

Swift River School

#SmallSchoolBigHeart

**Handbook
for Families**



New Salem • Wendell

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Swift River School

Serving the Towns of New Salem and Wendell

Kelley Sullivan
Principal

201 Wendell Road
New Salem, MA 01355
978-544-6926

Dear Students and Families,

It is my pleasure to welcome you back this school year! I look forward to working with you to make your student's educational experiences as fulfilling as possible. I hope we will have an exciting and successful year at Swift River School!

Our school is a safe, empathic, and academically-rich learning environment. The staff has a strong commitment to provide your students with a high-quality education in a nurturing environment. We regard your connection to and support of the School as vital to our mission.

This handbook is designed to be a source of information for parents and guardians of Swift River School students. It contains pertinent details regarding the operations and policies of our school. It also offers a short description of many school programs, practices, rights and responsibilities. Because we revise the handbook yearly, it is important to read through it at the beginning of the school year and to keep it handy as a valuable reference during the year.

Open communication between home and school is essential to a successful school year. Please know that you are always welcome to contact me by appointment, phone, or email with any questions or concerns. I look forward to seeing you at our many school-wide events in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Kelley Sullivan
Principal
sullivan@swiftriverschool.org

The New Salem-Wendell School District assures that all programs, activities, and employment opportunities are offered without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, disability, economic status, homelessness, religion, or sexual orientation.

School Calendar

SWIFT RIVER SCHOOL STAFF LIST 2017 – 2018

OFFICE

Principal: Kelley Sullivan
Secretaries: Ariel Barilla
Jessalyn Zaykoski
Maintenance: Larry Ramsdell

PRESCHOOL

Teachers: J. Powers
Olivia Chicoine
Paraprofessionals: Shannon Flematti
Robyn Vitello

KINDERGARTEN

Teacher: Linda Balk
Paraprofessional: Susan Bishop

GRADE 1

Teacher: Patty Savage
Paraprofessional: Tammy Richard

GRADE 2

Teacher: Lisa Aubin
Paraprofessional: Allie Barnes

GRADE 3

Teacher: Paige Smith
Paraprofessional: Lisa Latwis

GRADE 4

Teacher: Tina Newman
Paraprofessional: Gosia Spooner

GRADE 5

Teacher: Shannon Brown
Paraprofessionals: Matt Colturi
Sarah Thayer

GRADE 6

Teacher: Danika Tyminski
Paraprofessional: Bertie O'Loughlin

ART

Teacher: Kaitlin Scutari

MUSIC

Teacher: Mike Cortina

PE

Teacher: Chris Williams

COMPUTER LAB

Technology Coordinator: Christine Morin

LIBRARY

Librarian: Betsy Bergantino

NURSE'S OFFICE

School Nurse: Nan Mead

GUIDANCE

School Psychologist: Karen Nelson

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Teachers: Diane Adams
Mandy Higgins
Chris Wings
Paraprofessionals: Ciji Cody
Kelly Mailloux
Megan Villemaire

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Occupational Therapist: Rachel Vitello

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

S/L Pathologist: Ally Jefferson

TITLE I/ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Teacher: Jill Putala

COMMUNITY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN

CNC Coordinator: Gillian Budine
CNC Assistant: Joie Ciepiela

ENCHANTED FOREST

EF Staff: Allie Barnes
Matt Colturi
Siobhan Haggerty
Lauren Khan
Lisa Latwis
Bertie O'Loughlin
Tammy Richard
Jessalyn Zaykoski

KITCHEN

Food Service Director: Barrett Grazioso
Food Service Assistants: Darcee Clemenzi
Kara Swan

MAINTENANCE

Director of Maintenance: Larry Ramsdell
Evening Custodian: Walter Regnier
Substitute Custodian: Eric Shufelt

I. GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

A. SCHOOL HOURS

School begins at 8:18 AM and ends at 3:05 PM for Preschool – Grade 6 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays (although some PK students end the days at 11:30 AM). On Wednesdays, School ends at 1:05 PM to allow for professional development, curriculum work and special staff meetings.

Please do not drop off students in personal vehicles before students exit the buses in the morning. Staff members are not available to supervise students prior to 8:18 AM. If you need before-school care for your student, please contact the Enchanted Forest Director, in advance to make arrangements for your student to stay in Enchanted Forest. If students arrive to school early by foot, bike, or car, they should wait on the bench next to the office. If students arrive before 8:15 AM, parents must accompany them to the Enchanted Forest before-school program where staff will be available to care for students as early as 7:20 AM. Flexible arrangements are available; contact the Enchanted Forest Director.

Parents must accompany preschool students who don't ride the bus to their classroom. If you are a preschool parent with other small students and you do not wish to leave the vehicle, you must wait for ALL buses to leave and then you may pull up to the front door. Make sure your students exit your vehicle onto the sidewalk. Please do not arrive before 8:18 AM.

B. ATTENDANCE

MGL Chapter 76: Section 5. MGL Chapter 76: Section 5. Place of attendance; violations; discrimination

Section 5. Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where they actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violations of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly attended public schools. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

Regular attendance in school is essential for each student's academic progress. Students are required to attend school each day. **If your student will be absent from school because of illness, please call the Nurse before 9:15 AM to let the School know. The phone number is 978-544-6926, extension 220.** Absence notes are required when students return to school. Please be sure to include the date(s) of the absence(s), the reason, and your signature. This helps the office maintain records your student's absence; these notes are kept in the office.

It is also important for students to arrive at school on time. Students arriving later than 8:30 AM are marked tardy. They must report to the office and check in with the Secretary regarding their lunch and dismissal plans.

The Principal is required to notify parents when a student's absences exceed five full days or 10 half days in a school year. **Only illnesses and religious observations are considered excused absences.** A copy of the notification may be sent to the Superintendent's Office.

Occasionally it is necessary for doctor or dental appointments to be made during school hours. However, if possible, try to schedule these appointments to take place outside of school hours. Students should bring a note to school when they are to be dismissed early. Parents must come into the office to pick up their students in such instances.

Absences for family vacations will be treated as unexcused absences. Teachers are not responsible for providing packets of class work for students who travel or on vacation during the school year. Please try to not schedule family trips during school days.

C. BREAKFAST – SNACK – LUNCH

Meal prices are as follows:

Breakfast	No Charge
Snack	\$ 0.50
Milk	\$ 0.50
Lunch	No Charge

Breakfast Program:

Snacks: Fruits, vegetables, nuts, and cheese are available for students to purchase in the Cafeteria. Interested students should purchase snacks upon arrival and keep them in classroom cubbies until snack time. Parents, please do not send candy or soda for snack or lunch. Your student's classroom teachers will provide information about the snack routines in the classrooms.

Lunch Program: Application forms for free and reduced price meals are sent home to all students at the beginning of the school year, but are also available at any time if your financial situation changes. The federal government uses the number of students eligible for free or reduced lunch to determine the amount of financial support available to each school. It is helpful to our school to complete and

return the application, even if your student regularly eats school lunch. At this time, lunch is available to all students at no charge to families.

Lunch Time: We expect the SRS Café to be an enjoyable place for students and adults to eat. An adult always supervises lunch. Students are expected to sit down and stay seated throughout the lunch period. To ensure everyone's health, no food may be exchanged; students are expected to eat school lunch or home lunch everyday.

D. RECESS

Each class has recess under adult supervision every day. Students are expected to go outside during recess and must be dressed appropriately each day. During rainy or extremely cold weather, recess will be held indoors. During wheathe with temperatures between 0° and 20° F, the Principal will make a daily decision regarding outdoor versus indoor recess. Students will be expected to observe all rules related to specific equipment, to give proper regard to outdoor boundaries, and to never leave school property. At the beginning of the year, all students review the recess rules in their classrooms. They learn how to play recess games in Physical Education classes. All students are expected to play fairly, inclusively, and with a positive attitude towards the other students on the playground.

With a written request from a parent or guardian, students may stay inside during recess when their health requires it. Generally, we expect students who are well enough to attend school to participate in all school activities, including outdoor recess.

When students wear boots to school, they must bring a second pair of footwear to wear indoors. Having an extra pair of socks at school is always a good idea. At no time may students go barefoot or in socks-only in the school, as per fire regulations. To play in the snow, or in cold weather, students must wear snow pants, boots, hats, and gloves or mittens. **We suggest all articles of outerwear be labeled with the student's name or initials.**

There is a no-exclusion policy at recess. Any student may play in any game or activity at recess. We do not allow recess games that are inappropriate for elementary school students, such as tackle football or keep-away games. Hard balls and bats—wood or metal—are not allowed at school.

Toys at School: no weapons or replicas of guns or other weapons are allowed in school or on the bus. Toy weapons and sharp instruments of any kind are not permitted at recess or in school. We do not allow electronics (for example, Gameboys, iPods, DS or cell phones) to be used in school, in class, at recess or at lunch. **A cell phone must be turned off during school hours. If a student brings an expensive toy or electronic device to school to use afterschool, that item must stay in the student's backpack during the school day and on the bus. The school will not assume responsibility for loss or damage to any such item.**

E. AFTERSCHOOL PLANS

Plans for such afterschool activities should be made before the school day starts and your student must bring a parent note to inform the office of any afterschool plans. Students may not make afterschool plans during the school day. Parents may call the office with a change of plans for their student, when an unexpected situation arises. When calling with an emergency change of plans, please be sure to speak to someone directly; do not leave a voicemail. We cannot guarantee a voicemail will be answered before dismissal.

Whenever possible, students should come to school with a note from their parent. A note not only informs the classroom staff, but also allows the office staff to make bus changes in a timely manner, and helps everyone, including students, to feel secure. Remember, if your student rides a bike to school, they need to bring a note giving permission to ride the bike home. Bike riders must wear helmets.

F. DISMISSAL ARRANGEMENTS AFFECTING BUS TRANSPORTATION

If a student usually rides the bus, but will not ride the bus home for any reason, we must receive a note with permission which specifies the change in the usual arrangements, including where the student is to be dropped off and/or who is picking the student up. Such notes should be written in the following instances:

- (1) A student will ride their regular bus but get off at a different stop.
- (2) A student will ride a different bus.
- (3) A student will be picked up either during the school day or at dismissal.
- (4) A student will ride a bike home.

The bus will not extend its normal route in order to accommodate student-care or baby sitting arrangements.

When students are picked up at school, they must be picked up from the office. This helps us to assure parents that their students will only leave the school with their permission.

G. LOST AND FOUND

It is our goal to avoid a large collection of Lost and Found items. We encourage parents and students to make sure names or initials are marked in outerwear, especially sweatshirts and jackets. Lunch boxes should also be labeled. Please check the Lost and Found regularly for items belonging to your student.

We will keep lost clothing for one season and make every effort to return lost items to their owners when we can identify a student's name. The Lost and Found items hang in the main hallway. Teachers regularly display items at lunch and in the gym. Lost items without names are taken to a local charity once mid-year and once at the end of the year.

H. SWIFT RIVER CURRENT

The Current will typically be published on the third Thursday of each month. The school publishes, emails, and sends home a copy of *Swift River Current*. In it, you will find news of current and future events in the community.

Our newsletter is also available on our website, and provides opportunities for non-school-sponsored event announcements. We will print all appropriate articles and announcements if they are consistent with the guidelines developed by the School Committee, and if space permits. Please send articles to be published to the office no later than noon on the Wednesday before publication. We prefer that submissions be sent to Ariel Barilla by email at: barilla@swiftriverschool.org.

Fliers for non-school-sponsored events can be distributed with the Principal's approval and must contain a disclaimer stating, "This is not a school-sponsored event." A sufficient number of copies (165) must be provided. We will not make photo copies for non-school sponsored events.

I. VISITORS

Visitors are welcome at our school. An appointment to visit the school can be made in the office. Visitors and service providers should wear a visitor's badge and sign in and out in the office. We ask that all visitors, including parents, sign in and out to ensure that the school's safety protocols are met and maintained.

Students who wish to bring a visitor (including animal visitors) to school must obtain permission from their teacher and the Principal in advance. The Principal may permit visits that are compatible with student learning. Visitors may not ride the bus to or from school. All school rules and regulations apply to visitors.

J. VISITS

Parents are welcome to visit the school during school hours. Here are several helpful hints that will make your visit more beneficial:

1. Call ahead and make arrangements with your student's teacher.
2. Plan to leave younger students at home.
3. Plan to stay throughout a complete activity period.
4. Any perceptions, questions or concerns that arise during a visit should be shared directly with the classroom teacher.
5. Arrange a time with your student's teacher when it is mutually convenient to discuss your questions and concerns.
6. Remember it is essential to protect the privacy of ALL Swift River School students.

K. CLOTHING

Swift River does not have a formal dress code. Clothing should be comfortable, safe, clean, and should not distract others. We ask that students adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Hats may be worn at recess but must be removed in school.
2. Clothing should not contain obscenities, incitement, defamation or sexually implied material.
3. Shirts should cover the entire abdomen area. Spaghetti straps and low cut tops are not appropriate for school. Tank top straps should be two fingers-width wide.
4. Clothing designed to be underwear is not appropriate as outerwear; for example, men's white ribbed tank tops are not appropriate to be worn without a shirt worn over them.
5. Shorts and skirts should reach to end of the fingertips when the arms are extended straight down along the thighs.
6. Students wearing inappropriate clothing will be asked to change into other clothing, turn the garment inside out, or cover the garment in some way. Parents are encouraged to assist in the selection of school-appropriate clothing.
7. Students wearing shoes with high heels will be asked to wear more practical shoes in the future and to stay off the structures at recess.
8. When students wear boots or other heavy footwear to school, they must also bring in an alternative pair of footwear to wear indoors. Having an extra pair of socks at school is always a good idea. At no time may students go barefoot or wear only socks in school, as per fire regulations.
9. All students need appropriate shoes for gym class on Tuesdays and Fridays.
10. Students wearing flip flops or open-toed shoes will be asked to sit out during gym class, to stay off of structures, and to refrain from running during recess.

L. ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Families are offered student accident insurance annually. Options include exclusive school-time coverage and 24- hour coverage. The applications are sent home during the first week of school.

M. SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

For your convenience, we arrange to have photographs taken each fall. Photographs include both class pictures and individual portraits. A variety of packages are available on a prepayment basis.

II. TRANSPORTATION

A. RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS

F.M. Kuzmeskus, Inc. of Gill, MA is our bus company. The routes, stops, and approximate pickup times are published in the newspaper and are included in the Back-to-School email sent home in August. We also keep a list in the office. If you have any questions about your student's bus route, or if you would like to request a hard copy of your bus route, please call the office.

Swift River School strives to ensure the safety of each student who rides the bus. Toward this end, we are firm in regards to disciplinary action for students whose misbehavior may distract drivers and so endanger everyone on the bus. Once students get on the buses, it becomes the responsibility of the students, under the supervision of the bus drivers, to behave according to the school rules and ensure proper conduct on the buses.

During the year, students might wish to bring special items to school. We must ask that any items that are too large, too awkward, or alive be transported to school by other means than the school bus. Items such as soccer balls, which could potentially cause a safety problem, need to be contained in a paper or plastic bag to keep them from rolling. Glass containers should not be brought on the bus. Anything that is inappropriate in school, such as water pistols, are also not acceptable on the school bus. Your help in enforcing these rules will ensure a happy and safe start and end to each day for all students who ride the buses.

State law requires that the district provide transportation for students who live two miles or more from school. Students are transported to and from school on a daily basis. It is also a requirement that an adult or older sibling wait with or meet Preschool, Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2 students in the morning and in the afternoon. If no one is there to meet the bus, the driver will return the student to school. This is not negotiable.

We ask you to remind your students periodically about bus safety and proper conduct on the bus and at the bus stop. **Three rules for safe bus rides are:**

1. **Sit quietly—speak in a conversational volume.**
2. **Sit in your assigned seat facing forward.**
3. **Follow the bus driver's directions.**

At the Bus Stop: Swift River School has formal responsibility for students once they are on a school bus. It is important for parents to work together with the bus drivers to ensure the safety of their students at bus stops before the bus arrives and when students are dropped off in the afternoon. **Bus drivers are not allowed to leave students in Preschool – Grade 2 at their bus stop unless a parent, guardian, or designee is there.** If no one is at the bus stop to meet a student in Preschool – Grade 2, the bus driver will return the student to school. Parents may not ride a school bus or step on to the bus without first notifying the Secretary, who will then request permission from the bus company and bus driver. These are state law requirements.

Walking to the Bus Stop: students should walk on the sidewalk; if no sidewalk is available, students should walk on the shoulder of the road facing traffic and walk single-file. Students should not play in the road, and be sure to stand to the side. There should be no pushing, chasing or shoving at bus stops. Students should be on time for the bus and never run along side or approach a moving bus.

As the bus arrives, students should line up but not approach the bus until the driver gives the thumbs-up signal. Special caution must be taken during the winter months when ice, snow, and snow banks limit the area of the bus stop and present hazards.

Any student who waits for the bus on the side of the road opposite to where the bus stops must follow a series of safety measures:

1. Wait for the bus to come to a full stop and the flashing lights to be activated.
2. Wait for a thumbs-up signal from the bus driver to cross the road.
3. After looking in both directions, cross in front of the bus.
4. Cross well in front of the bus and in view of the driver. If parents are available, please cross with the student.

Bus Behavior and Rules: Students must follow the bus rules and behavior guidelines to help ensure safety for all bus passengers. Please discuss the proper passenger behavior and bus rules with your student.

- Students are required to follow the bus driver's directions at all times.
- Students are never to put anything or any part of their body out of the bus windows.
- Students may talk to the person they are sharing the seat with on the bus. Students may not turn around to talk with students behind them or across the aisle. Conversations should be conducted in regular voices, and never by shouting or screaming.
- Students may not eat on the bus.
- Books, snacks, packs and other property should be stored on laps. Musical instruments do not belong in the step well or in the aisle.
- Any type of aggressive behavior, whether verbal or physical, will not be tolerated.

- Any name calling or teasing will not be tolerated.

When the bus arrives at a bus stop, students should remain seated until the driver has brought the bus to a complete stop and opens the door. Students should look for the bus driver's thumbs-up signal before crossing the street in front of the bus. Although the law states that drivers must stop when bus lights are flashing, some drivers do not stop; extra caution must be used. Please teach your students to look for the thumbs-up sign. Ideally parents will meet students at the bus stop and cross with them.

It is school policy to provide transportation for each student. However, if it is determined that a student's behavior is endangering the safety of other students, or if a student repeatedly disregards bus guidelines or bus driver instructions, their privilege to ride the bus will be revoked.

Our expectation is that students will behave responsibly on the bus, and that they will realize that their safety and the safety of schoolmates is of the utmost importance.

In the event of an actual emergency, emergency exit procedures (as established by the emergency exit drills) will be followed. Parents of students who damage school buses will be responsible for reimbursement to the school district or to the bus company.

Procedures Regarding Bus Discipline: Bus drivers use forms to report bus misconduct to the Principal. When a student misbehaves, the bus driver will complete a misbehavior form and submit it to the Principal. The Principal will meet with the student and may send a copy of the form home to the parents. In the event of continued misbehavior by a student, the same procedure will ensue and the form will be sent to the parents. If misbehavior continues, or if a student engages in a dangerous activity or inappropriate behavior, the Principal will set a meeting with the parents to discuss the consequences of the student's misbehavior.

A possible consequence of bus misconduct will be the loss of bus privilege for three days. If a student loses their bus privilege, it will be the responsibility of the student's family to transport the student to and from school. After this three-day period, the student will again be permitted to ride the bus to school, and the warning system will begin anew.

If a student receives a seat assignment as a result of misbehavior, only the Principal can give permission for a subsequent seat change. The student can ask the Principal to consider reinstating this privilege after he or she has demonstrated correct bus demeanor. **If anything about your student's ride to or from school troubles you, please call the Principal immediately.**

Bus Accident Procedure: In the event of an accident involving a school bus, the list below outlines the plan of response.

1. When a bus accident occurs, the driver will immediately contact 911 and then the bus company. (If the driver cannot contact the bus company due to injuries, hopefully a student will be able to do so. If not, hopefully someone will come upon the accident and call 911.)
2. The bus company will get the preliminary information and call 911 (if 911 has not already been contacted).
3. When there is any chance that students have been injured, EMS personnel will assess each student and determine whether they may need medical attention. If they recommend medical attention and the parent refuses, the parent must sign a release form.
4. The bus company will send someone to the scene to determine if the bus is safe to continue the route. If not, as soon as possible, the bus (or a replacement bus) will continue the route with uninjured students.
5. The bus company will call the school with preliminary information. (School personnel may go to the scene if they feel this would be helpful, but this is not a requirement.)
6. The bus driver will use their daily bus list to determine which students ride the bus, including guest riders.
7. The bus driver will radio the bus company with rider information, and the company will contact the school. (If there are injuries, the bus company will contact the school with the names of injured students, and a preliminary assessment of injuries).
8. The school will contact affected families and provide updates. If students are injured, the school will notify parents and tell them which hospital their student is headed to.
9. When police arrive on the scene, police officers will take charge until the Fire Department arrives. The Fire Department then takes charge of the medical and fire safety situations. Police continue to assist by keeping the scene secure, maintaining traffic safety, and gathering information about the incident.
10. If parents or guardians come to the scene and want to take their students THEY MUST SHOW SOME FORM OF IDENTIFICATION AND SIGN A RELEASE BEFORE THE STUDENTS MAY LEAVE WITH THEM. Bus notes will be honored (i.e. if a rider shows that he or she has a note to go to the home of a different parent, that parent will be allowed to take the student). The only other persons that students can be released to are as follows:
 - The Principal or other school staff person designated by Principal.
 - Representatives of the National Red Cross
 - Police, State Police, or Fire Department Officials
 - National Guard
 - Department of Children and Families Staff

B. CARS

If you drive your student to or from school, please observe the following routines. According to M.G.L. C 90 section 16B, no driver shall cause or allow the engine of any motor vehicle to idle unnecessarily on school grounds. No driver may leave a car running and unattended at any time on school property.

Drop-Off: In the morning, after buses and vans leave, you may pull up to the school sidewalk. Please help students exit from the school-side of cars and not into the driveway. Students in Kindergarten – Grade 6 must enter through the front doors. Preschool students should be brought to their classroom by their parents, who must park in a parking space, and not in the driveway. If you need care for your student before the school day starts, contact the Enchanted Forest Director. Arrangements can be made for care at Enchanted Forest everyday or for drop-ins.

Pick-Up: All students in Kindergarten – Grade 6 who leave school by car will exit from the front door after checking in with office staff. Students may not be picked up in the parking lots. Parents should come into the school to pick up their student. A staff member will monitor the departure of students. Preschool staff will dismiss preschool students.

Parking: Please do not park on the blacktop section of the playground. Drop-off and pick-up parking is available in the lower lot or in the visitor spaces of the upper lot. **At no time should a car be left unattended in the driveway.** This area must be open at all times for emergency vehicles.

C. BICYCLES

In warm weather, students may ride bicycles to school. **All bicyclists must wear helmets; this is state law. Please note:** if a bike rider arrives at school without a helmet, he or she will not be permitted to ride the bike home.

We ask that parents of walkers and bicyclists write a note giving permission for their students to ride their bicycle or walk to and from school. This is a change of bus routine and therefore requires a note.

Bicycles should be parked as soon as students arrive at school and may not be ridden in the school parking lot or playground area before, during, or after school hours.

Both walkers and bicycle riders should plan to leave school immediately following bus departure, unless they are involved in a supervised afterschool activity.

Rules of the Road: If your students will ride a bicycle to school, be sure to review the following rules with them:

- Ride on the right hand side of the road with the flow of traffic.
- Ride single file.
- Stop at stop signs and obey all other traffic signs and signals.
- Signal turns by hand gestures and look before turning. Otherwise, keep both hands on the handlebars.
- Give the right of way to pedestrians.
- Give a clear warning by using a horn or voice cues, when passing pedestrians or other cyclists.
- Never carry passengers.
- Check your brakes often.
- Equip your bicycle with front and rear reflectors, pedal reflectors, and reflective material along the sides.

D. WALKING

Some students walk to school, although the roads near our school are not ideal for walkers. Walkers should walk against (not with) traffic. In the afternoon, walkers may leave from the front door after the buses have left. Walkers must leave school immediately after dismissal, unless they are enrolled in an afterschool program.

E. BAD WEATHER – DELAYED OPENINGS – SCHOOL CLOSINGS

If it becomes necessary to close school, or to delay school opening due to inclement weather or other conditions, the Superintendent will inform the school as early as possible. Sometimes weather drastically changes, and can necessitate a last-minute decision to delay the opening of school or to close school early. Be aware of this possibility. We will use our parent information system to notify you of early school closings, delayed openings, or snow days. Our system will send messages via phone call (or voicemail), text message, and email. Make sure we have up-to-date contact information to ensure that you receive important messages from the school.

Swift River School is part of Erving School Union #28. School closings or delayed openings are often posted under School Union #28 or Erving Union #28, and usually not as Swift River School. If Swift River is the only school with a closing, it may be announced as New Salem-Wendell School District. The radio stations listed below will announce Erving School Union #28 closings or delays:

WHA1 (98.3 FM)	Greenfield
WPVQ (95.3 FM)	Greenfield
WRNX (100.9 FM)	Amherst
WPVQ (95.3 FM)	South Deerfield
KIX (100.9 FM)	Springfield
WHMP (96.9 FM)	Northampton
WRSI (93.9 FM)	Northampton
WJDF (97.3 FM)	Orange

WXRG (99.9 FM) Orange
WGAW (1340 AM) Gardner (wgaw1340.com)

As will the following television stations:

WWLP (Channel 22) Springfield (www.wwlp.com)
WGGB (Channel 40) Gardner (www.wggb.com)

When school is cancelled early in the morning, you will receive a phone call, a text message, and an email from our automated parent notification system, or **robo call** (as we refer to it). You may also call the school at 978-544-6926; we will have a recorded message to inform families of any closing, delay, or early dismissal. Additionally, F.M. Kuzmeskus, our bus company reports delayed openings and early closings on their website, travelcuz.com.

Early Closure: If the Superintendent decides to effect an early closure, you will receive a phone call from school. **Please do not call the school except to respond to a message** to keep the phone lines free while we notify each student's parents. Early closings are rare, but would also be announced on the radio and on television, as well as through our parent notification system.

The school maintains a plan to respond to natural disasters such as earthquakes, tornados, and other events that require movement of students within the school building or removal of students from the school building. As part of that plan, it may be necessary to transport students away from the school. In such a case, parents and guardians will be notified as soon as possible. In order for school staff to reach you in the event of an emergency, we rely on the information you provide on your emergency form. Please notify us of any changes to phone numbers and/or emergency contacts as soon as possible.

III. EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

A. SCHOOL MISSION

Swift River School is a safe, compassionate, and academically-rich learning community where all students develop and apply knowledge, creativity, and social skills.

Vision: Swift River is known to the community as "Our School". We are a small, rural school where we greet, welcome, and support all. Our community inspires enthusiasm for learning, creativity, and social connections.

The student curriculum, both academic and social, is differentiated so that each learner is engaged in rich and meaningful work. Student achievement and sense of efficacy increase throughout the years.

Students and staff are introduced to the school's social curriculum which provides rules and guidelines for engaging in collaborative problem-solving and conflict resolution. These strategies are reinforced during directed activities and workshops, and then applied as situations naturally arise.

Staff members are encouraged to collaborate. They think together, share their practices, and critically analyze the condition of the school and the achievement of its students. Professional knowledge is applied regularly and creatively, and is shared in a collegial environment during scheduled professional development time.

Swift River School offers a variety of workshops for families. Topics include academic and social curricula. The workshops develop a common language that empowers everyone to be supportive contributors to the learning team.

The Swift River School community members—students, staff, families, and townspeople—work together to promote learning for all.

B. SCHOOL PROGRAMS

All students are expected to participate in all areas of the Swift River School curricula. Student work is displayed in classrooms and hallways of the school. If you do not want your student's work displayed, please send a note to the school stating that you wish your student's work to be excluded from display.

English Language Arts: To promote a consistent, viable, and balanced literacy program throughout our classrooms, Swift River School uses Foundations and McGraw Hill Wonders as the core ELA program in Kindergarten – Grade 6. Foundations focuses on scientifically-based principles and practices to assess and teach phonological awareness and phonics. The Wonders program focuses on phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and reading fluency. Swift River uses the Lucy Calkins Writing Workshop which focuses on students becoming writers. Students work on narratives, poetry, realistic fiction, non-fiction, essays, and informational and persuasive text designed for each grade level. Lucy Calkins Writing Workshop is aligned to the new Common Core Standards.

Handwriting: Handwriting is learned and/or practiced at all grade levels. Along with structured lessons, there will be additional opportunities to practice and apply skills. We use the Handwriting Without Tears method.

Mathematics: The Everyday Math program is a set of Preschool – Grade 6 enriched mathematics curricula developed by the University of Chicago that empowers students to understand mathematical content far beyond arithmetic. This curriculum is aligned with the Common Core Standards.

Sciences: Teachers present science units which include earth, physical, biological, and life sciences using FOSS (Full Option Science System) and supplementary materials. This is a strong inquiry-based curriculum for Preschool – Grade 6 that is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks developed by the University of California at Berkeley. Each kit contains book lists related to a topic, hands-on materials, and a variety of experiment ideas that allow for firsthand experiences with these topics. In addition, essential science skills such as observation, measurement, and deduction are emphasized.

Social Studies: Teachers in Preschool – Grade 3 select units of study that follow the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for each grade level. Social Studies units integrate with other academic areas. Social Studies Alive! History Alive! and Geography Alive! Books published by Teachers' Curriculum Institute are used in Grades 4 – 6. This series is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Field trips, guest speakers, and simulations support social studies learning.

Title I Reading: Title I funds and local funds are used to hire a teacher who provides extra reading support for our students. This program serves students in Grades 1 – 4 who are eligible for Title I services. Assessments, MCAS scores, and teacher recommendations are used to determine eligibility. Parents of eligible students will receive a notification letter that must be signed by the parents and returned to school before Title I services can begin. This additional support service may be delivered in the classroom or in a small group with the Title I Teacher.

Essential Skills Math: Local funds are used to hire a teacher who provides extra mathematics support for our students. The program serves eligible students in Grade 1 – 6. Assessments, MCAS scores and teacher recommendations are used to determine eligibility. Parents of eligible students will receive a notification letter that must be signed by parents and returned to school before Essential Skills services can begin. This additional support service may be delivered in the regular classroom or in a small group with the Essential Skills Teacher.

Technology Education: Our students' success with their technological education depends on their ability to use computers flexibly, creatively, and purposefully. In the computer lab, students focus on learning applications to facilitate the completion of projects including research, illustration, presentation, word processing and publishing. Students learn to become adept at managing and integrating technology into their everyday life. Teachers receive ongoing technological professional development. The lab includes Apple workstations, scanners, a color printer, and a projector. Students and parents must sign the Acceptable Use Policy before having access to the Internet. We have Fiber Optic connectivity that allows teachers to use the Internet to augment classroom instruction. We have enhanced our administrative software for IEP writing, student information management, and reading assessment analysis. The school maintains a website at <http://www.swiftschool.org>.

Art: Our expressive Arts program includes visual arts, crafts, movement, and theater to engage students in thoughtful and exploratory learning.

Music: The Music Program offers musical history, incorporates movement and dance, and provides emphasis on multiple composers and cultural themes. During the school-wide **Community Sing** on Friday mornings, students learn a wide variety of songs. Parents and community members are invited to join us at 8:45 AM in the Swift River Café. Instrument lessons are available to students in Grades 4 – 6. Grade 3 students may be included if there are slots available. Students may receive instruction in recorder, flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, baritone saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion. Parents pay the cost of instrument rentals, but otherwise there is no cost for participation. A less expensive alternative to instrument rental is to purchase a recorder (even good recorders are not expensive) and register for lessons.

Physical Education: The physical education program promotes the development of motor skills, physical abilities, and lifelong healthy habits. All activities are designed to encourage teamwork, cooperation, and positivity. Classes for students in Kindergarten – Grade 2 focus on the development of movement concepts such as locomotion (walking, jogging, running, galloping, and skipping), space (both personal and general), speed (slow, medium, and fast), and floor patterns (such as straight, curvy and zigzag). Other areas of focus include: learning boundaries, sports skills, cooperative games, and healthy nutritional choices. Students in Grades 3 – 6 focus on the refinement of movement concepts and sport skills while developing age-appropriate game skills such as team concepts, game rules, and decision-making. Other concepts include advanced sports skill development, body control, cooperative games, and teambuilding activities.

Library: The library program provides access to a variety of engaging books for personal and academic use. The main goals of the library program are: to promote a love of reading, to improve listening skills, to foster visual literacy, and to teach students to be responsible patrons of the library. To maintain the quality of our book collection and to ensure that all students have the opportunity to utilize this resource, we have established the following library loans procedures:

- **Book limits:** Preschool and Kindergarten students may check out one book for one week. Students in Grades 1 – 6 may check out two books for two weeks.
- **Renewal:** A book may be renewed up to two times if no one else has requested it.
- **Overdue books:** Students with overdue books will be permitted to check out more books, but they will not be allowed to take them home until all overdue books are returned.
- **Lost books:** Overdue notices will be sent home when books are not returned on time. If a book is still missing one month past its due date, it will be considered lost. A letter stating the current replacement cost of the book will be sent to the student's parents.
- **Damaged books:** Books are loaned in "library condition." When a book is returned in a condition that will prevent it from being loaned again, a letter stating the current replacement cost will be sent to the student's parents.

Preschool: Swift River Early Childhood Program operates a preschool program for children who are three or four by September 1st of the current school year, and who reside in the district. There is one multi-age classroom that meets every day. For more information about this program, please contact the Preschool Teacher at 978-544-6926 extension 236.

Kindergarten: Kindergarten is a full-day program for students who turn five years old by September 1st of the current school year. The Kindergarten program includes extended learning opportunities, lunch, and a quiet period.

Enchanted Forest: Our **before-school and afterschool program**, Enchanted Forest, is a combination student care and enrichment program that is available five days a week for students in Kindergarten – Grade 6. Preschool students may enroll in the before-school program, but not the afterschool program. Enchanted Forest provides students with a variety of play opportunities, including arts and crafts, physical activities, computer time, and a daily homework period. The program is oriented to encourage each student's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Call the Enchanted Forest Director with questions about available space, fees, or other information at 978-544-6926.

IV. THE COMMUNITY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN

The Community Network for Children (CNC) supports families and care providers in the communities of Erving, Leverett, Shutesbury, New Salem, and Wendell. The Community Network for Children is funded by CFCE grant funds through the Department of Early Education and Care. We support initiatives to create programs that address the needs of early education and care professionals and families with young children who live in Erving, Wendell, New Salem, Shutesbury and Leverett. We strive to collaborate with existing human service agencies to further fulfill these needs. If you live in one of these towns and have a young child, then your family can benefit from the Erving School Union # 28 Community Network for Children. If you have a newborn or are expecting a baby and live in one of these towns, please contact us to be added to our mailing list and receive a new baby gift bag!

To find out more about the services we offer or how to get involved, please contact the Community Network for Children Coordinator at 978-544-5157, or by email at budine@erving.com. You may also mail CNC at:

The Community Network for Children
Swift River School
201 Wendell Road, New Salem, MA 01355
Phone: 978-544-5157 | Fax: 978-544-2253

And online at:

<http://sites.google.com/site/communitynetworkforchildren/>
<http://www.facebook.com/communitynetworkforchildren>

CNC Program Objectives:

- To Act as a community-based information and resource hub for families with young children (aged 0 – 8) that allows them to increase their knowledge of and their accessibility to high-quality early education, care programs, and services.
- To Promote family education, engagement, and literacy through activities that:
 - Recognize parents as their student's first teacher.
 - Build on family strengths.
 - Bolster parental leadership.
 - Create parental opportunities for mutual support and social connections.
 - Build early and family literacy skills.
- To provide access to resources and information (which will support the deliverance of high-quality services) to early school educators, caregivers, educators outside of school, student care providers, and program directors across public and private sectors. To offer this access, we will use a variety of methods, including governance council meetings, email distribution, community resource guides, and web postings.

The Community Network for Children program was established in the spring of 2009 by joining the Massachusetts Family Network (MFN) and the Community Partnerships for Students (CPC) funding to maximize resources that support families and early care and education providers in our communities. It is our intent to continue to offer the best of both programs and support families and early care and education professionals within our communities.

CNC's Story Hour, special events, and programs are held at:

- Shutesbury M.N. Spear Memorial Library
- Leverett Public Library
- Erving Public Library
- Wendell Free Library
- New Salem Public Library

Parent-Child Playgroups are held at:

- Erving Elementary School
- Shutesbury Elementary School

- Swift River School
- Wendell Free Library

To receive a current schedule and program listings, call CNC at 978-544-5157.

Things We Do Together:

- Provide opportunities for parents to see themselves as their student's first teacher and become involved in their community.
- Enable collaboration with other service providers such as REACH, early studenthood school-based programs, private community studentcare programs, and Community Action!
- Maintain a newborn visiting program.
- Offer assistance to families in emergencies.
- Support local food pantries.
- Offer parenting workshops and educational services.
- Distribute newsletters to families, early care and education providers, programs, and partners.
- Collaborate with local libraries to offer children's kits and parenting books along with other resources.
- Hold informal support groups and meetings.
- Put on family and community events.
- Share ideas, talents and interests for future events.

For a current listing of EEC Licensed Early Education and Care Providers (both public and private), go to <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/StudentCareSearch/EarlyEduMap.aspx>, or call 978-544-5157 for help accessing the list. You can search all area programs in public schools, studentcare establishments, and center-based and school-age programs. We also support families accessing information about how to get assistance to pay for childcare, Preschool, or before-school and afterschool programs.

Resources for Early Education and Care Providers:

- Information and referrals designed to help early education and studentcare providers access professional development opportunities.
- Access to the MA State Wait List for Child Care Vouchers for eligible families.
- Networking with other providers in your communities.

CNC Council Meetings: The Erving School Union #28 Community Network for Children Council is a mechanism to develop and enhance collaborative relationships and partnerships that improve the quality of family support, resources, and early education and care in the ESU #28 communities. Parents, early education and care providers, service agencies, community programs, and businesses work together to form a cohesive system of programming and support for young children in our communities.

The Erving School Union #28 Community Network for Children Council allows families, early educators and community members to participate in the assessment of and response to the needs of young students while representing their needs in the decision-making process for programs that benefit both families and communities as a whole. The council is open to all who are interested and is always willing to include new members. Local council memberships consist of a variety of community members including:

- Parents of young students.
- Family student care providers.
- REACH (a local early intervention program).
- Head Start and Early Head Start.
- Public and private Preschool Teachers/Directors.
- School Principals.
- CNC members.
- Resource and referral agency members (student care outlook)
- Others.

Meetings are held throughout the year. Call the CNC Coordinator for the current meeting schedule at 978-544-5157.

V. ACADEMIC INFORMATION

A. REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

The staff has developed a report card aligned to the Massachusetts Common Core State Standards. Report cards will be distributed in December, March, and on the final day of school. Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in late fall and early spring. Conferences provide opportunities for both parties to share information and work together to promote each student's learning and growth. Communication between parents and teachers is sometimes necessary at other times as well. Both parents and teachers must feel free to arrange meetings as needed.

B. TESTING

Students in Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 will participate in the written Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test. Students in Grade 5 will participate in The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Science Test. These tests are given in May according to a schedule set by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). PARCC and MCAS test scores are distributed to parents when DESE releases them, usually by the next fall.

DIBELS Next (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), the Daze, and the Benchmark Assessment System are administered to students in Kindergarten – Grade 6 two to three times per year to assess reading fluency, decoding, and comprehension. Aimsweb and MIBELS are administered to students in Kindergarten – Grade 6 two to three times per year to assess math fluency and concepts. The Reading Street and Everyday Mathematics programs used in classrooms include regular assessments.

State regulations require us to administer developmental screening to all Kindergarten and Preschool students. We use the Dial-4 and the Fluharty-Z. Prior to or within the first month of school, all Kindergarten students are screened for speech, hearing, vision, and general readiness for school. Screening is a non-intensive scan of developmental abilities in order to determine which students may be referred for further evaluation. The purpose of screening is to identify potential factors that, without support, could prevent students from having successful experiences in school.

C. HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned to practice and understand skills and concepts learned in school, to complete unfinished work, and to do research projects or related background reading. Teachers evaluate students's homework.

As we continue to build our new school web site (www.swiftriverschool.org), we will add student links to skill builders for families to access.

D. FIELD TRIPS

During the year, classes occasionally take field trips to enrich and expand student learning. Each trip requires parental permission. A form is sent home to explain the details of the trip and parents must complete and return the included permission slip by its due date. Parents may deny permission for their student to go on a field trip by indicating this information on the permission slip.

The Principal or a teacher initiates school-sponsored field trips. The Student Activities Fund (supported by schoolwide fundraisers) provides partial payment for classroom field trips. Parents may be asked to pay remaining costs. Some teachers may request parental support with field trips. Any parent who volunteers to chaperone must have a CORI form on file in the Superintendent's Office. CORI forms are available in the office.

Students are transported to field trips in authorized vehicles (typically school buses) contracted by the school district.

VI. BEHAVIOR CODE OF CONDUCT

A. GUIDELINES

We consider Swift River School to be a supportive community, where emphasis is placed on taking care of others, of our environment, and of ourselves. We have three guiding principles:

Be Safe.
Be Kind.
Be Responsible.

We are committed to providing a school environment where students are safe and ready to learn. We work to help students foster positive behavior. We expect our students to show respect to each other, to adults, and to school property.

We believe discipline should be solution-oriented. When problems occur, every effort should be made to resolve the problems through conference and discussion, which may or may not include parents. We use the Second Step and Steps to Respect programs to teach problem-solving skills and non-aggressive conflict resolution.

B. CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Teachers have the authority and responsibility to maintain discipline in the classrooms in a manner consistent with school policy. When a problem occurs, a teacher may have a conference with the student involved, direct that student to the Principal for a cooling-off period and conversation, and/or have a conference with the student's parents or guardians.

The Principal has the responsibility and the authority to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning with a fair and consistent application of policies and procedures. When needed, the Principal will review a problem with the student and teachers involved and take appropriate actions. Such actions may consist of further conferencing, additional appropriate consequences, meetings with parents, and/or referrals to other agencies.

Repeated non-compliance of school rules may result in: loss of recess, composition of formal apology letters, community service, and time spent outside of the classroom until the behavior is corrected.

Students who are repeatedly disruptive and upset classroom learning may be denied the ability to join field trips, excursions, or similar activities. Students must understand that acceptable behavior is required of them at all times, whether on school grounds, on school buses, and on field trips.

Teasing and the use of inappropriate language occasionally occurs at school. Staff will address such behavior promptly. We will not tolerate bullying, harassment or threatening behavior in any circumstances.

When necessary, consequences for negative or disruptive behavior can range from verbal warnings to loss of privileges, recess time, and class time. A student may be asked to go to the office to speak with the Principal. The Principal may meet with the student's parents or guardians and with the student's teacher to assist in developing a plan for behavior improvement. Any behavior that is deemed dangerous or unsafe will be referred to the Principal, who has the authority and the responsibility to take appropriate action. When other interventions have failed, in-school suspension may result.

The Student Support Services Team determines alternative disciplinary criteria for students who receive support services when necessary.

Special Cases: If a student hits, strikes, pushes, or assaults a staff member, the student will be sent to the Principal. The Principal will notify the student's parents or guardians. The student may be placed in in-school suspension with the Principal for the remainder of the day. Prior to returning to school, the Principal will arrange a meeting with the student, the student's parents or guardians, and the student's teacher. The student will not return to class until this meeting takes place. A plan for a behavior change will be put into effect. A formal hearing will take place if suspension or expulsion is warranted. Student suspension, exclusion, and expulsion procedures are explained in full; see the Policies, Regulations, and Laws section of this handbook for more details.

Because of the health risks associated with biting, a student or adult who receives a bite from a student must be taken to the Nurse. The Nurse will treat the wound appropriately, contact parents or guardians and complete an accident report.

Physical Restraint: Physical restraint is defined as the use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement. (Physical escort, unlike physical restraint, is defined as the touching or holding of a student without the use of force for the purpose of direction, and is not covered by this policy.) Physical restraint will only be used as a behavior management tool when other less intrusive alternatives fail or are inappropriate. In the event that physical restraint is required for the protection of members of the school community, Swift River School has adopted a policy and procedures to ensure the proper use of restraint in order to prevent or minimize any harm to a student as a result of restraint. Specific staff members are trained in restraint annually. None of the following policies or procedures precludes any teacher, staff member, or agent of Swift River School from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent serious harm.

Corporal Punishment: Corporal punishment is defined as physical pain or restraint inflicted on a student's person. **Note:** Corporal punishment is **not** allowed under Massachusetts state law.

- No teacher, staff member, or agent of the School Committee shall inflict corporal punishment on any student.
- The power of teachers, staff members, and agents of the School Committee to maintain discipline upon school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any student.
- Nothing in this procedure shall be interpreted as preventing any teacher, staff member, or agent of the School Committee from using appropriate physical force in the following situations: to protect oneself from assault by a student, to protect other students and staff members from violent aggressive acts of a student, or to prevent a student from self-harm.

VII. STUDENT SUSPENSION, EXCLUSION, AND EXPULSION

A. DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS

A student will be suspended once due process has been followed:

Notice of Proposed Suspension: Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½ or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school suspension, an opportunity to be heard at a hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing. Notice shall set forth in plain language and include:

- the disciplinary offense;
- the basis for the charge;
- the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parents or guardians to attend the hearing;
- the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- the right of the student and the student's parents or guardians to seek interpreter services at the hearing if needed for participation.

The Principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parents or guardians orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parents or guardians present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parents or guardians. Reasonable effort is presumed if the Principal sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parents or guardians in the manner specified by the parents or guardians on their student's emergency form.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be delivered either by hand, or by first-class mail, certified mail, or email, using addresses provided by the parents or guardians for school communications (or any other method agreed to by the Principal and the parents or guardians) in English, and in the primary language of the home (if other than English), or by other means of communication when appropriate.

B. SHORT TERM SUSPENSIONS

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten consecutive days or less. Out-of-school short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively exceed ten days of suspension over the course of the school year shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

Principal Hearings: The purpose of a hearing with the Principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed a disciplinary offense, outline the basis for the charge, and bring forward any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. Parents or guardians present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.

Based on the available information, the Principal will make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The Principal will provide notification in writing of the determination in the form of an update to the student and the student's parents or guardians, and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the Principal shall inform the parents or guardians of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

If the student is in Preschool – Grade 3 the Principal shall send the determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and the Principal's determination shall be delivered either by hand, or by first-class mail, certified mail, or email, using addresses provided by the parents or guardians for school communications (or any other method agreed to by the Principal and the parents or guardians) in English, and in the primary language of the home (if other than English), or by other means of communication when appropriate.

C. LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS:

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten consecutive school days, or for more than ten cumulative school days for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of a hearing with the Principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, determine the basis for the charge, and bring forward any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension (such as loss of privileges, a composed apology, a student contract, restitution, and probation) are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

- In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not.
- The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or the parents' or guardians' expense.
- The right to produce witnesses on the student's behalf and the right to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident.
- The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district.
- The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or the parents or guardians upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing, the Principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense. If the Principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Principal will impose a consequence or a remedy, after taking mitigating circumstances into account, and with the consideration of alternatives to suspension, such as the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, including: mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports. If the Principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing.
- Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal.
- Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date for return to school.
- Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to encourage the student to make academic progress during suspension, and the contact information of a staff member who can provide more detailed information.

- Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or a designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five calendar days, which may be extended by a parents' or guardians' request in writing an additional seven calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on the appeal.

If the student is in Preschool – Grade 3, the Principal shall send the determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and the Principal's determination shall be delivered either by hand, or by first-class mail, certified mail, or email, using addresses provided by the parents or guardians for school communications (or any other method agreed to by the Principal and the parents or guardians) in English, and in the primary language of the home (if other than English), or by other means of communication when appropriate.

C. APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent if the appeal is filed properly and in a timely fashion. An effort shall be made to include the student's parents or guardians at the hearing. A hearing shall be held within three school days of the appeal, unless the student requests or the parents or guardians request an extension of up to seven additional calendar days, which the Superintendent shall grant.

The student and the student's parents or guardians shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension Principal hearing. Within five calendar days of the hearing, the Superintendent shall issue a written decision which meets the criteria required of the Principal's determination. If the Superintendent determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the Principal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

D. EMERGENCY SUSPENSION

A student may be temporarily removed prior to a notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no available alternative to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two school days following the day of the emergency removal.

During an emergency suspension, the Principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parents or guardians of the suspension and the reason for it. The Principal shall also provide the due process requirement of a written notice for suspensions and make arrangements for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable, within the two school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed upon by the Principal, the student, and the student's parents or guardians.

A decision shall be rendered orally and in writing on the same day as the hearing and no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of the Principal's determination in a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable.

E. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

In-School Suspension Under 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10 is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for not more than ten consecutive school days, or no more than ten cumulative school days for multiple infractions over the course of the school year.

The Principal may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

The Principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student with an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the Principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the day of the in-school suspension, the Principal shall make reasonable efforts to orally notify the parents or guardians of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The Principal shall also invite the parents or guardians to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the first day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon as possible thereafter. If the Principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The Principal shall send a written notice to the student and the parents or guardians about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parents or guardians to a meeting with the Principal for the purpose set forth above, if such a meeting has not already occurred. The Principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by

hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to the addresses provided by the parents on their student's emergency form, or by another method of delivery agreed upon by the Principal and the parents or guardians.

F. SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES

Suspension or Expulsion for Disciplinary Offenses Under M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H½ states that due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses:

- **Possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or assault of a staff member.** A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or if the student assaults a member of the educational staff, and the Principal determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal shall notify the student and the parents or guardians in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, the Principal may, at the Principal's discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of the appeal. The student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.

- **Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint.** Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal may suspend a student for a period of time deemed appropriate by the Principal, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension (prior to such suspension taking effect), and the right to appeal. The Principal will also provide the student and the parents or guardians with the process for appealing the suspension to the Superintendent. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the Superintendent. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing.

- **Felony conviction or adjudication/admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency.** The Principal may expel a student who is convicted of a felony, or a student who has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a felony, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent, as well as information regarding the appeal process. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of the request for an appeal of the decision no later than five calendar days following the date of the expulsion. The hearing with the Superintendent shall be held with the student and parents or guardians within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

G. EXCLUSION

Exclusion is defined as a temporary removal of a student from the regular school program, for a period of time greater than five school days.

Reasons for Exclusion: Physical or emotional disabilities inimical to the welfare of other students.

Authority: The Principal and the Director of Student Support Services determine whether student exclusion is warranted (students on temporary exclusion must be referred for a full evaluation in accordance with Special Education regulations).

Provisions: In the event of student exclusion, the following provisions may be put into effect:

- A student may be allowed to attend school on a part-time only basis if the student's exclusion is due to an inability to perform in a socially-acceptable manner over the duration of a full school day.
- A student may be allowed to attend school on a partially-integrated basis in which the student may spend part of the day with their classroom and the remainder of the day with a learning specialist.

- A student may be allowed to attend school full-time under the supervision of a learning specialist either during or after normal school hours.
- A student may be deemed suited for homebound instruction only when certified as such by the student's physician.

H. EXPULSION

Expulsion is defined as a forfeiture of a student's entitlement to attend school.

Reason for Expulsion: Student expulsion may ensue from serious infractions of the rules as set forth in the disciplinary code.

Authority: The School Committee determines whether student expulsion is warranted.

Procedure: In the event of student expulsion, the following procedure will be put into effect:

- The Principal will refer expulsion cases in writing to the Superintendent of Schools, who shall conduct a preliminary investigation and potential hearing on the matter within 72 hours from receipt of the notification.
- The Superintendent shall report their findings and recommendations to the Chairmen of the School Committee within 48 hours of the conclusion of the investigation.
- Upon recommendation from the Superintendent, the School Committee, or a majority thereof, will conduct a full hearing into the matter in accordance with the following provisions:
 - The student and the student's parents or guardians will be sent written notice of the charges, the possible penalty and the time, place, and circumstances of the hearing by certified mail, and will be provided with sufficient time to prepare a defense.
 - The student and the student's parents or guardians will be informed of their right to legal counsel or other representation.
 - The opportunity will be afforded to present witnesses or evidence on behalf of the accused student, along with the opportunity to cross-examine opposing witnesses.
 - A written record of the proceedings shall be maintained, although not necessarily in a verbatim transcript.
 - A written decision by the Committee will be sent by certified mail to the student and the student's parents or guardians within five days of the hearing's conclusion.
 - All hearings will be conducted in executive sessions unless voted otherwise by the School Committee. Hearings will be held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Meeting law.
 - Under these circumstances, a student may be temporarily suspended from school until such time as the School Committee has reached a decision regarding expulsion.
 - Expulsion of a student from Swift River School will be decided by the New Salem-Wendell School Committee upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, and in accordance with the prevailing laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Education.

I. DISCIPLINE CODE

Disciplinary Infractions: Students may be suspended, excluded, or expelled, depending upon the severity and number of offenses, for the following reasons:

- Use of violence, force, noise, coercion, profanity or obscenity, threat, harassment, discrimination, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other comparable conduct, that constitute an interference with school purposes, or for urging other students to engage in such conduct.
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, stealing or attempting to steal school property, or damage or theft of school property.
- Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to private property, or stealing or attempting to steal.
- Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury, or intentionally behaving in such a way as could cause physical injury to a student or staff member.
- Intentionally inflicting bodily harm on a student or staff member.
- Threatening and intimidating any student for the purpose or with the intent of obtaining money or other items from the student.
- Knowingly possessing, handling or transmitting any object that could reasonably be considered a weapon. Such objects shall not include school supplies, such as pencils or compasses, which have a practical use in connection with an educational function, but do include any firearm, any explosive (including firecrackers), or any knives, except where such items have practical use in connection with any educational function.
- Knowingly possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. All medical prescriptions must be dispensed by the Nurse upon written parental permission and physician's prescription.
- Engaging in the unlawful selling of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, or other violations of the criminal law which constitute a danger to other students, or which constitutes an interference with school purposes.
- Failing to comply with teachers' directions, during any period of time when a student is under teacher supervision, where such failure constitutes an interference with school purposes.
- Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which constitutes
- an interference with school purpose.
- A violation or repeated violation of any rules or regulations adopted by the School Committee for the orderly operations of the school.

- **Each count of possession, or use of explosives or incendiary devices that have potential to do great bodily harm or great physical damage will result in the following:**
 - **Possession:** Possession will result in three – ten days of external suspension pending School Committee review.
 - **Use:** Use will result in external suspension pending School Committee review; parents and police will be notified, and possible court action will ensue.
 - **Bomb Threats:** Bomb threats will result in ten days of external suspension; parents and police will be notified. Review before the School Committee is required, and court action may ensue.
 - **Arson:** Deliberately starting a fire in school or on a school bus will result in ten days of suspension; parents and police will be notified. Review before the School Committee is required, and court action may ensue along with psychological and psychiatric assessment.

Note: The above reasons for disciplinary action apply to infractions on school grounds, during extracurricular events off school grounds, or during bus transportation to and from school grounds. The above discipline code is to serve as a guideline for imposing disciplinary action and is not construed to be all-inclusive.

Due Process, Chapter 71, Section 37 H – MGL: Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

- Any student on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, who is found in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to a gun or knife; or controlled substances as defined in chapter 94 C, including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, or heroine, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.
- Any student who assaults the Principal, a teacher, or a staff member on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the Principal.
- Any student who is charged with a violation of the rules stated in either of the above paragraphs shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing, provided that the student may have representation, along with an opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the Principal may decide to suspend, rather than expel, the student.
- Any student who has been expelled from the school pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of the appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the Commonwealth shall be required to admit the student, or to provide educational services to the student. If the student applies for admission to another school or school district, the Superintendent of school district to which the application is made may request, and shall receive a statement from the Superintendent of the expelling school explaining the reasons for the expulsion.

VII. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

A. COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION

Swift River School maintains a commitment to provide support services, whenever appropriate, in the student's regular classroom and within the student's regular classroom program.

District Curriculum Accomodation Plan: Students in Preschool – Grade 6 may need additional classroom support with academic, social, emotional, behavioral, or physical difficulties. The teacher will develop a variety of strategies for the student in the classroom and may seek help from other school staff. These supports in the classroom are known as classroom accommodations.

Individual Student Success Plan: If interventions are not successful, the classroom teacher documents the concern and the instructional and/or behavioral strategies that have been utilized in the classroom in the Individual Student Success Plan (ISSP). The teacher meets with the Principal and the student's study team to discuss the concerns. Further short-term interventions may be initiated that could include work with the essential skills teachers and/or other school staff. If the new interventions are not successful in a determined timeline, then the teacher and the other staff will meet with the students parents or guardians to consider the next steps.

Warning Results on MCAS Testing: An Individual Student Success Plan (ISSP) will be developed for any student who receives a "warning" result on an MCAS test. The grade level team (classroom teacher, student support staff, essential skills teacher) will write the plan with the goal of providing support to the student individually in the subject in which he or she received the "warning" result.

B. SECTION 504/ADA

Two federal laws address issues pertaining to citizens with disabilities. They are the Section 504 Law and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students who meet the three criteria identified in these laws are eligible for accommodations in the classroom and/or related services. To meet the three criteria, a student must have: (i) a physical or mental impairment that causes (ii) substantial limitation to a (iii) major life activity. A team consisting of members who know the student will determine eligibility and create a 504 Plan to identify the accommodation to support student success.

C. THE SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW

In Massachusetts, the special education system is based on the federal special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), in combination with the state's special education law (MGL c. 71B). Before a determination can be made as to whether or not a student is eligible for special education, an evaluation of the student's educational strengths and needs must occur. At Swift River School, and in Erving School Union #28, we refer to our special education program as **Student Support Services**.

Student Find: Notification of screenings and orientations is given through letters, announcements, local newspapers and the *Swift River Current*. If you or any of your neighbors are new to town and have preschool-age students, please call the school so we can update our mailing lists and keep everyone informed of events and services. A parent or guardian can request a screening at any time. The purpose of screening is to determine whether a student has eligibility for support with speech, hearing, vision, and/or cognitive or emotional development for which early services may be beneficial. Under state and federal law, the school is required to provide services or evaluations for students who are deemed eligible through screening.

Eligibility Determination: If it is determined that instructional supports and/or accommodations have not resulted in sufficient progress for a student, an educational evaluation by the student support team may become necessary. In order for an evaluation of a student to proceed, a parent or guardian must provide written consent for the conduction of specific assessments. Parents and guardians have the right to request an evaluation for their child. A Student Support team is formed. Parents or guardians, the Principal, and the student's classroom teacher are always members of the team. The other members are determined by the student's assessments.

The evaluation process includes:

- An assessment of educational status, history, and school progress by the classroom teacher.
- An assessment by specialists in areas related to the student's suspected need for student support.

Other eligibility-based assessments which may be conducted at the parents or guardians request are:

- Health assessment
- Psychological assessment
- Assessment by a social worker, or a guidance or adjustment counselor
- Assessment by an occupational therapist
- Assessment by an audiologist
- Assessment by a neurologist or other specialists

D. IEP DEVELOPMENT

Following the completion of assessments, the student support team discusses reports, findings and recommendations at a team meeting. If a student is deemed eligible, and personalized instruction is required, an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) will be developed to include educational objectives the student support team would like the student to attain in the coming year. The student support team writes an IEP and parents or guardians can accept or reject the plan as written, meet again with some of the student support team members for more discussion, to make changes, or to request an independent evaluation. The goal of student support team is to provide personalized instruction that allows every student to acquire the necessary skills to access and progress in the regular curriculum.

IEPs for all students who receive support will indicate whether a student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code or if a modification is required. If a modified discipline code is required, it will be included in the student's IEP.

E. ADMINISTRATION OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The Principal is responsible for:

- Overseeing each student's support services team.
- Responding to parent requests for screenings and assessments.
- Scheduling evaluation meetings.
- Overseeing the development of Individualized Educational Programs.
- Determining the delivery of service.

The Director of Student Support Services for Erving School Union #28, who oversees the student support programs for all ESU #28 schools.

F. STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM MEMBERS

Teachers: Student support teachers provide direct personalized instruction primarily in reading, written language, spelling, and math, through individual and small group instruction. Student support teachers conduct assessments of academic needs, participate in evaluations of students, serve as resources to regular school staff regarding classroom modifications for specific students, and act as liaisons between other student support staff and classroom teachers.

School Nurse: The Nurse's involvement in the evaluation process may involve obtaining the developmental history of a student, acting as medical designee for presenting reports, and reviewing screening information.

School Psychologist: The School Psychologist administers and interprets psycho-educational evaluations, provides individual and group sessions for students, and consults with staff regarding classroom management of specific students' learning needs. Some

parents ask for assistance with behavior at home and at school to support social competency and self-esteem. The school psychologist works in close association with the classroom teachers and with the student's parents or guardians to define the learning environment that is the best match for a particular student's learning style.

Speech and Language Pathologist:

The Speech and Language Pathologist evaluates needs for speech and language support as they relate to the social and academic demands of the school, both through comprehension and expression. Intervention is provided in and out of the classroom through individual and small group instruction. Collaboration with other student support team members and regular staff facilitates ongoing sensitivity to individual language-learning needs.

Other Support Team Members: The following services are also available to students who receive support as prescribed in Individualized Educational Plans:

- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Teachers of the Visually or Hearing Impaired
- Contracted Consultation

G. DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE SUPPORT SERVICES OR ARE ON A 504 PLAN

If a student violates the school's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove the student from the student's current educational placement for a period not to exceed ten consecutive school days in any school year. If a student possesses, uses, sells, or solicits illegal drugs, or carries a weapon on school grounds or at any school-sponsored event, the school district may place the student in an interim alternative education setting as a result of a disciplinary action; the student may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed 45 days. Thereafter, your student will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless either a hearing officer orders another placement, or the parents or guardians and the school agree upon another placement.

In compliance with Chapter 71, section 37H of the Massachusetts General Laws, the following procedures have been established regarding the discipline procedures involving students who receive support services:

- A meeting will be held with the student's parents or guardians when the student who receives support services accumulates ten days of suspensions or expulsions to discuss the appropriateness of the IEP and possible revision.
- When a student who receives support services has accumulated ten days of suspension or expulsion, and the parents or guardians cannot be reached, the student will be instructed to come to school the next day with the parents or guardians for a student support team meeting. The student will be given a letter for the parents or guardians stating the need for their attendance in school the next day.
- If a student comes to school the next day without the parents or guardians, the student will be sent home and the Department of Education will be notified by the Principal or a designee.
- In all cases which result in a suspension or expulsion of more than ten days in a school year, immediate notification of the suspension and request for approval of an alternative educational plan will be made to the Department of Education by the Director of Student Support Services.

The law provides that the student support team must consider evaluation information, observational information, and the student's IEP and placement, and that they must determine whether the behavior prompting disciplinary removal was a manifestation of the student's disability. The student support team considers whether the student's disability impaired the student's ability to control behavior.

If the Team determines that the behavior was related to the student's disability, then the student may not be removed from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapon possession or of drug possession or use) until the IEP Team develops a new IEP and decides upon a new placement and the student's parents or guardians consent to the new IEP and placement.

If the Team determines the behavior was not related to the student's disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline the student according to the school's code of student conduct. When a suspension is for a period of longer than ten days, the school district must provide the student with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The school district must determine the educational services necessary for FAPE, the number and location for providing those services.

VIII. PARENT INFORMATION

A. COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS AND THE SCHOOL

Hearing about your student is extremely important to us. There are a number of ways to communicate with your student's teachers. To best communicate with your student's teacher, we encourage you to:

- **Request a conference.** Contacting a teacher directly to request a conference is the best way to address important concerns. Conferences can be arranged at any time during the school year. Don't wait for scheduled conferences to discuss an issue of importance.
- **Write notes to school.** Notes to school work well as a means of communication. Teachers will respond in writing or by phone as soon as possible.
- **Call the school.** Mornings are generally too busy to allow teachers time to speak with parents, as teachers are preparing for the day and greeting students. Making a set time to conduct a phone conversation will ensure that your student's teacher will be available for a conversation. All teachers have voice mailboxes, and you are welcome to leave a message suggesting a

convenient time to return the call. You may also leave a message with the Secretary. Suggestions of afternoon or evening phone conversations may be met with greater availability.

- **Communicate in the event of an emergency.** If there is an emergency, please call the office. If there is an emergency in your family that affects your student, you may always call the Principal, Kelley Sullivan, at 413-531-7175, outside of school hours.

B. PARENT AND GUARDIAN VOLUNTEERS

State law and school board policy requires that any parents or guardians who volunteer for school programs or activities (including serving as field trip chaperones) must have a CORI form (Criminal Offender Record Information form) on file with the Superintendent of Erving School Union #28. The form, which authorizes the release of CORI information to the Superintendent, may be found in the school Office. All volunteers must also sign a confidentiality statement.

There are many ways parents and guardians can be involved in the school. Some parents and guardians volunteer in classrooms, the library, or the computer lab, or serve as parent or guardian members of hiring committees. Classroom teachers may also ask for parents or guardians to lend assistance with different projects throughout the school year.

C. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The policies, procedures and programs of Swift River School are consistent with its philosophy. This handbook reflects our commitment to good relations with all members of the school community. The School Committee's policy for dealing with concerns and complaints clearly states that every effort should be made by the parent and the teacher to solve a problem together. More information is generally available from the teacher regarding a particular incident or situation than from anyone else. School problems should be handled in succession, starting at the lowest possible administrative level:

FIRST with the teacher or other involved staff member

SECOND with the Principal

THIRD with the Superintendent of Schools

FOURTH with the School Committee

Formal complaints should be addressed to the appropriate persons at the lowest level. When complaints are not resolved satisfactorily, or when there is a pattern of complaints, the person or persons at the next level should be informed. Any complaints that require School Committee action must be made in writing and sent to all members of the School Committee.

D. ROUTINES FOR PICKING UP YOUR STUDENT FROM SCHOOL

Notes: Send a note to your student's teacher indicating that you will pick up your student at dismissal, or indicating the time you plan to pick up your student. Once classroom staff read the note, it is sent to the office. When students arrive late to school, they must check in at the office before heading to class. The secretary will record the student's attendance, ensure the student is signed up for school lunch (if necessary), and inform the student where they can meet their class.

If someone other than a parent or guardian is picking up your student at school, send a your student's teacher a note that includes the full name of the person who will pick up your student. Once classroom staff read the note, it is sent to the office. If an emergency arises, you may call the school and speak with the Secretary, the Nurse, or the Principal to authorize an emergency designee to pick up your student.

If your student is sick and a parent or guardian cannot be reached, your student will be released to one of the alternates you list on your student's emergency form.

E. REGULATIONS FOR CUSTODIAL PARENTS AND NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

The school will only release students to parents or guardians unless we have instructions directly from the parents or guardians informing us of other individuals who may pick up a student from school. If only one parent has custody of a student, and the other parent is prohibited from picking up the student through court order, a custody agreement, or otherwise, we must be informed of that restriction and receive a copy of the court order or custody agreement in order to abide by it.

Non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their student's records unless the school has received a court order which states that:

- The non-custodial parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or the custodial parent.
- The non-custodial parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation.
- The non-custodial parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the order or any subsequent court order specifically allows access to student record information.

F. TRANSFERS TO ANOTHER SCHOOL

Student transfers are most efficient when adequate notice has been given. The school, and in particular the student's teacher, can help prepare a student for a transition to another school. Health and academic records will be sent to the new school once the office receives a copy of the new school's release request that has been signed by the parents.

IX. PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Many elements contribute to the development of a good school. The support, advice, and hard work that parents provide inform the culture of our school. We cannot be a good school without your help and participation.

A. T.E.A.M. SRS PARENT TEACHER COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (PTCA)

The PTCA raises funds to provide students, teachers, and staff with “extras” to enhance the classroom, the school, and the curriculum, and that help to make Swift River the special place that it is. In past years, PTCA funds provided buses for field trips, hired guest performers, and supported the Cultural Diversity Program. PTCA volunteers have organized meals for the teachers on the nights that they stay at the school late for Parent-Teacher Conferences. This is a wonderful example of the support they provide the staff. In the fall, PTCA members organize the Fall Fest, a low cost event for all community families that successfully raises money for individual classrooms and whole school activities. One year, the PTCA organized a spring clean-up day and refurbished the Nature Trail and built new bridges. This day was special for all the participants and the recipients of the community effort. If you have a student attending Swift River, you are automatically a member of the PTCA and are strongly encouraged to get involved.

B. SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 mandates the formation of a school council at each school in the Commonwealth. The School Council's responsibility is to consult with the Principal in the process of identifying the educational needs of students attending the school, adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with the goals and standards the Commonwealth established as a result of this law, and formulating a school improvement plan which will be reviewed and approved by the School Committee.

The Swift River School Council includes the following members: the Principal, two school staff members, two parents and one community member who is not a parent of students in the school. School Council terms last for three years. Parent representatives are elected by ballot when positions open. Voting takes place at the annual Open House in September.

C. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AND TITLE I PAC

There are informational and support groups that focus on issues related to students who receive support services. Meetings are held throughout the year. Specific topics are addressed at meetings, sometimes featuring a guest speaker. Announcements of meeting times and topics are announced in the *Swift River Current*. All interested parents and members of the community are invited to attend.

D. SAFETY COMMITTEE

The committee reviews the school's equipment, programs and policies to make sure the school is a safe place for students and all other community members.

E. COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The School Committee has established a policy that makes the school facilities available for community use when they are not being utilized for school functions. Applications for use of the school may be obtained from the office. Priority is given to events and classes organized for students. A fee is charged to aid in the supervision and maintenance of the building.

X. SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Five residents from Wendell and five from New Salem are elected to serve on the individual town's school committees. Both towns contribute proportionately to the school budget. The New Salem School Committee and the Wendell School Committee separate fiscal responsibilities for transportation from each town to Swift River School. From the five-member committee serving each town, one member is elected to serve on the Mahar Regional School Committee and three members are elected to serve on the ESU #28 Joint Supervisory Committee, which governs Swift River School.

The New Salem-Wendell School Committee meets the first Thursday of every month at Swift River School at 7:00 PM. Each month's agenda is posted on our website. The meetings are open to all, and the Committee encourages parents and other interested citizens to attend, participate, and learn more about the policies that govern the school. At the beginning of each meeting, time for public hearings is provided for those who wish to speak to the School Committee. Issues that are raised by the public at that time will be addressed by the School Committee at a later meeting or acted upon by district administrators.

Swift River School is served by the Superintendent of Erving School Union # 28, which is an elementary school union that also includes the schools in the neighboring towns of Erving, Leverett and Shutesbury. Each town has a separate school committee and also participates in a combined committee, the ESU #28 School Committee, which meets at least twice a year as the joint employer of the Superintendent.

A. FUNCTION OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The basic function of the New Salem-Wendell School Committee is to operate the school in accordance with State and Federal laws and to achieve the strongest school possible for the citizens of New Salem and Wendell. The principle duties of the School Committee are to:

- Determine local school district policies.
- Develop and approve budgetary support for school programs and operations.
- Appoint a Superintendent of Schools in conjunction with other Erving School Union #28 School Committees.

The Committee is an elected representative body and is the final authority for local decisions on school budget and policy. Decisions are made by a majority vote. The current School Committee members are:

New Salem

Carla Halpern Chair of New Salem
Dave Briand
Karyn Briand
Melissa Burke
Carl Seppala

Wendell

Johanna Bartlett Chair of Wendell
Beth Erviti
Amy Palmer
Jack Radner
Anna Weatherby

Mahar Representatives

Carla Halpern
Johanna Bartlett

B. MEETING PROCEDURES

Each meeting follows a printed agenda. Agendas are prepared by the Superintendent of Schools a week to ten days prior to each meeting and are designed to provide a specified time for public comment about issues relevant to the School Committee. In addition, the agenda provides time for report presentations, recommendations by the school administration, and for deliberation by the School Committee members about matters affecting the school. Because public attendance at School Committee meetings is usually low, parents, citizens and staff members who attend often participate in the School Committee's deliberations.

C. AGENDA ITEMS

Any person wishing to have an item placed on the School Committee agenda should present that item to the Superintendent of Schools or the Committee Chairperson at least ten days prior to meeting on the first Thursday of each month. Efforts will be made, when possible, to place agenda items on the School Committee's next regular meeting agenda, provided that the item has gone through the appropriate administrative levels. Submission of written statements explaining and supporting the submission of any agenda item is encouraged.

D. CONCERNS

Concerns, problems, and complaints about the school should normally be brought first to a teacher's attention (when appropriate), or, if a satisfactory result is not achieved or if deemed more appropriate, to the Principal, and then to the Superintendent of Schools. If the Superintendent of Schools is unable to resolve the matter, it may be brought to the School Committee for further consideration. After weighing the information submitted by both the petitioners and the Superintendent of Schools, the School Committee may grant a hearing to the interested parties. Such a hearing may be held during a regular meeting of the School Committee, either in open session or in executive session in accordance with the State's Open Meeting Law.

XI. POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND LAWS

A. LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Please note that there have been significant changes in state law (Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012 and 603.CMR 53.00) that impact student discipline-related actions. Specifically, these changes impact student suspensions or expulsions. Further changes to school policies and procedures will follow.

In addition, there have been changes to the law which governs student absences. These changes include family notifications when a student misses 5 or more unexcused school days in a single school year. Additional changes to school policies and procedures will follow.

Right to Attend School; Chapter 76, Section 5: Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the district where they actually reside, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the district unless their enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly attended public schools. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. *Amended by St.1971, c.622, c.1; St. 1973, c.925, s.9A; St.1993, c.282; St.2004, c.352, s.33.*

School And District Policies Prohibiting Discrimination And Harassment: In accordance with Title IX of the Education Acts of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Chapter 151B of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Swift

River School affirms that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, age, creed, national origin, disability, homelessness, or sexual orientation, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity it operates, including employment therein, and admission thereto. Swift River School will not tolerate verbal or physical harassment of any student or school personnel under any circumstances.

Any complaints or inquiries concerning this policy should be directed to the Principal or the Superintendent:

Principal Kelley Sullivan	Superintendent of Schools Jennifer Haggerty
Swift River School	Erving School Union #28
201 Wendell Road	18 Pleasant Street
New Salem, MA 01355	Erving, MA 01344

Disciplinary Action: If there are reasonable grounds to believe that discrimination or harassment has occurred, the person accused of those acts will have a confidential disciplinary hearing before the Principal or a designee. If after the hearing the Principal or the designee determines that discrimination or harassment has occurred, disciplinary and corrective action will ensue to prevent any further incidents. The range of discipline and corrective action may include one or more of the following: an education component; an apology to the victim; mandatory counseling; detention; short-term suspension; long-term suspension; or recommendation for expulsion. If either the victim of discrimination or their person accused of discrimination or harassment is aggrieved by the findings or actions taken by the Principal or the designee, that person may appeal the action to the Superintendent, who shall conduct a hearing and shall indicate a disposition of the appeal within two days of the appeal, and shall furnish a copy thereof to the aggrieved party and to the School Committee.

Anti-Discrimination Laws and Regulations: Chapter 622 and Title IX prohibit discrimination in public schools on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, creed, ethnic background, national origin, economic status, homelessness, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or religion. Swift River School supports the intent and the substance of these laws. We do not discriminate in any aspect of our school program. The school does not tolerate harassment of students or adults because of race, color, sex, gender identity, creed, ethnic background, national origin, economic status, homelessness, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or religion.

Section 504 and the American Disability Act prohibit discrimination against anyone solely on the basis of his or her disability. We do not discriminate against anyone solely on the basis of disability nor do we tolerate harassment on that account. A specific injunction for schools is to attempt to locate any disabled person between the ages of 3 and 21 who is eligible for but not receiving public education to ensure that they receive a "free appropriate public education." We would like to be notified of any eligible person who is not attending school.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a United States federal law that governs the method that states and public agencies use to provide early intervention, student support, and related services for students with disabilities. It addresses the educational needs of students with disabilities from birth to age 18 or 21 in specified categories of disability. Swift River School has a comprehensive student support program. Any parent with a student aged 2.5 years or older who believes their student requires student support should contact the Principal for consideration of that need. More information concerning details of student support programs may be found in this handbook.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement: In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, the Director of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call 800-795-3272 or 202-720-6382. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

B. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT

Swift River School and Erving School Union #28 schools have established an internal procedure to provide for prompt and equitable resolutions of complaints. In all cases relating to discrimination, harassment, or bullying, students will receive procedural due process and could be subject to suspension, exclusion, or expulsion. (Please refer to the Student Suspension, Exclusion and Suspension section of this handbook for an explanation of discipline measures taken if the school determines discrimination, harassment, or bullying has occurred.)

Definitions: A "Grievance" is a complaint made pursuant to, and arising out of, the Erving School Union #28 obligation to comply with state regulations regarding civil rights discrimination and harassment. An "Aggrieved Party" is the person or persons making the complaint.

Purpose: The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure prompt and equitable resolutions of grievances.

General: No aggrieved party will be subject to coercion, intimidation, interference, or discrimination for registering a complaint, or for assisting in the investigation of any alleged complaints within the context of this grievance procedure. All documents, communications, and records dealing with the filing of a grievance will be kept confidential to the full extent provided by law.

Procedure: After the occurrence of an incident involving a grievance, a complaint should be filed with the Principal **in writing** as soon as possible. If this complaint involves a student, an adult will scribe a written account for the student.

Within ten school days of the receipt of a grievance, the Principal or a designee shall meet with the aggrieved party in an effort to resolve the grievance. At this stage, the investigation into the complaint will be thorough, but informal. All interested persons and their representatives, if any, shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. If the grievance is not resolved, it will be forwarded to the Superintendent.

Within fifteen school days of the receipt of an unresolved grievance, the Superintendent will conduct a hearing to determine what, if any, action must be taken in response to the grievance. The hearing shall be held at a time and place mutually convenient to all parties. Parents or guardians should provide advance notice to the Superintendent if they will be represented by counsel or an advocate at the grievance hearing. The hearing procedure will follow appropriate due process procedures including:

- The opportunity for the aggrieved party to present the grievance in any suitable manner;
- The right of the aggrieved party to an impartial hearing officer;
- The right to the aggrieved party to be represented by counsel or an advocate at the aggrieved party's expense;
- The right of the aggrieved party to a prompt decision.

A written determination of the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Superintendent and forwarded to the complainant no later than fifteen school days after the hearing. The determination of the validity of the complaint and the description of the resolution will be provided in an alternate format, upon request, if required for effective communication.

The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case if they are dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made to the Superintendent within fifteen school days following receipt of the written determination.

These rules are designed to protect the substantive rights of the interested persons and to meet appropriate due process standards. Copies of all resolutions and findings made under this procedure shall be filed with the Superintendent's Office of Erving School Union #28.

C. COMPLIANCE

The Superintendent of Schools, who serves as the compliance officer for all of these state and federal laws, can be reached at the following address:

Superintendent of Schools
Erving School Union #28
18 Pleasant Street
Erving, MA 01344
Phone: 413-423-3337

Complaints to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education may be addressed to:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
74 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
Phone: 781-338-3700

Complaints regarding civil rights discrimination may be addressed to:

Office of Civil Rights
33 Arch Street, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02110
Phone: 617-289-0111

Swift River School is an Equal Opportunity Provider. Complaints regarding employment discrimination should be sent to:

USDA Director
Office of Civil Rights
Room 326-W Whitten Building
14th and Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC, 20250-9410
Phone: 202-720-5964

D. STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for student success. The New Salem-Wendell School Committee must provide for and enforce the school attendance of all students enrolled at Swift River School. Students must attend school regularly, in accordance with state law and for a minimum number of days annually, as determined by the Board of Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

When students are absent, the absence will be recorded as excused if it meets the legal criteria; all other absences will be considered unexcused. The Superintendent or a designee may only excuse absences for illness or religious observances. According to state law, school districts should report to the District Attorney's Office and to the Department of Social Services students who are absent for more than seven full days or fourteen half days within a six-month period if the student's absence is for reasons other than illness or religious purposes.

The New Salem-Wendell School Committee and school administration understand that students may sometimes require absences from school for reasons other than illness or religious observation. These reasons may include the bereavement of a family member, inclement weather, or, on rare occasions, a family vacation. However, these or similar absences are deemed unexcused absences and counted in the seven day limit under state law.

The school administration may request a physician's statement certifying a student's illness for absences in excess of seven full days or fourteen half days within a four week time period. In accordance with state law, attendance is not required for students who have a physical or mental condition that renders attendance inexpedient or impractical.

The Principal or a designee shall serve as the officer to oversee school attendance. At the start of each school year, the Principal shall ensure that a notice is sent to all parents and guardians to provide a phone number to use to report student absence, and to explain the appropriate process to follow for reporting student absence. These instructions shall include the time of day by which to contact the school regarding a student absence or late arrival. If requested by the attendance administrator, parents and guardians must provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness of a student. Whenever possible, advance notice of student absence or tardiness is required.

Parents and guardians of students who accrue absences and tardies, and who are at risk of exceeding the state-allowed number of each, will be given written notice by the attendance officer to alert them that truancy charges may be filed. Parents and guardians will be given one week to respond to the written notice. The designated officer should initiate this notice within one week of the allowable limit being surpassed. Parents and guardians may appeal a decision to file a truancy complaint to the Principal, the Superintendent, and the School Committee in that order.

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that students do not fall behind in their schoolwork when they are absent from school. Teachers may make a reasonable effort to provide missed assignments and instruction so long as this effort does not place an undue burden on the teacher. In instances when arrangements are difficult to make, the teacher and the student's family shall seek guidance from the Principal.

XII. HEALTH POLICIES

A. SCHOOL NURSE

The Nurse is scheduled for five days each week during school hours. She performs general nursing responsibilities, serves as our health educator, oversees wellness, confers with parents, and may make home visits when necessary. Parents with health-related questions are welcome to contact her directly at 978-544-6926, extension 220.

B. HEALTH POLICIES

The following health policies have been developed to ensure the health and safety of all members of the school community, and are in compliance with the regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Physical Examinations: New students, Kindergarten students, and students in Grade 4 are required by law to have a physical examination on file at the school. Physical examinations should be conducted by your student's physician and forwarded to the school. Students who transfer to Swift River School from another school in Massachusetts must have a physical within one year. All students who transfer to Swift River School from another state must have a physical within three months. Please contact the Nurse if you need assistance in arranging a physical for your student, or to obtain official school health forms.

Medication Administration Policy: In compliance with Massachusetts state law, our school district requires that two forms are on file in your student's health record before we can administer any medication to your student at school:

1. A signed consent by a parent or guardian to administer medication.

2. A signed medication order from a licensed prescriber. This form should be taken to your student's licensed prescriber (such as a physician, nurse practitioner, dentist, et cetera), completed by the licensed prescriber, and returned to the Nurse. This order must be renewed at the beginning of each school year and as needed during the school year. To minimize the need for medication at school, please ask your health care provider if the medication can be prescribed on a schedule that avoids school hours. **Note:** for a medication order of less than ten school days (for example, an antibiotic), only a parent or guardian consent form is required.

All medication must be delivered to the school by a parent, guardian, or designee in a container labeled by a pharmacy or by the manufacturer. **No student should deliver their own medicine to school.** If your student receives a medication at home and at school, please ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty-day supply of medication may be delivered to school.

Illness and School Attendance: If your student is exhibiting symptoms of illness in the morning, even if these symptoms are mild, please keep your student home for the day, and call the school to inform us of the reason why your student will be absent. This practice will help us control the spread of illness in the classroom, and will give your student's immune system a chance to fight off a potentially more serious illness.

If your student has a communicable disease, please check with the school nurse regarding exclusion guidelines before sending them to school. Students with a fever of or higher than 100°F may not attend school until the student has been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. Students with vomiting or diarrhea must be symptom-free and eating normally for 12 hours before returning to school.

If your student is absent from school they may not participate in school-sponsored events during the day or extracurricular activities in the evening unless a doctor's note which states otherwise is presented.

If you are unsure whether to send your student to school, please call the Nurse for guidance.

Illness, Injuries, and Medical Emergencies: It is essential that the school has current contact information that enables us to reach you or an alternate if your student becomes sick or injured during the school day. Please keep the information on your emergency form updated with any changes to your or your alternate's contact information throughout the school year. Please call the school or send in a note with your student to communicate changes to your emergency form information as soon as possible. **It is essential that we keep current information on file.**

If an emergency arises that requires immediate medical attention and an ambulance is needed, the following steps will be taken:

- 911 will be called.
- The student's parents or guardians will be notified of the need to transport the student to a medical facility and will be told where to meet their student.
- Certified school staff will perform basic first aid or life support as needed until the ambulance and EMTs arrive.
- The student's emergency form and a member of the school staff will travel with the student if they require transport in an ambulance. The staff member will stay with the student until the parents or guardians meet the student.

Please note: Chapter 660, regarding the liability of staff members in emergency situations states, "No public school teacher, principal or nurse who in good faith renders emergency first aid or transportation to a student who has become injured or incapacitated in a public school building or on the grounds thereof, shall be liable in a suit for damages as a result of providing emergency transportation to a place of safety, nor shall they be liable to a hospital for its expense of such injured or incapacitated student, nor shall they be subject to any disciplinary action by the School Committee for such emergency first aid or transportation."

If an illness or injury does not need immediate medical attention, the student's parent, guardian, or a designee will be responsible for transporting the student from school.

Communicable Diseases and Immunizations: If your student has a communicable disease (including strep throat, scabies, head lice, impetigo, chicken pox, et cetera), please inform the Nurse. It is important that we know what communicable diseases are in the school community, so that we can prevent their spread as much as possible.

The Massachusetts School Immunization Law requires that all students be vaccinated against Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP); Polio; Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR); Hepatitis B; and Varicella (a doctor's certification of a chicken pox history may suffice in lieu of a Varicella vaccine). Parents and guardians of Kindergarten students are also required to provide documentation that their student has been screened for lead poisoning. A doctor's certificate is the only acceptable evidence of immunizations. Students who are not fully immunized or exempted (for medical or religious reasons) must be excluded from school by law. If your student has a religious or medical exemption from immunizations, please submit signed documentation for the student's health file.

Vision, Hearing, Body Mass Index, and Postural Screenings: State mandated screenings take place throughout the year. Students's vision and hearing can change quickly, and if you have specific concerns about your student, please contact the Nurse. Postural screening, mandated for students in Grades 5 – 6, are generally completed in the spring; information will be sent home to parents of those students at that time.

The state's Body Mass Index (BMI) screening mandate requires Swift River School to collect height and weight measurements of all students in Grades 1 and 4. These measurements are used to calculate BMI, which is a "weight for height and age" index that may be used as a tool in early identification of possible health risk factors among students. The results of the BMI screening are confidential and will be kept in each student's health record and communicated in writing to each student's parents or guardians.

Parents will be notified if their student fails any of these screenings and will be referred for a follow-up with a health care provider. For students to be excluded from mandated screenings, a request must be made in writing to the school at the beginning of the school year, and proof that the screenings were conducted by your student's primary care provider must be documented before the end of the school year.

Allergies: If your student has any history of severe allergic reactions, please contact the Nurse. An individual health care plan will be developed to ensure the safety of your student.

C. LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGY POLICY

The Erving School Union #28 schools are dedicated to providing a safe and healthy environment for students during the school day and at school-sponsored events. Students who have life-threatening allergies (such as to food, bees, et cetera) will receive medically-necessary provisions while at school. The school's policy will support protocols to:

(1.) reduce exposure to allergens to the best of our ability, knowing that we can only be allergen-safe, not allergen free, and (2.) follow established procedures to treat allergic reactions.

A student identified as having a life-threatening allergy must have:

- A written statement from a health care provider that clearly documents the allergy;
- A doctor prescription for an EpiPen;
- Parental consent authorizing use of the EpiPen when needed.

The ESU #28 schools will provide adequate training to educate staff in the management of life-threatening allergies. As mandated by federal laws, including ADA, IDEA, and Section 504, no student shall be discriminated against or excluded from school activities based on their life-threatening allergy. A student who has an allergy and who is making effective educational progress in the regular educational program does not require a student support evaluation, an IEP, or student support services. However, every student has the right to reasonable accommodations for their disability under Section 504.

For a complete copy of our Life-Threatening Allergy Policy and Protocols, please contact the Nurse at 978-544-6929, extension 220.

D. REPORTING STUDENT ABUSE OR NEGLECT

In accordance with The Student Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974, and Massachusetts general laws, chapter 119, Section 51A and School Committee Policy (5140.2; File: JLF), Swift River School reports all cases of suspected student maltreatment to the Department of Children and Families.

XIII. INTERNET USE

Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy Introduction: The computer network resources at Swift River School are provided by and in consonance with the mission or the New Salem-Wendell School District, and serves to:

- Improve education for all students through access to unique resources and partnerships.
- Improve learning and teaching through research, teacher training, collaboration, and distribution of successful education practices, methods, and materials.

In addition, we seek to ensure a healthy and appropriate use of internet resources by making provisions for:

- The prevention of access by students to inappropriate materials.
- The safety and security of students when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communication.
- The prevention of unauthorized access, including hacking and other unlawful activities.
- The prevention of unauthorized disclosure, and use and dissemination of student personal information.
- The design of measures to restrict student access to harmful materials.

Our electronic resources, including, but not limited to, computers and internet, allow students to access local, national, and international, sources of information and collaboration vital to intellectual inquiry and democracy, and are intended solely for educational purposes. Every student has the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user in our school communities and on the internet. Students are expected to use our electronic resources in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner, and in accordance with school and district policies, rules, regulations, and guidelines and with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States.

The potential exists, outside the school network, for students to access inappropriate material on the internet. A user may intentionally or innocently access materials that are inconsistent with our educational purpose. While violations of school policy are a concern, we maintain that the educational advantages of using the internet outweigh the disadvantages and potential risks. It is the burden of parents and guardians to establish standards of use for electronic media that are consistent with school policy. We respect each family's decision as to whether their student should or should not have access to the internet. Students with internet use permission will be given an account on the Swift River School network and access to the internet unless a parent or legal guardian submits a signed refusal form.

A. ACCEPTABLE USE AND INTERNET SAFETY POLICIES

Swift River School has established protocols to ensure the safety of our school community, the security of our computer networks, and compliance with applicable law. Use of our computer network and the internet are both revocable privileges dependant upon student compliance with school policy. A student's failure to comply with policy may result in limited network access, suspension of access, and other disciplinary action. In order to use the Swift River School network, all students must be aware of the following policies:

Network and Internet Monitoring: Our school may have software and systems in place to monitor and record all internet usage within the school. Given reasonable cause, we may intermittently monitor internet traffic and other usage of electronic resources, for instance, by tracking destination URLs of individual users. Users should have no expectation of privacy when browsing the web, sending or receiving emails, or using other electronic resources.

Filtering: In accordance with the Students's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), passed by U.S. Legislature in January 2001 (Public Law 106-554), Swift River School shall employ filtering software to block student access to inappropriate content on all computers with internet access. Swift River School shall enforce a policy of internet safety and maintain technology protection measures.

Students are restricted from accessing visual depictions of subject matter that is obscene, pornographic, or harmful to others. In compliance with CIPA, Swift River School shall monitor the online activities of students in furtherance of the internet safety policy. Parents and students should be aware that filtering software cannot block all inappropriate websites.

We ask that internet users report all inappropriate websites that are not blocked by filters to the technology administrator for subsequent action. When required for legitimate research purposes, filtering software may be disabled for users who are 18 and over by the

technology administrator. Swift River School cannot be held responsible for misuse of internet, for material downloaded from any online source, or for inappropriate or sexually explicit material that is obtained through the network.

B. USER-SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

All Users: While using the Swift River School network, students and staff members shall not:

- Access or transmit material, including copyrighted material, in violation of any U.S. or Commonwealth of Massachusetts state law.
- Access, download, display, transmit, produce, generate, copy, or propagate any material that is: obscene or pornographic; advocates illegal acts; contains ethnic slurs or racial epithets; or discriminates on the basis of sex, gender identity, national origin, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, disability or age.
- Degrade, damage, or disrupt equipment or system performance.
- Gain unauthorized access to network resources.
- Permit or authorize any other person to use their network account.
- Use the account of any other person, or vandalize another person's data.
- Waste electronic storage space by saving unnecessary files or programs.
- Download, install, load, or use programs without written permission from the technology administrator.
- Use the internet for personal commercial purposes or for political lobbying.
- Use inappropriate, offensive, foul, or abusive language.
- Harass or annoy any other party with obscene, libelous, or threatening messages, or with objectionable information, images, or language, whether personally or anonymously.
- Forward chain letters.
- Forward email messages of broad interest—including virus alerts and jokes—to the entire school community.
- Knowingly make use of pirated software or violate software licensing agreements.
- Engage in the practice of hacking or knowingly engage in any other illegal activity.

While using the Swift River School network, students and staff members must:

- Only use the internet and other electronic resources for legitimate educational purposes.
- Respect commonly accepted practices of internet etiquette including, but not limited to, use of appropriate language.
- Be aware of potential security risks and take reasonable steps to minimize these risks by, at a minimum, logging off the network when a computer is unattended, and reporting all unauthorized use of any account to the technology administrator.
- Avoid bulk emailing.
- Forward all emails of broad interest, such as virus alerts, to the technology administrator to consider distribution to the entire school community.
- Treat all computer areas and equipment with the utmost care and respect.

Students: Students may only access the internet under adult supervision, and they must notify a teacher or the technology administrator immediately if they come across inappropriate content. In addition, students may not use the internet to give out personal information (such as a home addresses, telephone numbers, or pictures) that relate to themselves or other students. Student use of electronic resources is restricted to teacher-approved projects and research.

Email: School resources for electronic communication shall be used for educational purposes. Incidental and occasional personal use of electronic communication may occur when such use does not generate a direct cost for the school, but such messages will follow the same guidelines as other messages on the network. Prohibited forms of electronic communications include, but are not limited to:

- Use of electronic communications to send copies of documents that are in violation of copyright laws.
- Use of electronic communications to intimidate others or to interfere with the ability of others to conduct school business.
- Creation of electronic communications that appear to be sent from someone else.
- Provision of access to the files or communications of others for the purpose of satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial school-related purpose.

C. POSTING OF PHOTOS AND STUDENT WORK ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

Parent Permission is required to post any student's photo, art work, writing, or projects on the Swift River School website. Student work that is posted will appear with no reference to the student's last name, home address or telephone number.

D. CYBERBULLYING

The use of electronic mobile computer devices and the use of traditional computers for the purpose of cyberbullying is strictly prohibited both on and off school grounds.

Cyberbullying is defined by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 (An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools) as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in full or in part by wire, radio, electromagnetic signal, electronic photo, or optical photo, including, but not limited to, email, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying shall also include (i) the creation of a website or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any

of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive of the definition of bullying.

First Vote: October 4, 2001
Second Vote: November 1, 2001
Amended: November 4, 2010

XIV: STUDENT RECORDS

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Student files containing student records and information will be kept by the school.

Each student and every parent or guardian with physical custody has the right to see their student records. Copies of any information contained in the records may be obtained upon request.

Student records are available to school personnel who work directly with the student. This includes administrators, teachers, counselors, administrative office staff, and clerical personnel. These parties have signed confidentiality agreements do not need permission to view student records.

No information in the student's record will be made available to anyone outside the school system without a signed record release from the student's parent or guardian. Exceptions to this rule would be made for a probation officer, or by court order. A signed release must be received to send any part of a student's records when a student transfers to a new school. Additionally, signed releases are needed before records may be sent to prospective employers, other technical school, colleges, and military services.

The student and parents and guardians have the right to request the addition of relevant information to a student's record as well as the right to request the removal of information believed to be untrue or incorrect.

DESE Regulation 603 CMR 23 Section 23.06 states that (i.) transcripts must be maintained by the school system for 60 years following graduation, and that (ii.) enrollment registers shall be destroyed no later than seven years after graduation, transfer, or withdrawal.

B. DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Swift River School has designated certain information contained in student records as directory information for purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Record Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

The following information is designated as directory information:

- Student and parent names;
- Student and parent addresses;
- Student and parent phone numbers;
- Student birthdates.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose under the discretion of the school, without the consent of the parents or guardians of a student or an eligible student. Parents and guardians have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent, or as otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

When no refusal is made, it is assumed that parents or guardians of a student or an eligible student do not object to the release of the designated directory information.

C. REGULATIONS FOR NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

In August 2006, the Board of Education adopted final technical amendments to the Student Records Regulations in order to make them consistent with G.L. c. 71, §34H, as most recently amended by Chapter 62 of the Acts of 2006. The state statute and regulations expand the categories of non-custodial parents who are eligible to obtain access to a student's records and are consistent with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

As set forth in the amended regulation, 603 CMR 23.07(5), non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their students' student records unless the school or district has been given documentation that:

- The non-custodial parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student, and that the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation.
- The non-custodial parent has been denied visitation.
- The non-custodial parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student's record.

- There is an order from a probate and family court judge, which prohibits the distribution of student records to the non-custodial parent.

Reason for the Amendments: In October 2005, the Board of Education amended the Student Records Regulations to make them consistent with federal law. The legislature amended the state statute on non-custodial parents' access to student records for the same reason. The legislation was enacted on April 13, 2006 (find more information by visiting <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw06/sl060062.html>). The board's vote on technical amendments to the regulations in August 2006 was the final action to align the state regulations with the amended state statute and the federal law. The state Student Records Regulations (603 CMR 23.00), as amended, are available on the Department of Education's website at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23.html>.

D. AMENDING A STUDENT RECORD

Parents and guardians have the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written materials to their student's record. Interested parents and guardians must submit the additional information to the Principal with a written request to add the information to the student's record.

Parents and guardians have the right to submit a written request for deletion or correction of any information contained in their student's record, except for information that was added to the record by the student support team. Student support team information shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the student's Individual Educational Plan, or, if the IEP is rejected, after the completion of the student support appeal process. Any deletion or amendment of materials contained in a student's records shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:

- If a parent or guardian holds the opinion that the addition of materials to their student's records will not be sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in the student's record, the parent or guardian shall present an objection in writing and has the right to request a conference with the Principal or a designee to make the objection known.
- Within one week of the conference or receipt of the objection, the Principal or a designee shall render a decision in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the objection, the Principal or the designee shall promptly take any necessary steps necessary to effect the decision.
- If the Principal's decision is unsatisfactory to the parents or guardians, the parents or guardians may file an appeal to the Superintendent. Such appeals shall be made in writing and submitted to the Superintendent within five business days of the receipt of the written decision. The Superintendent shall render a written decision on the appeal within two weeks of receipt of the written appeal.
- If the Superintendent's decision is unsatisfactory to the parents or guardians, the parents or guardians may appeal to the School Committee by filing a written appeal within five business days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision. The School Committee shall conduct a hearing as required on the appeal as required by 603 CMR 23.09(4).

E. Notice On Transfer To Other Schools: Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(g), notice is hereby given to parents and students that Swift River School will forward the complete school records of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. All health and academic records will be sent to the new school when the parents or guardians have signed a release request form at the new school and the new school sends the request. Records of students who will enter Ralph C. Mahar Regional School in Grade 7 will be transferred automatically at the end of the students' Grade 6 school year. If, upon the completion of Grade 6, a student will attend a new school other than Ralph C. Mahar Regional School, Swift River School must receive a parent-signed record release request from the new school before releasing student records.

F. Destruction of Records: Notice is hereby given that the temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than five years after that student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the school. When a student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from school, and if the student or the parents or guardians request the temporary record, they are required to send their request the documents in writing prior to the last day of school. No additional notice will be provided to students, parents, or guardians of record destruction.

Additionally, each year, the Principal, teachers, and service providers may destroy documents that are considered to be part of the student's temporary record, such as: disciplinary records (other than documentation of suspensions, expulsions, and exclusions); notes from parents or guardians; documents related to absences, early dismissals, late arrivals; and examples of student work. Following the last day of school, destruction of these documents may occur after five days. If the students, parents, or guardians request these records, they must submit a written request for the documents prior to the last day of school.

XV. ANTI-BULLYING AND RETALIATION REGULATIONS

Background: Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools, was signed into law on May 3, 2010 and took effect immediately. The law requires each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved day or residential school, and collaborative school to develop and implement a plan to address bullying and intervention. The statute directs the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to promulgate regulations addressing a principal's duties under one of the ten required elements of the bullying and intervention plan, namely, notification to parents or guardians of the victim and the perpetrator of bullying or retaliation and the action taken to prevent further bullying, and notification to law enforcement of bullying or retaliation, when the perpetrator's conduct also may result in criminal charges. The law further provides that the regulations must be promulgated by September 30, 2010. As per 603 CMR 49.00 Notification of Bullying or Retaliation.

49.01 Regulatory Authority: Please refer to 603 CMR 49.00: M.G.L. 71, §37O, as added by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010. 603 CMR 49.00 is promulgated by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as added by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010.

49.02 Scope and Purpose: 603 CMR 49.00 governs the requirements related to the duty of the principal or leader of a public school, approved private day or residential school, collaborative school, or charter school to notify the parents or guardians of a victim and a perpetrator when there is a report of bullying or retaliation, and to notify the local law enforcement agency when criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator of bullying or retaliation. The regulation also addresses confidentiality of student record information related to notification of bullying and retaliation.

49.03 Definitions of Terms:

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Program: Plans that have been created in accordance with the requirements stated under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.

Bullying: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the repeated use by one or more students (aggressors) of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or of a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i.) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm or of damage to their property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school. For the purposes of requirements related to this law, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Cyberbullying: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying shall also include: (i) the creation of a website or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution of posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Local Law Enforcement Agency: Local police department, county district attorney, or any other public entity charged with investigation, apprehension, detention or prosecution of individuals suspected or convicted of a crime.

Parent: A student's father, mother, or guardian.

Perpetrator: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, a student who engages in bullying or retaliation.

Principal: The administrative leader of a public school, charter school, collaborative school, or approved private day or residential school, or a designee charged with the purpose of implementing the school's bullying prevention and intervention plan.

Retaliation: Any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a person in response to an action that person has taken or knowledge that the person has.

Victim: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, a student against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

49.04 Bullying Prohibited: Bullying and retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation about bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited as provided in G.L. c. 71, § 37O.

49.05 Notice to Parents: The Principal shall promptly notify the parents of the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator of a report of bullying or retaliation and of the school's procedures for investigating the report. If the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator attend different schools, the Principal receiving the report shall inform the Principal of the other student's school, who shall notify the student's parent of the report and procedures.

The principal shall inform the parent of a victim of bullying or retaliation of actions that school officials will take to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation.

Each public school district shall include the requirements and procedures for communicating with the parents of the victim and the perpetrator of bullying or retaliation in the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O.

The Principal's notification to a parent about a report of bullying or retaliation must comply with confidentiality requirements of Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603CMR 23.00, and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations.

49.06 Notice to Law Enforcement Agency: Upon receipt and review of a report of bullying or retaliation, the Principal shall make a preliminary determination whether to notify the local law enforcement agency of the reported incident. The Principal shall notify the law enforcement agency if the Principal has a reasonable basis to believe that the incident may result in criminal charges against the alleged perpetrator. The Principal shall, consistent with school policy and procedure, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and such other individuals the Principal deems appropriate in making such determination.

If the Principal decides to notify the local law enforcement agency, the Principal shall document the reasons for the decision and immediately contact the local law enforcement agency to discuss the incident and the law enforcement agency's involvement. Nothing in this section shall prevent the Principal from taking appropriate disciplinary or other action pursuant to school policy and state law.

49.07 Confidentiality of Records: The Principal may not disclose to a parent any student record information regarding an alleged victim or perpetrator who is a student and who is not the parent's student.

The Principal may disclose a report of bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency under 603 CMR 49.07(1)(a) without the consent of a student or their parent. The Principal shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of victims, student witnesses, and perpetrators to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

The Principal may disclose student record information about a victim or perpetrator to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals as provided in 603 CMR 23.07(e) and 34 CFR 99.31(10) and 99.36. This provision is limited to instances in which the Principal has determined there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals. It is limited to the period of emergency and does not allow for blanket disclosure of student record information. The Principal must document the disclosures and the reasons that the Principal determined the existence of a health or safety emergency.

Disciplinary Action: If there are reasonable grounds to believe that bullying has occurred, the person accused of bullying will have a confidential disciplinary hearing before the Principal or a designee. If the Principal or the designee, after the above hearing, determines that bullying has actually taken place, disciplinary and corrective action will occur to prevent any further incidents. The range of discipline and corrective action may include one or more of the following: an education component, apology to the victim, mandatory counseling, detention, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or recommendation for expulsion.

If either the victim or person accused of bullying is aggrieved by the findings or by action taken by the Principal or the designee, they may appeal said action to the Superintendent, who shall conduct a hearing and shall indicate a disposition of the appeal within two days of such appeal, and shall furnish a copy thereof to the aggrieved party and the School Committee.

Reprisal: Reprisal, threats, or intimidation of the victim or of a person who provides information regarding a claim of bullying will be treated as a most serious offense, which may result in a recommendation of permanent separation from the school community through expulsion from school or any of the consequences described above under disciplinary action.

XVI. BULLYING INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PLAN

A. PRIORITY STATEMENT

- Swift River School expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.
- SRS is committed to providing all students with a safe, supportive environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.
- We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and students who are homeless may be more often targeted with bullying, harassment, or teasing. The school or district will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. We repeat that this plan is not focused on any one group of students but strives to create a safe environment that promotes positive peer relationships for everyone.
- We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on our school grounds, or during our school-related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore a targeted student's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including our curricula, instructional programs, professional development, extracurricular activities, and parent and guardian involvement opportunities. Instructional programs adopted by SRS are Steps to Respect and the MARC Anti-aggression Program. More detailed information about these programs is available online at: <http://www.cfstudents.org/programs/str/overview> and <http://webhost.bridgew.edu/marc/k12.html>.
- The SRS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to address bullying and cyberbullying, and SRS is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation.

A complete copy of the SRS Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan can be found online at www.swiftriverschool.org. If you wish to have a printed copy of the plan, please contact the office.

XVII. HAZING

It shall be the policy of the New Salem-Wendell School Committee that hazing, as defined below, will not be tolerated. The School Committee expects administrators to follow procedures to report hazing incidents and to make clear to students and staff that hazing in the school building, on school grounds, on the school bus or other school-sanctioned transportation, or at school-sponsored functions will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for students and termination for employees. The Principal shall be responsible for investigating and processing all complaints of hazing.

Chapter 269, s.17 Crime of Hazing and Penalties: Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$3,000.00 or by imprisonment in a house of correction for no more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing," as used in this section and section eighteen and nineteen, shall refer to any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverages, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health of another person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Chapter 269, s. 18. Duty to Report Hazing: Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practical. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000.00.

Prohibition of Hazing: In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 536 of the Acts of 1985, the School Committee hereby deems that no student, staff member, or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at school-sponsored events, regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any students who observe what appears to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the Principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the New Salem-Wendell District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the local Police Department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Superintendent of Schools, be suspended from school for up to ten school days.

Any student determined by the Principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process and are subject to suspension, exclusion and expulsion.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: - M.G.L. 269:17, 18, 19

XVIII. SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Purpose: To create for all Swift River School employees and students a work and study environment free of sexual harassment. The Swift River School Committee is committed to safeguarding the right of all persons associated with Swift River School, including students, employees, school committee members, and volunteers to a work and educational environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment on its premises.

All individuals associated with the New Salem-Wendell District, but not necessarily limited to the School Committee, the administration, the staff, the students, and members of the public, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community or while on school property will be in violation of this procedure. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal will be taken in any instance where an employee violates this procedure. Sexual harassment by a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Sexual harassment by others will result in their being excluded from school premises; they will be accompanied by a district representative at all times.

If the sexual harassment is criminal in nature, the offense shall be reported to the local Police Department. If the sexual harassment required the intervention of State Social Service or Protective Agencies, the proper authorities will be contacted. In these circumstances, the school's attorney will be immediately contacted to give advice and guidance on how to process these actions with the appropriate authorities.

Any student, employee or individual acting legitimately on school property who believes they have been subject to sexual harassment should make complaint to a supervisor, teacher, guidance counselor, or the Principal so that appropriate action may be taken at once.

Management representatives are charged with the responsibility of discouraging any sexually-harassing behaviors within or outside of their area of supervision. This includes directly confronting the harasser when a management representative observes harassing behavior, and reporting the activity to the appropriate party.

Complaints will be investigated promptly and corrective action will be taken when appropriate. No person shall suffer retaliation or intimidation as a result of using the internal complaint procedure.

A copy of this procedure and its accompanying regulations are posted; copies are available upon request.

Sexual Harassment Definition: Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature whereby:

- Submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of a student's education.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for education decisions affecting the student.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Assault, inappropriate touching, intentionally impeding movement, comments, gestures, or written communication of a suggestive or derogatory nature.
- Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome (reciprocal attraction between peers is not considered sexual harassment).
- Within the educational environment, implying the threat of withholding or actually withholding grades earned or deserved, suggesting that a poor performance evaluation will be prepared, or suggesting that a scholarship recommendation, college application, or other benefit will be denied.
- Coercive sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect educational opportunities, grades, and the learning environment of a student.
- Offering or granting favors or educational benefits, such as grades or recommendations in exchange for sexual favors.
- Other sexually harassing behavior directed towards students, whether committed by management, staff or fellow students, is also prohibited.

Disciplinary Action: If there are reasonable grounds to believe that sexual harassment has occurred, the person accused of sexual harassment will have a confidential disciplinary hearing before the Principal or a designee. If the Principal or the designee, after the above hearing, determines that sexual harassment has actually taken place, disciplinary and corrective action will occur to prevent any further incidents. The range of discipline and corrective action may include one or more of the following: an education component, apology to the victim, mandatory counseling, detention, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or recommendation for expulsion.

If either the victim or person accused of sexual harassment is aggrieved by the findings considered or action taken by the Principal or the designee, they may appeal said action to the Superintendent, who shall conduct a hearing and shall indicate a disposition of the appeal within two days of such appeal, and shall furnish a copy thereof to the aggrieved party and to the School Committee.

Reprisal: Reprisal, threats, or intimidation of the victim or of a person who provides information regarding a claim of sexual harassment will be treated as a most serious offense, which may result in a recommendation of permanent separation from the school community through expulsion.

XIX. TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOL POLICY

According to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 37H, effective June 4, 1993, smoking and the use of tobacco products by students, staff members, and visitors are prohibited on all school property at all times. Conclusive evidence exists that tobacco use is a leading public health problem in the United States. This policy must be consistently enforced and well-publicized. Use or possession of tobacco products or paraphernalia by minors on school property is strictly prohibited. Use of tobacco products by staff members or other adults on school property is strictly prohibited. School property includes: school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, school parking lots, school buses, and any property or event controlled by the School Committee. Violations of this policy will result in the following consequences:

Students: The Principal or a designee, consistent with building codes of conduct, will arrange for a parent conference to discuss intervention strategies to prevent reoccurrence. Other disciplinary measures, such as counseling and community service, may be required if the violations continue.

Faculty and Staff: Faculty and staff members are expected to comply with state laws and local regulations pertaining to the tobacco-free school policy. A first offense will be met with a verbal warning and tobacco education resources. A second offense will result in a written warning and referral to a cessation program. After a third offense, progressive disciplinary action may be taken.

All school groups using school property will be notified in writing that the use of tobacco products on school property is prohibited. A first offense will be met with a verbal warning. A second offense will result in removal from school property. After a third offense may result in a ban from future use of school property. **Note:** there is not always irrefutable evidence of a tobacco violation, but a strong probability could result in any consequences as listed above.

XX. USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The citizens of Wendell and New Salem may use the facilities of the school for civic purposes. An application for use of the school building and a copy of the School Committee policy regarding use of the facilities are available in the office.

A. IDLING

No Idling: As per MGL Chapter 90 16 B 540 CMR 27.00, **cars or buses may not idle in front of the school building.** No vehicle may be left running and unattended on school property.

XXI. PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

Annual Public Notification 2017 – 2018: This notification is required by AHERA, 40 CFR Part 763 of Title II of the Toxic Substances Control Act.

A. ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLANS

Asbestos management plans have been developed for Swift River School. These plans are available and accessible to the public at SRS as well as from ESU #28 Central Office located at:

Erving School Union #28
18 Pleasant Street
Erving, MA 01344

The LEA Designee:

Director of Maintenance, Larry Ramsdell
Swift River School
201 Wendell Road
New Salem, MA 01355

A three-year reinspection was conducted in 2015 by ATC Associates, Inc. Periodic surveillance is done every six months by Larry Ramsdell or by Walter Regnier.

The building maintenance crew received training in the management of asbestos containing materials and Haz Com by ATC Associates, Inc.

This notification is sent home in the student handbook and posted on the official notice board by the office.

B. THE WATER SYSTEM

The water system at Swift River School is subject to regulations established by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Licensed Water Operator:

Director of Maintenance, Larry Ramsdell
Swift River School
201 Wendell Road
New Salem, MA 01355

Testing: Routine testing is required and copies of analytical reports are available from the Water Operator. The school is and has been in compliance and up-to-date with all DEP requirements. This notification is posted on the official notice board by the office.

Registered # 1204001 for Public Water Supplier.
Drinking Water V.S.S. License - 20598
License - I T 22064

C. INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Integrated Pest Management is in compliance with state regulations. Swift River IPM is coordinated by:

Minute Man Pest Control Company, Inc
90 Conz Street
Northampton, MA 01060

D. VISITS TO SCHOOL

Visitors are welcome at our school. We ask that all visitors check in at the office when entering the building to sign in and pick up a visitor's badge. It is essential to everyone's safety that we know who is in the building.

We ask that parents check in with the office when picking up a student during school hours. Any classroom visitations arrangements should be made with classroom teachers.

If you would like to tour our school, we can arrange for an ambassador to guide you. Please call the Principal to schedule a tour at 978-544-6926.