



STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

2023-2024

*Children are at the heart of all we do.
We nurture a child's curiosity, ignite enthusiasm for exploring,
develop tools for inquiry, for invention, for achievement.
We welcome families into a community-wide collaboration
to help our children grow into their best selves—
responsible citizens and stewards of the greater world, makers of the future.*

**9 School Street
P O Box 847
North Bennington, Vermont 05257
(P) 802-442-5955
(F) 802-447-2397**

info@vsnb.org www.vsnb.org

Welcome to the Village School of North Bennington!

On behalf of the entire faculty and staff, we take this opportunity to welcome your student(s) and family to the Village School of North Bennington (VSNB). It is our hope that the school year will be one filled with happiness and personal accomplishments. The information in this *Student and Family Handbook* is designed to answer questions you may have about our school and to provide guidance and direction for all members of our school community to have a productive and positive school experience. Please reach out to faculty or staff if you have additional questions or need assistance.

We recommend that you visit the VSNB [website](#) for the most up-to-date information throughout the year, including the [school calendar](#) and contact information for [faculty and staff](#). The school's policies and handbooks are available online at www.vsnb.org/handbooks.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that VSNB has the most accurate and current information on file for your student. If a student's contact information or medical information needs to be updated during the school year, please notify the school office about these changes immediately by calling (802)442-5955 or via email to office@vsnb.org.

VSNB reserves the right to make changes to this handbook during the school year; any changes will be communicated directly to families and staff.

**Students are expected to uphold the pillars of the VSNB Constitution:
Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Respectful, and Have Fun!**

The Village School admits students of any race, color, gender, gender identity, nationality, religion, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The Village School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, gender identity, religion, nor national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

THE SCHOOL DAY - TIME SCHEDULE

Breakfast Program	7:45 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.
Early Arrival/Morning Gym	7:45 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Front Doors Open	8:00 a.m.
Class Begins	8:15 a.m.
Dismissal	3:00 p.m.

ARRIVAL (8 a.m.)

Morning arrival takes place on both School Street and Church Street depending on the grade of your student(s) starting at 8 a.m. **If you have students in multiple grades, please use the location designated for your youngest student.**

- **The Church Street “Drop-off Zone”** is for families with students in **Pre-K through First Grade**. Staff members accompany our youngest students into the school building and walk with them to their classrooms. If you have older students, they should be dropped off on Church Street, as well.
- **School Street** is only for families with **students in Second Grade through Sixth Grade**.

Parking can be tricky during the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times, especially during the winter months with inclement weather. To keep the students safe and to make the process as easy as possible for everyone, please do not drop off or pick up students in the street. If you are using School Street, please fully park your vehicle in a parking space before letting your student exit or enter the vehicle. It is important not to double park. If you are using the Drop-Off Zone on Church Street, you must stay in your car as this is a fire lane and a no-parking zone.

Students arriving for Morning Gym at 7:45 a.m. should enter through the school through the red gym door, located on the School Street side of the building.

DISMISSAL (3 p.m.)

Students in Pre-K through First Grade must be picked up from their classrooms at the end of the school day by 3 p.m. by a parent/guardian and/or a designated pick-up contact, unless the student is enrolled in the After School Program. **Parents/guardians will be admitted into the school building at 2:50 p.m. by School Staff at the main entrance.** We ask that parents/guardians and designated contacts for pick-up please refrain from bringing any oversized bags or backpacks into the building.

Students in Second Grade through Sixth Grade are released outside for dismissal at 3 p.m. All students are expected to exit the building by this time unless accompanied by an adult (staff or family member) within the building for a specific purpose and/or enrolled in the YMCA After School Program or another officially organized

activity/program. VSNB faculty and staff are unable to supervise students after 3 p.m., unless specific arrangements are made with an individual faculty or staff member.

ABSENCE/TARDY/EARLY DISMISSAL POLICIES

If your student will be absent, arriving late, or needs to be picked up early for an appointment, please notify the school's main office at office@vsnb.org or 802-442-5955. The office will notify your student's teacher with these details. No student may leave the building during the school day without a parent or guardian providing permission to the school office. Students must be signed out of school by a parent/guardian or designated caregiver who is listed on your student's Emergency Contacts list.

The school day begins promptly at 8:15 a.m. and the lobby door is locked at this time. Students who are not in their classrooms by 8:15 a.m. are considered tardy. Tardy students disrupt the classroom routine, so we ask that every effort be made to ensure your student arrives at school on time.

If your student arrives late, please use the doorbell and an office staff member will greet you using the intercom and camera at the main entrance. Students in grades Pre-K through First Grade need to be accompanied into the school building by their caregiver and sign in at the main office; students in Second Grade through Sixth Grade do not need to be accompanied into the school building but must sign in at the main office.

Early Dismissal: Parents must email or call ahead to the main office at 802-442-5955 or office@vsnb.org to notify the school that your student(s) will be picked up early. Communicating this information to the teacher is not enough; please contact the main office. The main office will inform your student's teacher of the early pick-up. Anyone, other than a parent/guardian who is picking up a student early must be on your student's Emergency Contacts list. Please be prepared to come into the school building to sign your student out at the main office. The process of dismissing a student early may take up to 10 minutes, and we recommend you build this extra time into your schedule.

VISITING DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

- Anyone visiting the school during the school day for any purpose other than dropping off or picking up students at the regularly scheduled times needs to sign in at the main office before going anywhere else in the school.
 - Visitors will be provided with a visitor badge. Visitor badges include the school's safety and security protocols in case of an emergency.
 - Visitors are asked to refrain from bringing oversized bags or backpacks.
 - Visitors must sign out at the main office and return their visitor badge before leaving the building.
 - Please know that anyone seen in the building without a visitor badge will be greeted and asked to kindly return to the office to obtain one.
 - During special school-wide events that are open to the community, such as a Fantastic Friday, our visitor sign-in procedure will be suspended for the event.
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AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Students in grades K-6 are eligible to participate in the Berkshire Family YMCA's After Care Program located on-site at the Village School. The program includes outside play and gym time, gross motor games, crafts, homework help, and more! More information about the After School program is available on the VSNB website at this link:

<https://vsnb.org/before-and-after-school-program/>.

FRIENDS OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL (FVS)

Friends of the Village School welcomes family, friends, teachers, staff, and community members—anyone who loves our school—for the purpose of community-building and engagement. FVS strives to promote the spirit of friendship and volunteerism within our school community. FVS also organizes fundraisers in direct support of classroom activities, opportunities, and experiences that are not otherwise provided for in the school budget. For more information about FVS, visit www.vsnb.org/fvs/. If you are interested in volunteering with FVS, please contact friends@vsnb.org.

COMMUNICATIONS

Our main method of all-school communications to parents/guardians is via email and text message. Every week, the school sends "current announcements" to families, and these announcements are also posted on the school website. Events, activities, meetings, and schedule changes are announced via email/text and posted on the website, as well. The website address is www.vsnb.org. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the school at office@vsnb.org or 802-442-5955. The school office is staffed from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. from Monday-Friday while school is in session.

SAFETY POLICY

VSNB is committed to providing a safe environment for all students, staff members, and community members. Our students, families, and staff are important partners in helping make this possible. Consequently, negative conduct cannot and will not be tolerated within our school. Anyone having knowledge of negative conduct within our school has a responsibility to report this to one of the VSNB staff members.

It is important for us to know who is at our school during the day, and we ask that everyone follow the Absence/Tardy/Early Dismissal policies and the Visitor policy included in this handbook. In the event of an emergency, we need to be able to account for and support all members of our school community. All exterior doors will be locked during the school day for the safety of our students and staff. Please do not prop the doors open, as this compromises our security efforts. We ask that all families and visitors follow our procedures.

Outside of school hours, students are not permitted in the building unless they are in the company of a staff member or parent/guardian.

MUTUAL RESPECT POLICY

VSNB is committed to providing a safe and mutually respectful environment for all students, staff members, and community members. Aggressive behavior and/or language directed at our faculty, staff, and students by parents/guardians and/or visitors will not be tolerated. We consider “aggressive behavior” as any behavior that defies the following rules:

- No physical assault
- No threatening behavior
- No abusive language, including profanity directed either in person or via email, telephone, or text
- No sexual harassment
- No drug use of any kind
- No weapons of any kind

Aggressive behaviors directed at our staff members, students, or community members may result in ejection from the campus, with or without the assistance of law enforcement personnel, and could result in immediate exclusion from all campus activities, events, and involvement. Parents/guardians who are excluded from campus will still have access to their student’s educational records; however, all communications about their student will be handled by the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and/or School Counselor.

EVACUATION AND “CLEAR THE HALLS” DRILLS

The Head of School (or designee) is responsible for conducting Egress Fire Drills, Emergency Evacuations, and Clear the Halls (Lockdown) Drills in order to instruct students and staff in exiting the school building and staying safe within our building in an emergency in the shortest time possible and without confusion and panic. Evacuation drills shall include instruction on exit locations, as well as evacuation procedures. Clear the Halls drills will provide clear direction for staying safe within the building.

In order to be effective, these drills may be unannounced and may occur at any time. In accordance with Vermont State Law, we are required to have these drills once per month. All students are expected to cooperate with staff members during these drills, and to remain quiet and orderly and listen carefully to safety instructions. For evacuation drills, the exit route is posted in each room. Students must stay with their teacher during these drills.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Head of School or Assistant Head of School may close VSNB or dismiss students/staff early when hazardous weather or other emergencies threaten health or safety. When school is closed, all activities are canceled.

We ask that parents/guardians avoid calling schools on days of poor weather; it is important to keep school phone lines open.

All school closings and delays will be posted on the school website at www.vsnb.org and will be communicated to parents/guardians via email and text message.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students and staff are expected to dress in a respectful manner. While we embrace individual freedoms, we recognize that school is a place of work for both staff and students and that their dress must underscore a climate of mutual respect. This policy requires all students and staff while attending school and all school-sanctioned functions to present themselves appropriately attired. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students have access to a safe, welcoming learning environment that promotes a body-positive mindset within an educational context.

As such, students are expected to dress respectfully when attending school and all school activities. Students must wear shirts, bottoms and footwear. Certain body parts should be covered at all times. Clothing should be worn so that it covers the genitals, buttocks, and nipples at all times.

Please note that the following guidelines apply to all students:

- Students may **not** wear clothing, jewelry, or personal items that:
 - Include sexual content/innuendo, contain threats, or that promote illegal or violent conduct such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia;
 - Demonstrate hate group association/affiliation and/or use hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or other protected groups.
 - Could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon
- While wearing hooded tops is allowed, wearing the hood up is prohibited when inside the school building, unless special permission has been received from the Head of School and/or Assistant Head of School.
 - Please note that the purpose of this guideline is aligned with safety and security, as our faculty and staff must be able to quickly visually identify any individuals within our building.
- Hats are allowed, in general. However, the Classroom Teacher/Special Educator/Interventionist may ask or require a student to remove hats that impede learning, cause distraction to the student and/or their peers, or cause the student to disengage with the academic materials being taught.
- Ripped or distressed bottoms and/or shorts are allowed only as long as leg openings or distressed tears are not located surrounding and/or exposing the genital/groin/buttocks area.

The School respects natural hairstyles that are historically associated with race, such as (but not limited to) braids, locks and twists. Additionally, attire worn in observance of a student's religion will be allowed.

Reasonable accommodations to the dress code policy will be made for medical conditions and/or religious beliefs. Accommodations cannot be self-imposed; requests for reasonable accommodations to the dress code policy shall be presented to the Head of School or Assistant Head of School.

Students shall not be disciplined as a consequence for wearing attire in violation of this policy unless the attire creates a substantial disruption to the educational environment, poses a hazard to the health or safety of others, or factors

into a student behavior rule violation such as malicious harassment or the prohibition on harassment, intimidation, and bullying. However, frequent and intentional violation of the dress code policy will result in disciplinary action.

If a student or staff member notices a person wearing attire in conflict with this policy, they should contact the Head of School and/or Assistant Head of School. In all cases in accordance with this dress code, the Head of School and/or Assistant Head of School will determine what is “appropriate attire.”

Students who are in violation of this policy will be provided three (3) options:

- Students will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, for the remainder of the day.
- Students will be asked to wear temporary school clothing provided by the School Nurse for the remainder of the day.
- If necessary, students’ parents or guardians may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.

COMPREHENSIVE ATTENDANCE POLICY

VSNB recognizes that student attendance in school is a vital component of student success. Numerous studies have shown the impact of chronic absences on academic achievement and literacy. Student interaction with teachers and peers helps to enhance the academic learning experience and provide a foundation for students and families to feel a part of their school community. Daily attendance creates an environment of academic and social-emotional support that helps to build a positive work ethic and attitude, which will create opportunities for a student well into the future.

As such, it is very important that all children be in school and on time each day. Parents/guardians are expected to notify the main office in the morning if their student is going to be absent or tardy. This can be done by calling the office at (802)442-5955 or by sending a message via email to office@vsnb.org. We also ask that parents/guardians please inform the school if their child needs to leave for an appointment during the day, or has any other changes to their schedule.

Excused Absences and Tardies

The following reasons for student absences, tardies and early departures shall be considered appropriate by VSNB standards:

1. Illness (extended illness of three or more consecutive days requires a physician’s note)
2. Illness or death in the family
3. Religious observance
4. Medical appointments
5. Isolation due to Covid-19 illness
6. Required court appearances
7. Participation in a school-sponsored activity

8. Other reasons as may be approved by the Head of School / Assistant Head of School

Any other student absence, tardiness or early departure shall be considered to be unexcused.

If a student is out of school more than three consecutive days, a medical excuse is required. Medical excuses can be sent directly from the physician to our School Nurse via email to office@vsnb.org or faxed to (802)447-2397.

If a pattern of absenteeism develops, parents/guardians will receive a written and/or verbal communication from the school at 5-10-15 days of unexcused absence. The Classroom Teacher and/or School Counselor will initiate a parent/guardian meeting at 10 days of unexcused absence to discuss any barriers that may be interfering with a child's school attendance and offer parents/guardians possible interventions and resources. If there is no resolution to the unexcused absences, at 20 days of unexcused absence, a mandated report is made to the Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF), and an affidavit is written and sent to the states attorney. Please keep in mind the latter part of this pertains only to unexcused absences.

HOMEWORK POLICY

In an information-saturated society such as ours, homework is an essential practice in every student's educational experience. Our goal is to provide purposeful homework as a means of contributing to the educational advancement of our students. There are many sound educational reasons for giving homework.

Among them are:

1. Its usefulness as an act of intellectual discipline;
2. Its ability to foster initiative, independence, and responsibility;
3. Its value in supplementing and reinforcing work done in school;
4. Its ability to bring the role of school and home closer together.

Homework Policy: Student's Responsibility (as age appropriate)

- Students will keep an accurate, current record of assignments given and completed.
- Students will complete assignments and hand in assignments on the day that they are due.
- Students should regularly observe high standards of neatness and quality.
- Students will seek help and use resources when needed.
- The teacher and the student will work together to determine what classwork, if any, needs to be completed following an absence.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND PARENT CONFERENCES

Student progress reports will be completed by teachers to keep parents/guardians informed of their students' school progress.

Parent conferences are an important element in reporting student progress to parents/guardians, and teachers will reach out to schedule conferences at least twice a year. Parents/guardians may also initiate a conference by contacting the teacher, School Counselor, Assistant Head of School, and/or Head of School. When a parent/guardian requests a conference with a teacher, the teacher will make every effort to arrange a mutually convenient time. Such conferences will be planned around the teacher's schedule so as not to interfere with class time.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) STATEMENT

It is the Village School's philosophy that children who feel safe, secure, and nurtured will be successful learners. With this philosophy in mind, our entire school community works together to embrace social-emotional learning (SEL), which provides students with a strong foundation in building skills to: develop healthy identities; understand and communicate their emotions; self-regulate their actions; set and achieve both personal and collective goals; feel and show empathy for others; resolve conflicts with friends, parents/guardians, and the other adults in their lives; establish and maintain supportive relationships; and to improve problem-solving abilities so that students are able to make responsible and caring decisions. These skills are cultivated collectively through efforts both within the classroom and outside of the classroom, by all members of the school community, including: faculty, support staff, administrators, and the school counselor. Efforts include programs such as: Responsive Classroom, Zones of Regulation, Care for Kids (Pre-K through 2nd), and We Care Elementary (3rd through 6th).

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES & ILLNESS POLICIES

A student's overall health is important to the student's ability to learn. VSNB has a school nurse to help your child get the most out of the school experience and to serve as a link between the child/family and your child's physician. The nurse is a resource person for students, parents/guardians, and faculty/staff. Some of the services provided include: first aid/emergency care, administering medicine, health screenings, nutrition/dental education.

VSNB is following the guidance and regulations coming from the Vermont Department of Health, the State of Vermont Agency of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control for all infectious diseases. We reserve the right to make changes to VSNB health and wellness policies and also to overall VSNB school policies and procedures based on what is determined to be safest. There will be no exceptions to safety requirements without documentation that shows the variation is appropriate and safe for the circumstances.

Any updates made to VSNB's Health and Wellness policies during the school year will be communicated to families and staff and posted on the VSNB website at this link: <https://vsnb.org/health-and-wellness>.

Allergies

If your child has food allergies or seasonal allergies, it is the responsibility of a parent/guardian to document this on your child's student record and to send in a note from your student's doctor. The note can be faxed to the school at 802-447-2397.

Medication

For any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day, the following regulations shall apply.

Prescription Medication:

- Written orders from a physician detailing the name of the student, the drug dosage, reason for giving and the time that medication is to be given must be received by the School Nurse. A renewal of a long-term medication order is required each school year. Physician orders can be faxed to the school at 802-447-2397.
- Prescription medications will be given in school only with written permission from the parent(s)/guardian(s) as well as prescribing physician.
- Medication will be dispensed by the School Nurse or a person trained and delegated by the School Nurse. Medication must be provided in its original container labeled with the students name, dosage, and directions. Medications will be locked in the Nurse's Office. Any person delegated to dispense medication may only administer medication that is delegated by the School Nurse.
- Students with the following disorders: asthma, history of anaphylaxis, cystic fibrosis and diabetes who have demonstrated responsibility for self-administering their medications shall be allowed to continue with the written permission of the prescribing physician and parent/guardian. This privilege may be withdrawn at the discretion of the School Nurse if student safety is compromised. The parent/guardian and physician will be notified of the withdrawal of this privilege.
- Unused medication as determined by the School Nurse shall be properly disposed of or returned to the parent/guardian for disposal.
- In the absence of the School Nurse, medication to be given at school or during a field trip must have been reviewed for accuracy and proper documentation by the School Nurse before the first dose of that medication can be administered by school personnel.
- Administration of medication shall be recorded (indicating time and dosage) by the school personnel administering the medication. The record shall note the student's name, medication, time, dosage, and initials of the person administering medication.

Non-Prescription Medication:

- Non-prescription medications will be administered only after a permission form has been signed by the parent. Non-prescription medication must be left in the Nurse's Office.
- No aspirin will be given in school because of its possible association with Reye's Syndrome.
- Administration of medication shall be recorded (indicating time and dosage) by the school personnel administering the medication. The record shall note the student's name, medication, time, dosage, and initials of the person administering the medication.

Screening and Immunizations

Vision and hearing screening will occur for students in grades Pre-K, K,1,3,5, as well as for students with an IEP or 504 plan. VSNB complies with Vermont State law regarding immunizations. Our school nurse will contact any parent/guardian whose child may be missing a required immunization.

Student Illness or Injury During School Day

If a student is injured or ill, the student should inform a teacher and ask for permission to see the school nurse. If the nurse deems it necessary for the student to leave school, the parent/guardian or designee will be notified. The school

nurse is authorized to administer emergency first aid. If an injury appears serious, the parents will be notified and transportation home or to the hospital will be arranged. It is very important that the school be provided with all parent/guardian contact numbers, as well as at least two emergency contacts in case the parent/guardian(s) cannot be reached. Please be timely in picking up your student from the nurse's office and/or have a back-up plan for a student who may need to leave school early due to illness or injury, as we do not have enough space or personnel to care for sick children for more than a short time.

Your Child Should Not Attend School If Any of the Following Apply:

- A temperature greater than 100.4°F (this is considered a true fever). The student must be fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of fever reducers (such as ibuprofen and acetaminophen), before returning to school. Please do not give students fever reducers and send them to school. They are still contagious and should not be around other children.
- Shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, and/or muscles aches/malaise; please contact your healthcare provider.
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea within the last 24 hours. Must be 24 hours since the last episode before the student returns to school.
- Severe sore throat for more than 48 hours and/or exposure to strep throat; please contact your child's healthcare provider.
- Honey-crusted sores around the nose and mouth; please contact your child's healthcare provider.
- Unidentified rash on any area of the body; please contact your healthcare provider.

Parents/guardians are asked to remind their children to throw away used tissues, cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze (please use elbow method to catch/cover), keep their hands away from their face, and to wash hands often with soap and warm water. These measures will help keep everyone healthier. Face masks will be used on as-needed basis, depending on the case.

If you find your child is frequently asking to stay home from school and there do not appear to be any physical symptoms, if they are falling behind or appear anxious about school, contact the school nurse or your child's healthcare provider to discuss your concern.

COVID-19 Illness:

According to the Vermont Department of Health (VT DOH), people with COVID-19 may have a wide range of symptoms, including no symptoms at all, mild or moderate symptoms, or needing medical attention for severe illness. Even people with no symptoms can spread the virus to others. Symptoms can start 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus. **The VT DOH recommends getting tested if symptoms develop. Refer to the VT DOH website for COVID-19 symptoms: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19>.**

The following information is adapted from the Vermont Agency of Education and Department of Health memorandum published in August 2022:

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- If a student or staff member is not well enough to learn or participate, regardless of whether they are tested for COVID-19, they will be sent home from school. The school nurse may require a student who is being sent home due to illness to wear a mask while awaiting pick-up.
- A student or staff member may return to school if their symptoms have improved, and they meet school criteria for their illness (refer to the section above: *Your Child Should Not Attend School If Any of the Following Apply*). COVID-19 testing is not required for symptomatic students or staff to return to school. Although testing is not required, we encourage students and staff members to test before returning. This will help decrease the rate of COVID-19 in our school.
- If a student or staff member has confirmed COVID-19, they should follow the Vermont Department of Health isolation guidance.
- Students and staff are permitted to exercise their own or their family's decision-making to wear a mask at school. A parent/guardian who would like their student to wear a mask at school, should please notify their student's teacher so that we can help support your family's choice.
- Frequent and thorough hand washing using soap and water or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol will be encouraged throughout the school day to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.
- It is recommended that students and staff keep up to date on all vaccinations. COVID-19 vaccinations do not prevent one from getting COVID-19, but vaccinations do help keep our school and community healthier. Here are reasons why: decrease the chances of infection; decrease the chances of developing symptoms and their severity; decrease the rate of transmission to vulnerable people, like some of our staff members.

FRAGRANCE POLICY

Students and Staff members who are sensitive to perfumes and chemicals may suffer potentially serious health consequences, triggered by exposure to scented products. In these individuals, fragrances from personal care products have been associated with inducing headaches, upper respiratory symptoms, shortness of breath, asthma symptoms, and difficulty with concentration. Consequently, students and employees, as well as any visitors to the school, are asked to refrain from the use of personal scented products.

MEALS: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

All students will have access to free breakfast and lunch for the 2023-2024 school year, thanks to funding from the state of Vermont. Breakfast will be available in the cafeteria from 7:45 - 8:15 a.m. Lunch will be served in the cafeteria, where students will eat with their classes at appointed times. If students want to participate in the meal program, they can order from the school menu on a daily basis. For students who want to purchase milk only, there will be a cost for milk of 60¢. Families who would like to send their students with lunch from home, may still do so.

Students are expected to:

- Treat others with respect
- Remain seated unless purchasing food or disposing of garbage/tray
- Return all trays and utensils to the designated area
- Clean up all litter from their table and immediate area.
- Talk, not shout
- Be courteous to fellow students and cafeteria staff in the lunch line and at their tables
- Keep “hands off” the food of others
- Refrain from throwing food or other material
- Respect any allergy-free zones
- Follow the reasonable requests of the cafeteria supervisors

Complete Nondiscrimination Statement:

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Education:

Students are entitled to an education without discrimination.

Each student has the right to:

1. Learn in a safe, healthy, orderly and courteous school environment.
2. Attend school and participate in school activities and programs unless removed from participation by the Head of School.
3. Take part in all school activities on an equal basis..

Each student has the responsibility to:

1. Attend school regularly.
2. To be familiar with and abide by all school policies, rules, and regulations of the school pertaining to student conduct.
3. Respect the property of others and the school. Take responsibility for his/her belongings and understand the school will not be responsible for personal items brought to school.
4. Work to the best of his or her ability in all academic and extracurricular pursuits and strive toward the highest level of achievement possible.
5. React to direction given by teachers, administrators and other school personnel in a respectful, positive manner.
6. Ask questions when they do not understand.

Association:

Students have the right to participate in any and all student activities without discrimination.

Students have the responsibility to respect and follow the established guidelines of each activity by:

1. Behaving appropriately when participating in or attending school events and adhering to the highest standards of positive conduct.
2. Accepting responsibility for one's actions.
3. Seeking help in solving problems that might lead to disciplinary issues.

Child Welfare:

The school has a legal and moral responsibility to act on behalf of a child who may be neglected or mistreated. All school faculty and staff are mandated child abuse reporters. Our staff members receive annual child abuse prevention training and have been instructed to report signs of child abuse/neglect.

PROHIBITED STUDENT CONDUCT

The VSNB administration and staff expect all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students; school personnel and other members of the school community; and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. School personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

VSNB recognizes the need to make clear and specific expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school activity. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that; they focus first and foremost on

safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

A. Do not engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples of disorderly conduct include:

1. Running in hallways.
2. Making unreasonable noise.
3. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar, or abusive.
4. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic, including bicycles.
5. Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software, or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the school's Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources.

B. Do not engage in conduct that is insubordinate or disruptive. Examples of insubordinate or disruptive conduct include:

1. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
2. Lateness for, missing, or leaving school without permission.

C. Do not engage in conduct that is violent. Examples of violent conduct include:

1. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching, and scratching) upon another student, a teacher, an administrator or another school employee, or attempting to do so.
2. Possessing a weapon; displaying what appears to be a weapon; threatening to use any weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
3. Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, or another school employee.
4. Intentionally damaging or destroying school property.
5. Threatening to harm another person.

Please note that if a staff member has reasonable suspicion of an inappropriate or dangerous item in a student's possession (backpacks, etc.) an immediate search will occur to protect the safety of everyone in our building).

D. Do not engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others. Examples of such conduct include:

1. Stealing the property of other students, school personnel, or any other person.
2. Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements or representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them.
3. Discrimination, which includes the use of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability as a basis for treating another in a negative manner.
4. Harassment, which includes a sufficiently severe action or a persistent, pervasive pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or group which are intended to be or which a reasonable person would perceive as ridiculing or demeaning.
5. Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily

harm.

6. Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with, or maintaining membership in any school sponsored activity, organization, club, or team.
7. Selling, using, or possessing obscene material.
8. Using vulgar or abusive language, cursing, or swearing.
9. Smoking a cigarette, e-cigarettes, vape, cigar, pipe, or using chewing or smokeless tobacco.
10. Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing, or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances or cannabis (including marijuana, medical cannabis and hashish), or being under the influence of these.
11. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
12. Indecent exposure, that is, exposure to sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
13. Initiating a report warning of fire, bomb, or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.

E. Do not engage in any form of sexual misconduct.

The Village School of North Bennington does not tolerate sexual misconduct of any sort, at any level, from any member of the school community. Sexual misconduct is defined as any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication, or any other act directed toward or with another person that is designed to establish a sexual relationship with the victim, including a sexual invitation, dating or soliciting a date, engaging in sexual dialogue, making sexually suggestive comments, self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual or erotic nature, and any other sexual, indecent, or erotic contact. This can occur student-to-student, adult-to-student, student-to-adult, or adult-to-adult and may involve people of any gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation.

It is the policy of VSNB to provide students, staff, and families with education on the prevention of child sexual abuse, in accordance with Vermont's "Act 1," which was signed into law in 2009 with the goal of Improving Vermont's Sexual Abuse Response System. For more information on Act 1, please visit the [Prevent Child Abuse Vermont website](#). This training is provided by our School Counselor and/or School Nurse.

It is also the policy of VSNB to provide training to all of its Staff on required state Mandated Reporter responsibilities. Training is completed on an annual basis, and training materials are easily accessible to all staff members at any time in both digital and hard copy formats. Staff members are encouraged, but not required, to discuss suspicion of child abuse, child neglect, and/or child sexual abuse with the Head of School, School Nurse, and/or School Counselor prior to contacting authorities if they are in need of further clarification as to what is considered appropriate for reporting.

It is also the policy of VSNB to provide training to its staff on the prevention of sexual misconduct, which includes training on best practices concerning the following:

1. School Staff should not work 1:1 with students with the office or classroom door closed if no other students or adults are present.
2. School Staff should not give gifts to singular students; gifts are allowable when given to all students in an equal and/or equitable manner.
3. School Staff may not be "friends" with or "follow" students on any form of social media. This also includes former students while they are under the age of eighteen-years old.
4. School Staff should not interact with and/or socialize with students outside of school without express permission from the student's parent/guardian. In some instances, additional permission from the Head of School will also be required.

Any and all allegations of sexual misconduct will be investigated by the Head of School and/or a designee.

If the nature of the complaint is either adult-to-adult or adult-to-student sexual misconduct, the adult in question will be placed on leave until the conclusion of the investigation. If the nature of the complaint is child-to-child sexual misconduct, the child in question may be moved to an alternate classroom/space or removed from the class or may be suspended from school until the conclusion of the investigation, only if the complaint warrants a removal from the classroom.

Disciplinary penalties for sexual misconduct can be found in the “Reporting Violations” section of this handbook.

F. Do not engage in any form of academic misconduct.

Examples of academic misconduct include plagiarism, cheating, or copying.

REPORTING VIOLATIONS

All students are expected to promptly report violations of the code of conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, the Head of School, or another staff member. Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol, or illegal substance on school property or at a school activity shall report this information immediately to a teacher, the Head of School, or any other school personnel. The Head of School or his or her designee must notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency of those code violations that constitute a crime and substantially affect the order or security of school.

Disciplinary Penalties

Procedures and Referrals

Discipline is most effective when it deals directly with the problem at the time and place it occurs, and in a way that students view as fair and impartial. School personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the student’s ability to grow in self-discipline.

Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be firm, fair, and consistent so as to be the most effective in changing student behavior. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, school personnel authorized to impose disciplinary penalties will consider the following:

1. The student’s age;
2. The nature of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense;
3. The student’s prior disciplinary record;
4. The effectiveness of other forms of discipline;
5. Information from parents, teachers, and/or others, as appropriate;
6. Other extenuating circumstances.

As a general rule, discipline will be progressive. This means that a student’s first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations. If the conduct of a student is related to a disability or suspected disability, the

student shall be referred to the Educational Support Team; and discipline, if warranted, shall be administered consistent with the separate requirements of this code of conduct for disciplining students with a disability or presumed to have a disability. A student identified as having a disability shall not be disciplined for behavior related to their disability.

Penalties:

Students who are found to have violated the school’s code of conduct may be subject to the following penalties, either alone or in combination:

1. Verbal warning
2. Oral or written notification to parent
3. Recess detention
4. Detention with teacher, Head of School, or Designee
5. Removal from activities or privileges
6. Removal from classroom by teacher
7. Suspension from school by Head of School
8. Out of school suspension by Head of School or Designee
9. Long-term (more than five days) suspension from school by Head of School
10. Reporting of violations to appropriate authorities

Agency of Education (AOE) State Rule 4500 for the Use of Restraint in Schools

VSNB closely adheres to the state rules on the use of restraint when a student’s behavior poses an imminent and substantial risk of injury to self or others. Specific Parent/Guardian notification will be provided if a child is involved in a restraint as per AOE rules on appropriate use of restraint to protect the safety and welfare of children and adults in our school.

SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR BULLYING, HAZING AND HARASSMENT

VSNB recognizes that hazing, harassment, sexual or otherwise, and/or bullying of students and staff is abusive and illegal and that such behavior harms victims and negatively impacts the school culture by creating an environment of fear, distrust, intimidation, and intolerance. The VSNB Administration and Board further recognizes that preventing and remedying bullying, harassment, and/or hazing is essential to ensure a healthy, nondiscriminatory environment in which students can learn and employees can work productively.

It is the policy of VSNB to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.

VSNB is committed to providing an educational and working environment that promotes respect, dignity, and equality and that is free from all forms of harassment. To this end, VSNB strictly prohibits all forms of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying on school grounds and at all school-sponsored activities, programs, and events, including those that take place at locations outside the school.

- No student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in bullying, harassment and/or hazing.

- No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone or tolerate bullying, harassment and/or hazing.
- Apparent permission or consent by a person being bullied, harassed or hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy or the enforcement of this policy.
- This policy applies to behavior directly connected to school activities that occur on or off school property before, during, and after school hours.
- A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law shall be subject to discipline for that act.

Harassment can occur employee to student, student to employee, employee to employee, student to student, male to female, female to male, male to male, or female to female. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, employee, or third party (school visitor, vendor, etc.) to harass any student or employee. Words alone can constitute harassment. Words can create an atmosphere that is so severe, pervasive, and offensive that it denies a victim equal access to educational or employment opportunities.

The term “bullying” refers to any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, that is directed against a student by another student or group of students and which follows the three key components listed below. Bullying consists of inappropriate persistent behavior including threats, or intimidation of others, treating others cruelly, terrorizing, coercing, or habitual put-downs and/or badgering others. Bullying, similar to all forms of harassment and hazing, are prohibited behaviors.

Bullying has three key components:

1. Rude and disrespectful behavior;
2. Repeated harmful acts;
3. An imbalance of power, real or perceived.

It can involve repeated physical, verbal, or psychological attacks, or intimidation directed against a victim (target) who cannot properly defend oneself because of size, strength or because the victim is outnumbered or less psychologically resilient.

Reporting Complaints of Hazing, Harassment, or Bullying

Any student who believes that he/she/they has been hazed, harassed, and/or bullied under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that he/she/they reasonably believes might constitute bullying, should promptly report the conduct to the appropriate Classroom Teacher as the first tier of support.

Any school employee who witnesses conduct that he/she/they reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment, and/or bullying shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and immediately report it to the Head of School and/or Assistant Head of School.

Any school employee who overhears or directly receives information about conduct that might constitute hazing, harassment, and/or bullying shall immediately report the information to the Head of School and/or Assistant Head of School. If the Assistant Head of School is a person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the incident shall be immediately reported to the Head of School. If the Head of School is a person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the incident shall be immediately reported to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Any other person who witnesses conduct that he/she/they reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment, and/or bullying under this policy should promptly report the conduct to the appropriate Classroom Teacher, Assistant Head of School, and/or Head of School.

Documentation of Complaints

If the complaint is oral, the person receiving the complaint shall promptly complete a Student Conduct Complaint Form that includes the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses. Both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will have the right to present witnesses and other evidence in support of their position.

False Complaints

Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding hazing, harassment, and/or bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion with regard to students, or up to and including termination with regard to employees. There shall be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying when the person has a good faith belief that hazing, harassment, and/or bullying occurred or is occurring.

The School's Response to Complaints

Upon notice of information that hazing, harassment, and/or bullying may have occurred, the Classroom Teacher, Head of School, and/or Assistant Head of School shall ensure that all details are collected. If the information is found to constitute hazing, harassment, and/or bullying, an investigation will be conducted by the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and/or School Counselor.

At the beginning of the investigation, the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and/or School Counselor shall notify in writing both the complainant and accused individual (or if either is a minor, inform their respect parent or guardian) that:

- an investigation has been initiated;
- retaliation is prohibited;
- all parties have certain confidentiality rights; and
- they will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation

All notifications shall be subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information. A school administrator may seek the consent of the parent/guardian of the accused student in order to inform the complainant of any disciplinary action taken in cases where the school determined that an act(s) of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying, or other misconduct has occurred. The parent/guardian shall provide a signed and dated written consent before the School discloses personally identifiable information of the disciplinary actions taken.

Investigations

Unless special circumstances are present and documented, such as reports to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or the police, the school administrators shall, no later than one full school day after the notice of complaint, initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations, which the school administrators believe may constitute hazing, harassment, and/or bullying.

The Head of School and/or Assistant Head of School shall assign a person to conduct the investigation, including

his/her/their own self. No person who is the subject of complaint shall conduct such an investigation.

It may be appropriate for the school to take interim measures during the investigation of a complaint. If the seriousness of the complaint indicates a safety concern between students, the school may decide to place the students immediately in separate classrooms; or, if they are in different grades but have overlapping schedules, measures to reduce the contact between students may be taken. Similarly, if the alleged harasser is a staff member, removing interactions between the student and staff member may be appropriate. In all cases, the school will make every effort to prevent disclosure of the names of all parties involved (the complainant, the witnesses, and the accused), except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation. In all cases where physical harm has resulted and/or where the targeted student is known to be expressing suicidal ideation, or experiencing serious emotional harm, a safety plan will be put in place. Safety plans must also be considered in cases where the targeted student is known to have difficulty accessing the educational programs at the school as a result of the alleged behavior. No contact orders, or their enforcement, may also be appropriate interim measures.

VSNB is committed to following best practices in following due process to students and staff members who are accused of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying. As such, the complainant and the accused shall both have the opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence during an investigation. The school will ensure that steps to accord due process rights do not restrict or unnecessarily delay the protections provided to the complainant.

In determining whether the conduct constitutes hazing, harassment, and/or bullying, the investigator shall consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. The school will also consider the impact of relevant off-campus conduct on the school environment where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated or the conduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs. Whether a particular action constitutes a violation of this policy requires determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

The investigation shall be conducted in a timely manner. No later than five school days from the filing of the Student Conduct Complaint Form with the designated employee, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator shall submit a written initial determination to the Head of School.

The investigator shall prepare a written report to include a statement of the findings of the investigation as to whether the allegations have been substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes hazing, harassment, and/or bullying. The report, when referencing student conduct, is a student record and considered confidential. It will be made available to investigators in the context of a review conducted by either the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) or investigations of harassment conducted by the Vermont Human Right Commission or US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights.

Notice to Parents/Guardians

Within five school days of the conclusion of the investigation, the Head of School or his/her/their designee shall notify, in writing, the parent/guardian of both the complainant and the accused individual of the following:

- That the investigation has been completed;
- Whether or not the investigation concluded that a policy violation occurred, as well as which policy term was violated;

- That federal privacy law prevents disclosure of any discipline imposed as a result of the investigation unless the parent/guardian of the accused student consents to such disclosure
- That the complainant has the right to request an independent review of the school’s final determination within thirty days of the final determination notice.

Responding to Substantiated Claims

In the event that the investigation determines that an act(s) of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying has been committed, the school shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action reasonably necessary to stop the actions committed, to prevent any recurrence of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying, and to remedy its effects on the victim(s).

Remedial actions for students may include (but are not limited to): age-appropriate warning or reprimand, education, training, counseling, suspension, or expulsion. Remedial actions for school staff may include (but are not limited to): written warning, Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), education, counseling, training, suspension (with or without pay), and/or termination of employment. A series of escalating consequences may be necessary if the initial steps are ineffective in stopping the hazing, harassment, and/or bullying behaviors.

Other remedies may include providing counseling to the victim(s) and/or the perpetrator(s), as well as additional safety planning measures for the victim(s) and a safety plan for the perpetrator(s).

Prevention of Retaliation

It is unlawful for any person to retaliate against a person who has filed a complaint of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation related to the complaint, regardless of whether or not the underlying complaint is substantiated. The school will take reasonable steps to prevent any retaliation against the student(s) or person who filed the complaint on behalf of the student(s) or against those who provided information as witnesses involved in the investigation.

STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Refer to the “Technology” section of the VSNB website (<https://vsnb.org/technology/>) for additional policies and information.

Giving students access to computers and the Internet provides students with positive educational experiences and motivates students to improve academic skills. Our goal is to effectively use electronic resources to support and enrich the curriculum. However, we also recognize that with student access to computers comes the possibility that a student may discover controversial or inappropriate information or material. We believe that the benefits to students from access to electronic information and the opportunities it provides far exceed the potential risks and disadvantages, but we also recognize the importance of minimizing the risks. School staff will provide basic instruction to students on appropriate use of electronic resources and the Internet, but shall not be liable for students’ unacceptable use or violations of copyright restrictions or other laws.

Students are not permitted to use personal electronic devices (PEDs) at school. Students may possess PEDs in school, but they must be powered off and out of sight in backpacks. It is not permissible for PEDS to be on “silent” or vibrate”

during this time.

PEDs may include but are not limited to: laptops, tablets, existing and emerging mobile communication systems and smart technologies (cellular phones, iPhones, Smartphones, internet-enabled phones), handheld entertainment systems (video games, CD players, compact DVD players, MP3 players, iPods, earphones, Apple Watches, etc.), and current or emerging wireless handheld technologies or portable information technology systems that can be used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording, and information transmitting/receiving/storing, etc.

If your child has a legitimate reason for using a PED during the school day, it will be necessary for a parent/guardian to write a letter to the Head of School explaining why your child needs to use the PED.

RESPONSIBLE COMPUTER, NETWORK & INTERNET USE

Refer to the “Technology” section of the VSNB website (<https://vsnb.org/technology/>) for additional policies and information.

VSNB recognizes that information technology (IT) is integral to learning and educating today’s children for success in the global community and fully supports the access of these electronic resources by students and staff. The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Create an environment that fosters the use of information technology in a manner that supports and enriches the curriculum, provides opportunities for collaboration and enhances staff professional development.
2. Ensure VSNB takes appropriate measures to maintain the safety of everyone that accesses VSNB’s information technology devices, network, and web resources.
3. Comply with the requirements of applicable federal and state laws that regulate the provision of access to the internet and other electronic resources by school districts.

It is the policy of VSNB to provide students and staff access to a multitude of information technology (IT) resources, including the Internet. These resources provide opportunities to enhance learning and improve communication within our community and with the global community beyond. However, with the privilege of access comes the responsibility of students, teachers, staff and the public to exercise responsible use of these resources. The use by students, staff or others of district IT resources is a privilege, not a right.

The same rules and expectations govern student use of IT resources as apply to other student conduct and communications, including but not limited to VSNB’s harassment and bullying policies.

We expect that all students learn to use electronic resources in an acceptable manner and to use them in appropriate ways to enhance their learning. Students shall be held accountable for any misuse or damage of the school’s electronic equipment or resources.

Communication over the school network shall not be considered private. The Head of School and our staff shall

periodically review and inspect electronic files and e-mail messages, and, in cases where there is reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing or misuse of the system, may forward records to the Head of School for review and possible disciplinary action.

The school shall cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation relating to illegal activities conducted through the school's electronic system. Disciplinary action will focus on helping students learn how to use the electronic network in a responsible manner.

VSNB's computer and network resources are the property of VSNB. Users shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, receive or display on or over VSNB's computers or network resources, including personal files and electronic communications.

The Head of School is responsible for establishing procedures governing the use of IT resources consistent with the provisions of this policy. These procedures must include:

1. An annual process for educating students about responsible digital citizenship. As defined in this policy, a responsible digital citizen is one who:
 - **Respects One's Self.** Users will maintain appropriate standards of language and behavior when sharing information and images on social networking websites and elsewhere online. Users refrain from distributing personally identifiable information about themselves and others.
 - **Respects Others.** Users refrain from using technologies to bully, tease or harass other people. Users will report incidents of cyberbullying and harassment in accordance with VSNB's policies on bullying and harassment. Users will also refrain from using another person's system account or password or from presenting themselves as another person.
 - **Protects One's Self and Others.** Users protect themselves and others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials and communications. They are responsible at all times for the proper use of their account by not sharing their system account password.
 - **Respects Intellectual Property.** Users suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc.
 - **Protects Intellectual Property.** Users request to use the software and media others produce.
2. Provisions necessary to ensure that Internet service providers and other contractors comply with applicable restrictions on the collection and disclosure of student data and any other confidential information stored in district electronic resources.
3. Technology protection measures that provide for the monitoring and filtering of online activities by all users of district IT, including measures that protect against access to content that is obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors.
4. Methods to address the following:
 - Control of access by minors to sites on the Internet that include inappropriate content, such as content that is:
 - Lewd, vulgar, or profane

- Threatening
- Harassing or discriminatory
- Bullying
- Terroristic
- Obscene or pornographic
 - The safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, social media sites, and other forms of direct electronic communications.
 - Prevention of unauthorized online access by minors, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities.
 - Unauthorized disclosure, use, dissemination of personal information regarding minors.
 - Restriction of minors’ access to materials harmful to them.

Policy Application

This policy applies to anyone who accesses VSNB’s network, collaboration and communication tools, and/or student information systems either on-site or via a remote location, and anyone who uses VSNB’s IT devices either on or off-site.

Limitation/Disclaimer of Liability

VSNB is not liable for unacceptable use or violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, user mistakes or negligence, and costs incurred by users. VSNB is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information found on the VSNB electronic resources network including the Internet. VSNB is not responsible for any damage experienced, including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. VSNB is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through or stored on the electronic resources system including the Internet, or for financial obligations arising through their unauthorized use.

Enforcement

VSNB reserves the right to revoke access privileges and/or administer appropriate disciplinary action for misuse of its IT resources. In the event there is an allegation that a user has violated this policy, the school will handle the allegation consistent with the student disciplinary policy.

Allegations of staff member violations of this policy will be processed in accord with contractual agreements and legal requirements.

17 U.S.C. §§101-120 (Federal Copyright Act of 1976 as amended)

20 U.S.C. § 6777 et seq. (Enhancing Education Through Technology Act)

18 U.S.C. §2251 (Federal Child Pornography Law—Sexual Exploitation and Other Abuse of Children)

47 U.S.C. §254 (Children’s Internet Protection Act)

47 CFR §54.520 (CIPA Certifications)

13 V.S.A. §§2802 et seq. (Obscenity, minors)

13 V.S.A. § 1027 (Disturbing Peace by Use of...Electronic Means)

13 V.S.A. §2605 (Voyeurism)