals. Thus, coaches insure that ALL players participate in every competition.

Exceptions to these policies are permitted to give coaches and school administration some discretion with regard to disciplinary actions, poor absence at pre-game practices; injury rehabilitation; etc.
Basic Student Prerequisites for Extra-Curricular Activities

Academic: The following requirements apply to all students who participate in interscholastic athletics. All students must meet all the requirements to be eligible to participate in athletics.

- A student must carry a full load of courses. (All students are eligible to participate in activities at the start of a new academic year, regardless of the previous year’s grades.)
- For the rest of the academic year, eligibility is determined the day that report cards are distributed to students. A student may fail ONE course and still remain eligible if he/she maintains a 70 average overall for the marking period (i.e., quarter, semester, or most recently-completed 12-week grading period). Any student with a grade of “incomplete” for a course is ineligible to participate until that grade is finalized.
- If a student is placed on out-of-school suspension, that student is not permitted to attend or participate in school activities or athletic events until the suspension is complete. A suspension is complete when the student has had a successful conference with his/her parents and the Principal.
- Students are required to be in school and attend all scheduled classes, including lunch period, TA periods, etc. in order to participate in that day’s activity. If a student needs to be absent for all or part of the day, that student needs to obtain prior written approval from the school Principal to do so. If a dance or other activity is scheduled for a weekend or other non-school day, students must have attended school and all of their classes the last school day before the event in order to be eligible to attend or participate. If a student misses school or classes because of a suspension, they will be considered absent, and the requirements above will be applicable.

- A student-athlete rendered ineligible due to academic performance may regain his/her eligibility half-way through the next marking period by earning passing grades in ALL of their classes.

Academic Eligibility

Grades are published at the mid-point and end of each marking period. Academic eligibility is be determined on the day report cards are sent home. Students who find themselves ineligible as a result of published grades may apply for Academic Probation status. The application must be received by the administration within three school days from the date of published grades. The probation period shall last for two weeks from the date of the signed (by the Principal) contract. The intent of this contract is to assist motivated students toward academic excellence and restore their participation in extra-curricular activities. The contract will state the student’s intent and agreement to abide by the conditions of academic probation. Participation in after school Academic Success Club (aka Homework Club) will be a mandatory part of the contract. Academic probation is available only ONCE after each set of grades are posted. During a period of ineligibility, a student will not take part in practices, meetings, games, performances, etc.

When report card grades are published (between sports seasons or other extra-curricular activities) and a student is academically ineligible, the student may take the initiative to apply for academic probation status within three school days from the date of published grades. The student may request that a progress report be generated at the end of the two weeks in order to determine eligibility for participation in the upcoming extracurricular activity.

Weekly Extracurricular Eligibility Agreement

Teachers and supervisory staff will submit weekly eligibility through BEAMS by 3 p.m. on Thursday. The teacher giving an eligibility will communicate with the student, parents and athletic director/extracurricular advisor. The athletic director will communicate with the coaches. This process will be used to determine eligibility for athletics and senior privileges. If the reason for ineligibility is behavioral, this could include field trips, dances, and any other school-related activity.

WEEKLY eligibility shall be determined by the classroom teacher using the following criteria:
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1. Chronic tardiness that results in disciplinary action by the administration.
2. The student will have participated appropriately so that no official disciplinary form has been written to the administration.
3. The student will have turned in homework — ON TIME — including meeting deadlines for his/her senior project.
4. The student will have turned in make-up work — ON TIME.
5. The student will maintain a passing average of 70 or higher in his or her classes. Students are allowed no more than one grade to fall below this average.

Teachers will contact the student and parent if they are non-eligible due to having failing grades. If not improved by the 2nd week, the teacher will e-mail the parent, the counselor and principal stating that the student is still failing. The principal will then notify the athletic director that the student is ineligible.

The athletic director will review weekly eligibility forms. Those students not meeting all five (5) criteria listed above will result in the student being ineligible for one week. If the student becomes eligible the following week, then the student can resume playing. The teacher must notify the student, parent, guidance counselor, and principal. The principal will then notify the athletic director.

For athletics, all ineligible players/participants will dress for home games and sit with their team. They will not be allowed to travel to away games. Ineligible players will not participate in games. All ineligible athletes will report to practice with their missing assignments and homework and will sit in a coach’s designated location to finish work and assignments. They will be allowed to observe the practice if there is an opportunity to do so. Any athlete who becomes ineligible due to behavior will be required to attend practice and sit in an area designated by the coach to observe practice. Ineligible athletes who become a distraction during a practice will be removed from the team roster. If a student athlete becomes ineligible, either academically or for behavioral issues, for more than two weeks during the season, his/her roster status will be terminated.

Student athletes are just that. Their academics are viewed as a priority by Whitcomb Athletics, not as a sidebar. A student needing additional academic assistance from either a teacher or tutor will, upon notifying his or her coach, be excused from attending practice to focus on academic issues.

Academic Make-up Work

Students are expected to see teachers before an athletic or other school event to get assignments and to complete their academic work. This may include (academic) after school sessions. Students, coaches and advisors should understand that practices, rehearsals, competitions, or performances are not an acceptable excuse for failing to complete make-up work or for attending after-school help sessions.

Homework Club

- Is available for any student in middle or high school who wishes to receive extra help in an academic subject.
- Is mandated for students who are determined to be academically ineligible for participation in an extra-curricular activity and wish to return to this activity.
- Is available four days a week after school in pre-determined location to be announced.

Training Rules

All student athletes are required to know and comply with the following rules:

- Student-athletes are expected to attend each practice and game. Frequent absences may result in the student-athlete being suspended or dropped from the team.
- Student-athletes will not be permitted to practice or play on the day of an unexcused absence or tardiness to school.
- Frequent absences from practice may result in the student-athlete being suspended or dropped from the team.
• Student-athletes and their families should give their coaches advanced notice of planned absences, and should consult with the Principal to determine whether or not this absence is excused or unexcused.
• Missing practice immediately before a game, whether excused or unexcused absences, may impact the student-athlete’s playing time – this is a coach’s decision and NOT an overall policy.
• In-school disciplinary actions may also impact a student-athlete’s eligibility on a day-to-day basis.
• Student participation in an extra-curricular activities are not an acceptable excuse for being tardy or absent from school the next day.
• High school athletes must attend TEN practices before participating in interscholastic competition.

The athletic eligibility form, which must be signed by both the student-athlete and the parent/guardian, acknowledges the student-athlete’s responsibility to know the rules and follow them. “Not knowing” is not an excuse. Additional rules may be imposed by the coach. These rules will be in writing and presented to both the team and the Athletic Director.

Health & Safety

• Student-athletes must provide proof of private or public health insurance before being allowed to participate in practices or games (VPA Rule). Insurance and Athletic Eligibility forms are on the schools website.
• Middle and High school athletes must have had a physical examination within the last two years of participation in team sports. The medical professional performing this physical must sanction the athlete’s fitness to partake in practices and games. A record of this examination must be given to the Athletic Director before the first day of practice.
• All athletes must have emergency medical information on file with the Athletic Director, who will provide copies to coaches.
• Student-athletes playing soccer or basketball are no longer required to wear mouth guards during games, but participants are strongly encouraged to wear them during practices and games.

Equipment

Some activities will require students to furnish basic equipment in order to participate. Participants unable to provide these items on their own should see their activity advisor or the Principal, who will assist in making arrangements to address the situation.

Student “On/Off Campus Misconduct Policy”

Any report of student misconduct that is in violation of school policy will be investigated by the school administration and/or designated persons. The investigating parties will utilize other resources such as (but not limited to) law enforcement, citizens, school personnel, personnel from other schools (when applicable) and students. Students are required to follow the rules and regulation of the Rochester Student Handbook at all times, both on and off campus.

Any report of student conduct that is in violation of school policy will be investigated by the school administration and her designees. The investigating parties will utilize other resources such as (but not limited to) law enforcement, citizens, school personnel, personnel from other schools (as applicable), and students.

In the event that a student’s conduct is in violation of school policy, the student will be subject to all current consequences. These consequences include those specific to violations of the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Chemical Abuse, Bullying and Harassment policies.

Those students participating in extracurricular activities who are in violation of the On/Off Campus Misconduct Policy are subject to the following consequences:

• First violation: Consequences of Board Policy and two-week suspension from activity participation.
• Second violation: Consequences of Board Policy and removal from activity participation for the duration.
Safety of Student Participants

- The VPA recommends that all athletes wear mouth guards during basketball games, and encourages individuals to use them at practices. Mouth guards are available from the athletic director for a small fee.
- Athletes are forbidden from wearing jewelry in interscholastic athletic competitions.
- It is good common sense for student-athletes to drink lots of fluids, eat well, and get plenty of rest. Parents/guardians, coaches, and teachers need to work as a team to help young athletes balance their busy lives in a healthy manner.
- All major injuries must be reported to the Athletic Director. Parents/caregivers should be notified immediately if at all possible. If they are unavailable, the school will call the person whom the parent/guardian has designated as their emergency contact.
- An adult chaperone will accompany an injured student to the hospital, if at all possible.
- Any student who has received medical care due to an injury incurred during a school activity must be cleared by a physician before returning to participate.
- All coaches MUST provide athletes with hydration breaks during both games and practices. Water MUST be available, players are encouraged to provide their own sports drinks as well.

Commitment to Extra-Curricular Activity

Students and their families need to be aware that EVERY Extra-Curricular Activity at Rochester School may schedule some rehearsals/practices and/or games during school vacation periods. Students and their families should do everything possible to accommodate these schedules. The advisor or coach of any activity that requires student participation during school vacations will make this very clear at the beginning of the season or activity period. Parents are asked to contact the advisor/coach in charge of the activity with questions regarding future planning.

VPA mandates place the following limitations on varsity sports scheduling:

- **Fall Sports**: Practices may begin in August. Soccer teams may play a maximum of 14 games. State Championships for soccer are on a Saturday in November.
- **Winter Sports**: Practices may begin in November. Basketball teams may play a maximum of 20 games. Championships are in March. “Note that girls’ and boys’ tournament may be over February vacation!”
- **Spring Sports**: practice begins in March. Baseball/softball teams may play a maximum of 16 games. Finals scheduled for early June.

Rochester School recognizes that many opportunities are available to students to participate in activities outside of school. These may include dramatic or musical productions, AAU teams, recreational and competitive skiing, off-season soccer and baseball programs, etc.

**While Rochester student-athletes are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities, when there is a conflict, it is the policy of the school that school activities must come first.**

A student missing ANY group activity to participate in a non-school activity may forfeit the privilege to partake in the school activity or be asked to withdraw. The student’s status will be determined by the school administration.

Uniforms

When appropriate, activity participants will be issued team uniforms by the supervising adult. **Uniforms are property of Rochester School – the student must recognize that he/she is borrowing these garments.** It is the student participant’s responsibility to keep the uniform neat, clean, in good repair and in good taste. The student must return it in good condition to the appropriate adult **within a week of the activity’s conclusion.**
Students failing to return their uniforms will be charged a replacement fee. Only when that fee is paid will the individual be eligibility to receive a uniform in the future.

Travel

All students will be transported by bus TO AND FROM all games. The Rochester School expectation is that students are to come and go with the group unless PRIOR arrangements have been made between parents/guardians and the adult in charge. Students will not be allowed to ride home with other student drivers, girlfriends/boyfriends that are not enrolled in our school, other parents, or anyone other than parents/caregivers without a note provided to the Principal at least 24 hours prior to the trip.

The following rules apply to group travel:

1. Students and adults will dress appropriately. Changing on the bus is NOT allowed. Neither is changing for an activity an acceptable excuse for missing class.
2. The adults in charge are responsible for proper conduct on the bus.

Varsity Letters, Awards, and Athlete Recognition

There will be an “Athletic Awards” night at the conclusion of each sports season to honor our student-athletes for their efforts and accomplishments. Students and parents/guardians should make every possible effort to attend. Coaches will speak about their team’s season, and they will bring each individual player to the stage. These events are pot-luck dinners, held in the gymnasium. Families, staff, and the public are invited to attend. Dinner is at 6:00, with presentation of awards to follow around 7:00.

The hierarchy of awards that has evolved over the years at Rochester School is as follows:

1. Student-athletes successfully completing their first season of competition at the Varsity level will be honored with a Rochester letter.
2. Student-athletes will also receive a commemorative sports pin for their sport(s).
3. In commemoration of their year of graduation, student-athletes who earn a second varsity letter will be awarded “their numbers” and whatever necessary sports pin(s).
4. Student-athletes will receive a “bar” for each subsequent letter in a sport after earning their pin.
5. Student-athletes who earn three letters in one sport, or six letters overall, are eligible to receive a varsity jacket. The athletic department will pay $100 towards the cost of the jacket. (Please see the Athletic Director for more details.) Student athletes need to order Varsity jackets before graduation. If ordered after graduation, students must pay the full charge.
6. Student-athletes are also eligible for “all-league” honors, which are awarded at this ceremony. These “CVL” all-star winners receive a special certificate.
7. Team captains receive captain’s pins.

Summer / “Off-Season” Athletics

Rochester student-athletes are NOT required to participate in any activities related to a school sport during the off-season or summertime.

It should be noted that a widely-held coaching ideal states “great athletes are made in the off-season.” The athletic department encourages Rochester students to be active in their sports’ off-seasons, and will help make arrangements for individuals to join summer league teams, attend camps or clinics, etc. Please contact coaches or the Athletic Director for more information.

VPA Misconduct Rules

• Any severe misconduct (i.e. red card in soccer, etc.) resulting in ejection from an event requires that the athlete be suspended, by the VPA, for the next contest. The player will also be required to meet with the
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Athletic Director, Principal, and coach for possible further disciplinary action.

- A player making physical contact with an official will be suspended from playing for a period of one calendar year. (VPA Rule)

Local Misconduct Rules

In the event of other incidents of misconduct (yellow cards, technical fouls, taunting, obscene gestures, post-game or practice incidents, etc.) the athlete will meet with the coach, and may be referred to the AD and/or Principal for disciplinary action.

Confidentiality

The privacy of a complaining student who complains of misconduct, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses will be respected as much as possible, consistent with the legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

Adult Facilitator’s/Coach’s Responsibility to Parents/Caregivers

Adult facilitators/coaches need to provide positive yet honest feedback to parents, and keep them informed of any changes in practice/rehearsal and game/performance schedules. In the event of cancellations, it is the advisors’ and coaches’ responsibility to inform students and their families.

Adult facilitators/coaches MUST inform parents/caregivers of ANY instances of injury or fatigue that are observed during practices/rehearsals or games/performances.

Coaches MAY ask parents/caregivers NOT to attend practices (i.e. "closed" practices).

Coaches and Practices

1. Practice sessions for JV and Varsity teams should not exceed two hours. Middle school practice sessions are limited to 1½ hours.
2. No unsupervised practices are allowed. If proper supervision is not possible, practice will be canceled. “Captains’ practices” are a violation of VPA regulations and will not be allowed.
3. Sunday practices are permitted only if cleared in advance by the Athletic Director and in preparation for a Monday competition. Any Sunday practice must be held in the p.m. hours, and be OPTIONAL for the student-athletes. No player will be penalized for missing Sunday practice.
4. When school is closed due to inclement weather, all athletics will be canceled. The only exceptions will be made by special permission of the Athletic Director and the Principal.
5. Whenever possible, Middle School practices will be held immediately after school.
6. Basketball practice times will be determined by gym availability. The AD will prepare a schedule each month. The coach is responsible for distributing this schedule to players and parents.

VPA State Tournament Participation

It is the policy of Rochester School that each team will apply for tournament play if the head coach of that team and the Athletic Director agree, based on that team’s performance during the season. In the event that the coach and Athletic Director disagree, the Principal will render the final decision.

Volunteer Protocols and Procedures

Individuals interested in volunteering in our school must register to volunteer using our prior to performing volunteer services within our school. All volunteers are expected to abide by all applicable Rochester School policies and procedures, federal and state laws and
Rochester Rockets Rock!!

regulations, and other administrative rules while providing service within our school or a school-sponsored field trip or activity. Expectations for volunteers has been created to summarize some of the key policies, procedures and rules applicable to volunteers. All potential volunteers must complete a volunteer application form and sign an Agency of Human Services (AHS) Consent for Release of Registry Information form. It can take up to 10 days to be processed, so completing the forms promptly is recommended. Most forms have to be completed each school year.

In order to protect our students from potential abuse or exploitations, school districts are performing a Vermont criminal record check screening through the Vermont Criminal Information Center (VCIC) on all individuals interested in volunteering in our schools or athletic department.

No individual subject to the criminal record checks shall be eligible to serve (or continue to serve) as a volunteer if they have been convicted of one or more of the following crimes (taken from 16 V.S.A. §§ 252 and 1698). The list of disqualifying crimes is not meant to be all inclusive. For convictions not listed, eligibility to volunteer shall be considered on a case by case basis. The totality of the crimes shall also be considered when determining eligibility to volunteer. The decision of the Superintendent in these matters shall be final:

• Sex offender crimes listed in 13 V.S.A. § 5401(10) (sex offender definition for registration purposes):
• Crimes involving a victim listed in 13 V.S.A. § 5301(7)
• Contributing to juvenile delinquency under 13 V.S.A. § 1301
• Cruelty to children under 13 V.S.A. § 1304
• Cruelty by person having custody under 13 V.S.A. § 1305
• Prohibited acts under 13 V.S.A. § §§ 2632 and 2635
• Displaying obscene materials to minors under 13 V.S.A. § 2804b
• Sexual exploitation of children under 13 V.S.A. chapter 64
• Drug sales, including selling or dispensing under 18 V.S.A. §§ 4230(b), 4231(b), 4232(b), 4233(b), 4234(b), 4234a, 4234b, 4235(c), 4235a(b), and 4237
• Sexual activity by a caregiver, under 33 V.S.A. § 6902(D)
• Crimes that are cause for licensing actions listed in 16 V.S.A. § 1698(1)(B)-(D)

In addition to the above disqualification, it is the discretion of the Principal/Director to accept or not accept specific individuals as volunteers, and all decisions related to the continuation of a volunteer’s service, and their decision on these matters is considered final.

Child and Adult Abuse Registry Checks and FBI Fingerprint Supported Criminal Background Check

In addition to the Vermont criminal record check screening (outlined above), all volunteers who provide direct services to students that involves extensive unsupervised contact with school children (e.g. over-night chaperones, volunteer coach/adviser, student mentors, etc.) shall be required to undergo the following checks:

1. A registry check with the Department of Children and Families (DCF/AHS); and,
2. For volunteer services that begin on or after 1/1/13, an FBI fingerprint supported criminal background check under the National Child Protection Act which is processed through the Vermont Criminal Information Center (VCIC). This process will involve obtaining fingerprints
at a Sheriff’s or State Police office. In order to complete this step, the volunteer will need to get the necessary forms from the Elementary School Admin. Asst. or the WNWSU. The prospective volunteer must complete and submit the fingerprint receipt upon completion of the fingerprinting process. Individuals will automatically be disqualified from volunteering if his/her name appears with a substantiated report of abuse or neglect as listed on the DCF registry. If volunteer services commence prior to the completion of the registry check process, continued services would be contingent upon satisfactory registry check and FBI criminal records check results.

**Web Publishing Guidelines**

All content published via the school district network must comply with the following:

1. All Web pages should meet goals of high quality in both style and presentation and support the educational mission of the school district.
2. All school Web publications will reside primarily on the school's web server.
3. Content should always be current and updated. This includes checking to make sure the links on your website are functioning.
4. Correct grammar and spelling are expected. All information must be verifiable.
5. All publications must comply with all state, federal, and international laws concerning copyright, intellectual property rights, and legal uses of network computers.
6. Each teacher is responsible for his/her website including the content and updating of information posted on the teacher's homepage.
7. Permission to publish a child's name, picture and/or work must have been obtained by using the Web Release Agreement. A copy of this signed document must be filed with the Administration in each school.
   a. Published documents should NOT include student or staff personal information: a home phone number, street address or box number, names of other family members, or parent/guardian work addresses or phone numbers.
   b. Documents will not include any information that indicates the physical location of a student at a given time.
8. Web pages may not contain business advertising (web banners, commercial logos, etc.) or be used for commercial purposes.
9. Links to “third party sites” must be identified and the following disclosure statement must be present on the page: “Links to third party sites do not indicate support or endorsement by the Windsor Northwest SU or its member districts. Content provided by these sites is not the responsibility of the Windsor Northwest SU or its member districts.”
10. Links from any pages on the district, school or personal web site to any personal pages that individuals may have with other Internet Service Providers, to personal matters including any political or religious affiliation or to commercial concerns and/or ventures of faculty, staff, parents or students are not permitted.

11. Server space and network performance must be considered when developing and publishing web pages. Large graphics and/or multiple graphic images should be kept to a minimum.
12. Building administrators should be contacted if there are any questions regarding the appropriateness of information to be published.

**Student Computer Network Acceptable Use Agreement**

Success in education, employment, and civic involvement increasingly demands the ability to effectively use technology. Access to the district’s information technology resources will be provided to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Students and their parents must read the following guidelines, sign the form, and return it to the office before network access will be granted.
Student Technology Guidelines

1. Students are to use network resources for educational purposes only. Access to the district’s computer network is a privilege. Use of the computers or network for any illegal activity is prohibited.

2. Students are to cite all work that is taken from the Internet or electronic sources. Staff will help those students who are unsure about documenting these sources. Plagiarism, in any form, will not be tolerated.

3. Junior and senior high school students must have permission from a classroom teacher when using network resources in public areas such as the library and computer lab. Elementary students will be supervised by faculty and/or staff while using the computers. Students are not allowed to use computers in areas where there is no adult supervision.

4. Students are not to access Internet sites that are pornographic, violent, or obscene. Sites which are accidentally accessed should be reported immediately to the Director of Information Technology or supervising teacher. All Internet activity will be filtered and monitored.

5. Students are not to access personal e-mail accounts or instant messaging programs while using the school network. Social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and similar sites are not permitted.

6. Students are not allowed in chat rooms, message boards, blogs, or other public forums where anonymous messages or personal information may be posted.

7. Students are not to use network resources to send or display offensive messages or pictures, use obscene language, or harass/insult others.

8. Students are not to intentionally waste resources including, but not limited to, paper, ink, or network space. Network bandwidth is considered a ‘resource’ and as such, students are not permitted to partake in activities that would unnecessarily consume network bandwidth.

9. Students are not to trespass into another network user’s work, files, or folders. Students are not permitted under any circumstance to access the local root drive or operating system files on any computer. Students are not allowed to access any administrative files or folders. Students are not permitted to access any network shares unless approval has been granted by the Technology Coordinator.

10. Students are not to share their passwords or use another student’s password to access the network.

11. Students are not to download and/or install software on any computer. Students are not allowed to alter or modify any computer hardware or software configuration.

12. Students are not to play computer games, applications, and/or audio/video CD-ROMs that are not part of an established curriculum.

13. Students are responsible for the appropriate use of the school’s technology. Vandalism of equipment, software, or files may require cost reimbursement by the network user.

14. Students may not use any network resources for commercial or political activities.

15. The use of personal equipment such as, but not limited to, cell phones, laptops, and cameras on the district’s computer network is prohibited.

16. Users are responsible for making backup copies of documents that are critical to them.

17. Do not tamper with or open any printer. The IT Department should be contacted if a printer is not working.

18. Users are responsible for taking precautions to prevent viruses on network and equipment.

19. Any problems that occur with a computer should be immediately reported to the classroom teacher or the IT Department.

Violations of the above guidelines will result in the loss of computer access. Additional disciplinary action may be warranted as noted in the school handbook.

NOTE: You must sign the Handbook Acknowledgment Form in order for your child to have permission to use the school computer network.
School Board Policies

School Board policies are available from the school office. Please contact the school office if you would like a copy of any policy.

Title IX

It is a violation of Federal law to discriminate in educational programs in public schools based upon gender. If a student or his/her parents believe he/she has been denied educational benefits and/or been subjected to discrimination in any Rochester School program or activity based upon gender, a grievance may be filed with the Principal.

School Board policies are available from the school office. Please contact the school office if you would like a copy of this or any other policy.

Access

The school will maintain a limited open forum as defined in the Federal Equal Access Act. Fair opportunities will be provided for all student groups, regardless of religious, political, or philosophical viewpoints, to conduct meetings within the limited forum, provided that:

1. The meeting is voluntary and student-initiated.
2. There is no sponsorship of the meeting by the school, the government, or its agents or employees.
3. Employees or agents of the school or government are present at religious meetings only in a non-participatory capacity.
4. The meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school.
5. Non-school persons do not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend activities of student groups. No club or activity meeting within the limited open forum will be sponsored or endorsed by the school.

Policy On Prevention Of Harassment Of Students *

I. Purposes

The Rochester School is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. This policy addresses incident(s) and/or conduct that occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity, or incident(s) and/or conduct that does not occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity but where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated.

Harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. It is the policy of the District/Independent School to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity, to the extent required by law. In addition, retaliation is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. Consistent with these purposes, annually, each school shall select two or more designated employees to receive complaints and shall publicize their availability in any publication of the District/Independent School that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.

It is the intent of the District/Independent School to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with student rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The purpose of this harassment policy is to prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that is likely to substantially disrupt the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources, or create a hostile learning environment.

The District/Independent School shall promptly and effectively address all complaints of harassment in accordance with the procedures established by this policy. In cases where harassment is substantiated, the school shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline. Such
serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a person for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the school's other disciplinary policies or codes of conduct.

II. Definitions

“Harassment” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race, creed,color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity ¹ 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. Harassment includes conduct as defined above and may also constitute one or more of the following:

1. Sexual harassment, ² which means conduct that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur:
   a. submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education, academic status or progress; or
   b. (ii) submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student

2. Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to cultural customs.

3. Harassment of members of other protected categories, means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

* Vermont Department of Education Policy on Prevention of Harassment of Students

1. See 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1).

2. See Appendix A.

3. Effective July 1, 2007, 1 V.S.A. §144 defines “gender identity” as “an individual’s actual or perceived gender identity, or gender-related characteristics intrinsically related to an individual’s gender or gender-identity, regardless of the individual’s assigned sex at birth.”

B. “Complaint” means an oral or written report by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of harassment.

C. “Complainant” means a student who has filed an oral or written complaint with a school employee or a student who is the target of alleged harassment in a report made by another person.

D. “Designated employee” means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of harassment pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1).

E. “Employee” includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the District/Independent School, an agent of the school, a school board member/member of the board of trustees, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, “agent of the school” includes supervisory union staff.

F. “Notice” means a written complaint or oral information that harassment may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the harassment, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred.

G. “Retaliation” means any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, intimidation, and reprisal.

H. “School administrator” means a superintendent, principal/head of school/technical center director or his/her designee.

III. Reporting Student Harassment

A. Student reporting: Any student who believes that s/he has been harassed under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute harassment, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any other school employee.

B. School employee reporting: Any school employee who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute harassment shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and immediately report it to a designated employee. Any school employee who overhears or directly receives information about conduct that might constitute harassment shall immediately report the information to a designated employee. If one of the designated employees is the person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the complaint shall be immediately filed with the other designated employee or the school administrator.

C. Other reporting: Any other person who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute student harassment under this policy should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee.

D. Documentation of the report: If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing in a harassment complaint form, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, and the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses.

E. False Complaint: Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding harassment may be subject to disciplinary action.
IV. Procedures Following a Report

A. Notification:8 Upon receipt of a complaint of harassment the designated employee shall immediately inform the school administrator of the complaint. In addition, the designated employee shall immediately provide a copy of this harassment policy to the complainant and accused individual. If either the complainant or the accused individual is under the age of 18, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be: (1) promptly notified that a complaint of harassment has been filed and provided with a copy of this policy; (2) notified if an alternative dispute resolution method will be offered and, if it occurs, of the outcome of any such attempt; and (3) notified in writing of the results of the complaint investigation. All notification letters shall be subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information. A school administrator may seek waiver of confidentiality rights of the accused in order to inform the complainant of any alternative action taken in cases where the school determined that harassment or other misconduct occurred.

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8 This statutory definition of sexual harassment describes only the “quid pro quo” form of sexual harassment that can occur between an adult and student. However, sexual harassment may also include student to student conduct as well as conduct that creates a hostile environment.

8 See 16 V.S.A. §14(c)(3).

B. Investigation: Unless special circumstances are present and documented, such as reports to the Department for Children and Families (“DCF”) or the police, the school administrator shall, no later than one school day after the filing of a complaint with a designated employee, initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning himself/herself or a designated employee as the investigator. No person who is the subject of a complaint shall conduct such an investigation.

No later than five school days from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator shall submit a written initial determination to the school administrator. The report shall include a statement of the findings of the investigator as to whether the allegations have been substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes harassment. When the initial determination concludes that an accused student has engaged in harassment, the school administrator shall use his or her discretion to decide the appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action. In cases where the investigation has identified other conduct that may constitute a violation of other school disciplinary policies or codes of conduct, the designated employee shall report such conduct to the school administrator for action in accordance with relevant school policies.

All levels of internal review8 of the investigator’s initial determination, and the issuance of a final decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the District/Independent School, be completed within 30 calendar days after the review is requested.

C. Action on a substantiated complaint: If, after investigation, the school finds that the alleged conduct occurred and that it constitutes harassment, the school shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment and prevent any recurrence of harassment. Such action may include warning, reprimand, 8 An “internal review” is any procedure provided by the school through policy or practice and is not the same as an “independent review” as described below.

education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension, and/or expulsion of a student, and warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension and/or termination of an employee.

D. Alternative dispute resolution: At all stages of the investigation and determination process, school officials are encouraged to make available to complainants alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, for resolving complaints. The following should be considered before pursuing alternative dispute resolution methods: (1) the nature of the accusations, (2) the age of the complainant and the accused individual, (3) the agreement of the complainant, and (4) other relevant factors such as any disability of the target or accused individual, safety issues, the relationship between the target and accused individual, or any history of repeated misconduct/harassment by the accused individual. If an alternative dispute resolution is either not appropriate or is unsuccessful, the school administrator shall initiate or cause to be initiated an investigation of the allegations in accordance with the timelines established in this policy.

E. Appeal: A person determined to be in violation of this policy and subjected to disciplinary action under it may appeal the determination and/or the disciplinary action(s) taken in the same manner as other disciplinary actions, in accordance with the District’s/Independent School’s discipline policy, applicable statutes, or collective bargaining agreements.

Independent Review: A complainant may request an independent review if s/he: (1) believes that the school did not correctly analyze the complaint and failed to conduct an investigation of the incident because the school believed the alleged conduct did not constitute possible harassment, (2) is dissatisfied with the final determination following an investigation as to whether harassment occurred, or (3) believes that although a final determination was made that harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem. The complainant shall make such a request in writing to the superintendent of schools/head of school. Upon such request, the superintendent/head of school shall promptly initiate an independent review by a neutral person as described under 16 V.S.A. § 565(f), and shall cooperate with the independent reviewer so that s/he may proceed expeditiously. The review shall consist of an interview of the complainant and relevant school officials and a review of the written materials from the school’s investigation. Upon completion of the independent review, the reviewer shall advise the complainant and school officials in writing: (1) as to the sufficiency of the school’s investigation, its determination, and/or the steps taken by the school to correct any harassment found to have occurred, and (2) of recommendations of any steps the school might take to prevent further harassment.
from occurring. A copy of the independent review report shall be sent to the Commissioner. The reviewer shall advise the student of other remedies\(^1\) that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the school for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records. The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the District/Independent School. The District/Independent School may request an independent review at any stage of the process.

F. **Retaliation:** It is unlawful for any person to retaliate against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. A person may violate this antiretaliation provision regardless of whether the underlying complaint of harassment is substantiated.

\(^{1}\) See 16 V.S.A. §14(a).
\(^{2}\) See 16 V.S.A. §565(b)(1)(E).
\(^{3}\) An “internal review” is any procedure provided by the school through policy or practice and is not the same as an “independent review” as described below.
\(^{4}\) See 16 V.S.A. §565(b)(1)(C).
\(^{5}\) See 16 V.S.A. §65(f).

V. **Confidentiality and Record Keeping**

A. The privacy of the complainant, the accused individual, and the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the District’s/Independent School’s obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.

B. The Superintendent or school administrator shall assure that a record of any complaint, its investigation and disposition, as well as any disciplinary or remedial action taken following the completion of the investigation, is maintained by the District/Independent School in a confidential file accessible only to authorized persons. All investigation records, including but not limited to, the complaint form, interview notes, additional evidence, and the investigative report, shall be kept for at least six years after the investigation is completed.

VI. **Reporting to Other Agencies**

When a complaint made pursuant to this policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. §4911, et seq. must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. §6901 et seq.

If a harassment complaint is made in a public school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds for licensing action under 16 V.S.A. Chapter 51, Professional Educators, the Superintendent shall report the alleged conduct to the Commissioner of the Department of Education, and, if a principal reports the alleged conduct to the Commissioner of the Department of Education, s/he must also report it to his/her Superintendent. If a harassment complaint is made in an independent school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds under 16 V.S.A. Chapter 51, Professional Educators, for licensing action, the head of school is encouraged to report the alleged conduct to the Commissioner of the Department of Education.

Nothing in this policy shall preclude anyone from reporting any incidents and/or conduct that may be considered a criminal act to law enforcement officials.

VII. **Dissemination of Information, Training, and Data Reporting**

A. **Dissemination of Information.**\(^1\) Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, the District/Independent School shall provide notice of this policy and procedures to students, custodial parents or guardians of students, and employees. Notice to students shall be in age-appropriate language and include examples of harassment. At a minimum, this notice shall appear in any publication of the District/Independent School that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for the District/Independent School.

B. **Training.**\(^1\) The school administrator shall use her/his discretion in developing age appropriate methods of discussing the meaning and substance of this policy with students to help prevent harassment. The school administrator shall implement training for school staff within the context of professional development to enable staff to recognize, prevent and respond to harassment.

C. **Data Gathering.** Public school districts shall provide the Vermont Department of Education with data requested by the Commissioner.

VIII. **Alternative Complaint Process**

In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a harassment complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a harassment complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the addresses noted below:

Vermont Human Rights Commission
14–16 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)
(877) 294-9200 (tty)
(802) 828-2481 (fax)
Email: human.rights@state.vt.us
Designated Employees

The following employees of the Rochester School have been designated by the District/Independent School to receive harassment complaints pursuant to this policy and 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1):

Name: Catherine Knight  
Title: Principal  
Contact information: Rochester School  
222 South Main Street  
Rochester, VT 05767  
Phone: 802/767-3161  
Email: c knight@wnwsu.org

Name: Dea Kimball  
Title: Guidance Counselor  
Contact information: Rochester School  
222 South Main Street  
Rochester, VT 05767  
Phone: 802/767-3161  
Email: d kimball@wnwsu.org

Additional Information Required for Handbook

State Items

Hazing and Harassment: Per 16 V.S.A. § 565(d), school boards must annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, provide to students and their parents or guardians notice of the hazing and harassment policies and procedures. The notice to students should be in age-appropriate language and should include examples, and must, at minimum, appear in any publication of the school district that sets forth comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school. In addition, each school building must identify two designated employees to receive reports of hazing and harassment and there must be a procedure to publicize their availability.

Comprehensive School Plan for Responding to Student Misbehavior: 16 V.S.A. § 1161a(a) requires schools to adopt a comprehensive plan for responding to student misbehavior.

Technical Center Offerings: 16 V.S.A. § 1541a(b) provides that school boards that maintain high schools must provide the names and addresses of students to the technical center for its region so that they may be contacted and notified of technical center offerings.

Periodic Release Time Courses: 16 V.S.A. §§ 1052-1053 provide that upon request of a religious group, periodic released time religious education courses shall be included in public school catalogs and listings of course offerings, provided that all such course offerings are identified as given under the provisions of 16 V.S.A. Chapter 24. Whether such provisions are legal under current state and/or federal constitutional analysis is as yet undetermined.

Periodic Hearing and Vision Screening Guidelines: Per 16 V.S.A. § 1422, the Commissioner of Health, in cooperation with the Commissioner of Education, is responsible for developing research-based guidelines for students’ periodic hearing and vision screenings by school districts and primary care providers.

Military Recruitment: 16 V.S.A. § 563(27) requires school boards to annually inform every student in grades 9-12 and his or her parent or guardian of the right to opt out of having the school provide the student’s contact information (i.e., name,
address, telephone listing) to military recruiters and/or institutions of higher education, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 7908(a).

School Choice: Under 16 V.S.A. § 563(28), school boards must annually inform students and their parents or guardians of their options for school choice under applicable laws or policy.

High School Completion Program: Vermont’s High School Completion Program (16 V.S.A. § 1049a) allows an individual between the ages of 16 and 22 who has not yet earned a high school diploma to request an individual graduation plan in order to obtain a high school diploma. Educational services may be provided by a public or approved independent high school, an approved provider, or a combination of these. School districts shall award a high school diploma to persons who successfully complete their approved graduation education plans.

School Safety Programs: Pursuant to the State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Policies (SBE), every school district receiving federal and/or state funds for program support must develop a safety program, institute the program, and monitor it to ensure the program is kept current. (SBE Rule 4101) In addition, school districts shall adopt an alcohol and drug policy that is in keeping with SBE Rule 4200 et seq.

Life-Threatening Allergies and Life-Threatening Chronic Illnesses: 16 V.S.A. §563(29) requires school boards to assign an employee to annually inform the parents of students with life-threatening allergies and life-threatening chronic illnesses of the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable federal and/or state statutes and federal and/or state regulations. This would include notice of the provisions of 16 V.S.A. §1387 that permits students with life-threatening allergies or asthma to possess and self-administer emergency medication at school in accordance with a plan of action authorized and developed under the requirements of this statute.

Federal Items

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): FERPA, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g as implemented in 34 C.F.R. Part 99, requires annual notification to parents or eligible students of their rights under the Act. Such notice must include that parents or eligible students have the right to:

1. Inspect and review the student’s records,
2. Seek amendment of the student’s education record that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights,
3. Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable student information, except as provided in 34 C.F.R. § 99.31, and
4. File a complaint with the United States Department of Education under 34 C.F.R. §§ 99.63 and 99.64 if they believe the educational agency or institution has failed to comply with the Act.

Additionally, the annual notice must include:

1. The procedure for exercising the right to inspect and review education records
2. The procedure for requesting amendment of the records under 34 C.F.R. § 99.20, and
3. If the educational agency or institution has a policy of disclosing records under 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(1), a specification of criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest.

An educational agency or institution may disclose “directory information” if the school: (1) publicly notifies parents or eligible students of the types of directory information that will be released, (2) informs parents or eligible students of their right to refuse to let the agency or institution release particular or all directory information, and (3) states the period of time within which the parent or eligible student has to notify the school in writing that he or she does not wish to have the school designate some or all of the information about the parent’s child designated as directory information.4 The Vermont Department of Education recommends that schools also include in their annual FERPA notice that parents or eligible students have the right to seek protective action for the student’s education records if the agency or institution receives a judicial order or lawful subpoena that would otherwise require disclosure of a student record under 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(9).

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA): PPRA, 20 U.S.C. § 1232h as implemented by 34 C.F.R. Part 98, protects the rights of parents and students in two ways. First, the PPRA ensures that all instructional materials intended for use in connection with any survey, analysis, evaluation, or other research or experimentation

Rochester Elementary, Middle High School Student Handbook 2014-15
program, are available for inspection by a student’s parent or guardian. Second, it requires schools or contractors to obtain written parental or student consent before requiring a minor student to participate in any such survey, analysis, or research program.

Local education agencies (LEA) are required to adopt policies regarding the PPRA, in consultation with parents. In addition, the LEA must provide notification of those policies to parents or eligible students, and the opportunity for the student to opt out, at the beginning of every school year, and within a reasonable time after any substantive amendment to the LEA’s PPRA policies.

Military or Postsecondary Recruiters: Under 20 U.S.C. § 7908(a), secondary schools must notify parents and students of their right to request that the student’s name, address, and telephone number not be released to military or postsecondary recruiters without prior written consent of the parent or secondary student.

Civil Rights Provisions: Recipients of federal funds, including education agencies and institutions, are required to make available information regarding the applicability and compliance of the recipient’s programs with the nondiscrimination requirements of the Civil Rights Act, as amended. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination generally on the basis of race, color or national origin. National origin discrimination includes discrimination on the basis of limited English language proficiency. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, sex, national origin and religion.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination generally on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities receiving or benefiting from federal funds. The US Department of Education has issued guidance indicating that sex discrimination includes discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Recipients must designate a Title IX coordinator and must publish their grievance procedures with respect to discrimination on the basis of sex.10 Additionally, each recipient must “implement specific and continuing steps to notify…students and parents of elementary and secondary school students…that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the educational program or activity which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX not to discriminate in such a manner.” The latter section requires publication of this notice in a variety of ways, including in bulletins, catalogs, or application forms.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 197312 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by recipients of federal funds. Section 504 requires recipients to designate 504 coordinators, adopt a grievance procedure 13and to provide notice to students, parents, employees, unions and professional organizations that the school district does not discriminate in admission or access to or treatment or employment in its programs or activities. This notice must be included in any materials or publications given generally to participants, applicants or employees and it must inform them of the grievance procedure and identify the 504 coordinator.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA): Local education agencies are required to notify parents in a variety of circumstances. Here are a few of the more significant ones:

1. 20 U.S.C. § 6311(h)(2)(A)(i) requires local education agencies receiving Title I assistance to prepare and disseminate to all parents an annual “report card.” At minimum, it must contain the number and percentage of schools identified as needing improvement, for how long they have been so identified, and information on how students achieved on state assessments compared to students in the state as a whole.
2. 2. 20 U.S.C. § 6316(b)(6) requires a local education agency to notify parents of children in attendance “promptly” that its school has been identified as a school in need of improvement with an explanation of what it means and what will happen as a result, as well as notifying parents of the option for public school choice (where available) and supplemental educational services.
3. 20 U.S.C. § 6311(h)(6) requires notice by a school district receiving Title I funds at the beginning of the school year to the parents of each student regarding the qualifications of the school’s teachers. The notice is to include the right of parents, upon request, to obtain information as to whether the child’s teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria, whether the teacher is teaching under a waiver or provisional license, and what the major of the teacher was in his or her baccalaureate degree. If the child receives services from a paraprofessional, the paraprofessional’s qualifications must also be furnished. And, the notice will also contain a statement as to whether the student will be taught by a
teacher for four or more consecutive weeks who has not met the federal requirements for “highly qualified teacher.” Finally, this notice must also alert parents to their right to obtain information as to the level of achievement of their child in each of the state’s academic assessments.

4. 20 U.S.C. § 6312(g)(1) provides that parents of students who are of limited English proficiency must be notified not later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year that their child has been identified as in need of services. The statute contemplates a very specific and detailed listing of information to be provided in an understandable manner to the parents of the child.

5. 20 U.S.C. § 6318(a)(2) requires each local education agency with Title I schools to “develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parental involvement policy.” Again, the required content of the policy is to be spelled out in great detail in the statute.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400, *et seq.*, as enacted in Part 300 of the C.F.R., requires notice to parents in a variety of ways, including the following:

1. **Section 300.111 Child Find:** Vermont has policies and procedures in place incorporating IDEA child-find requirements, including notifying the public of the availability of special education services for eligible children aged 3 to 21 years. Similar provisions address child-find for students from birth to age 3.

2. **Section 300.503 Prior Notice:** IDEA requires written notice to a parent of a student with disabilities within a reasonable period of time prior to a school district either proposing or refusing to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student, or the provision of a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) to a student.

3. **Section 300.504 Procedural Safeguards Notice:** A notice of “procedural safeguards” must be provided one time per school year, except that a copy must also to be given to the parents:
   - Upon initial referral or parent request for a special education evaluation,
   - Upon receipt of the first due process complaint in a school year,
   - Upon receipt of the first State complaint in a school year,
   - In accordance with the discipline procedures in 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(h), or
   - Upon request by a parent.

This Handbook — a work in progress — was compiled and reviewed by teachers, parents, and members of the Rochester School Board, with a final adoption before issuance. School Board policy supersedes any stated policies in this Handbook.

8/28/14 This year’s handbook was compiled and reviewed by the Administration, School Improvement Team, teachers, staff, and members of the Rochester School Board. School Board policy supersedes any stated policies in this Handbook.