

Whiting Elementary School

Parent-Student Handbook
2016-2017



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whiting.rnesu.org

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Otter Valley Unified Union School Board

Whiting is now part of the OVUU district, along with Sudbury, Leicester, Brandon, Goshen, and Pittsford. Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month beginning at 6:00 p.m. OVUU and the new Barstow district (Chittenden and Mendon) are “side-by-side” districts in the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union. During 2016-17 school year, the OVUU Board will rotate meeting locations among the various schools in the district. Meeting agendas and meeting minutes can be viewed on a link from the RNESU website (www.rnesu.org).

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* Contains specific notification date

Academic Expectations

The Staff of Whiting School invites the support of parents to join us in encouraging students to:

- Come prepared to work hard each school day.
- Participate appropriately in classroom and cooperative group activities.
- Always give their best effort.
- Set goals for themselves and strive to reach them.
- Learn to reflect on and evaluate their work and progress.
- Complete work to meet or exceed expectations and on time.
- Do their assigned homework to reinforce and extend learning.

Reinforcing the critical importance of learning and doing well in school are the jobs of parents and school staff. Students are naturally motivated by meeting goals they and others set for them, by being successful learners and by what is supported at both home and school. A parent's active interest and involvement in education will greatly increase their child(ren)'s potential for high achievement in school. Students whose parents are interested and actively involved are more likely to be active learners, to take appropriate risk that is part of the learning process, to complete assigned tasks (i.e. homework) and to achieve academically. Every adult must work together to provide and reinforce the best educational programs possible and to pave the path to a bright educational journey for each Whiting learner.

Acceptable Student Use of Electronic Resources and the Internet

Students at Whiting Elementary School have access to the school's electronic resources and the internet for school-related assignments, activities, communication and research. All users of the school's network need to follow the rules of personal and ethical conduct regarding electronic resources. Teachers will guide students in learning acceptable use, and students are responsible for appropriate behaviors when using school networks. A copy of the policy and procedures relating to the safe and appropriate use of electronic resources is available on the RNESU website.

Alert Notification System

To achieve important and/or rapid communication with parents/guardians when the need arises, Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union and Whiting Elementary School use the One Call Now automated dialing system. The primary uses of the system will be to notify you of delayed openings, early dismissals, school closings, emergencies and important "non-emergency" announcements. You will receive a call and/or e-mail initiated by the Superintendent of Schools, the school principal or a designated member of the school staff. This will enable the school and/or district to disseminate information to each of our families in the most time efficient manner possible. Once your contact information is in the system, you only need to contact us if your information changes. If it does change, you will need to notify the school of the change in your personal information so that your emergency contact information can be kept current.

Annual Notification - Disclosure of Directory Information

Schools in the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union may disclose designated directory information on students and eligible students (18 yrs. of age or attending a post-secondary institution) without the prior consent of the parent/guardian of the eligible student, and without any record of such disclosure. The following types of personally identifiable information have been designated directory information:

- Student's name, address, date of birth, dates of enrollment;
- Parent or legal custodian's name and address;
- Student's grade level classification;
- Student's participation in recognized school activities and sports;
- Weight and height of member of athletic teams;
- Student's diploma, certificates, awards and honors received.

Disclosure may include such personally identifiable information contained or reflected in photographs. There are numerous occasions during the school year when the school, district, local media organizations, or authorized individuals photograph, videotape or interview students and staff members in school for legitimate purposes. Photos and audio/videotapes are used to document instructional programs and/or inform parents and public. Groups and individual students are shown as they take part in school-related events. Another purpose for photography or videotaping allows students and teachers to review in-class activities. As a result, some photos and tapes may be retained for an extended time. Photographs or likenesses may be released without written consent unless qualified objectors comply with the following procedure; contact the principal in writing by Sept. 15.

Eligible students, or parents/guardians of a student, currently attending any of the RNESU Schools, have a right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of these types of information as directory information concerning your

child or yourself (if an eligible student) by providing written notice of your refusal, listing the type(s) of information which you refuse to have so designated, to the principal of the school (or the school you attend, if an eligible student) on or before Sept. 15.

At Home

A child with high self-esteem is a confident learner, one who feels good about himself/herself and one who will do better academically and socially in school.

Please help your child:

- Get 8-10 hours of sleep each sleep each night (a “must,” according to pediatricians);
- Practice consistent personal hygiene;
- Have a nutritious breakfast and healthy food for snack and lunch;
- Dress in layers and appropriately for the time of year;
- Have everything necessary for that day (lunch, milk money, homework);
- Reduce early morning stress by helping to organize his/her things for school the night before and,
- Leave for school with a supportive "good-bye" (put morning stressors aside!)

Stay in tune with what your child is learning. After school, ask questions about his/her day. Show an interest in you child’s school work. Display papers prominently (not just the perfect ones) and communicate pride! **READ EVERY NIGHT!!!** Read to your children (even the older ones) and listen to them read (children who aren’t reading yet can talk about the story/pictures). The more families encourage learning, the more learners know the value you place on success in school.

Attendance/Tardiness Policy

Overall student achievement is directly related to consistent school attendance. Being absent from school means not only a loss of instructional time, but also a loss of continuity in his or her studies, and a loss of opportunities for instructional interaction with peers and teachers. State Law mandates that a child between the ages of six and sixteen shall attend an approved public school or a reporting private school for the full number of days for which that school is held, unless:

- the child is mentally or physically unable to attend, or
- is being furnished with an approved program of home instruction, or
- has completed the tenth grade, or
- has been excluded by the school board or superintendent for discipline reasons.

If your child is unable to attend school and will be staying home, please call in his/her absence to our school secretary by 9:00 am (623-7991). You can leave a message on our answering machine. **We need, per State law, a written, dated excuse indicating the reason for the absence for each day a student is absent.** All absences from school must be considered excused or unexcused.

Excused absences- A student shall be designated as “excused” for any of the following reasons:

- Death in the family
- Inclement weather, which would be dangerous to the life or health of the student as determined by the principal
- Legal quarantine/subpoena
- Emergency conditions as determined by the principal
- Prior permission of the principal and consent of the parent/guardian (i.e. outside evaluations)
- Religious absence for official religious holidays

Unexcused absences – Any absence not listed as an excused absence will be recorded unexcused. Unexcused absences are considered truancy and will be handled under the provisions of Vermont laws. As mentioned above, parent/guardians must provide a written notice for each day their child is not in school upon return to school.

Sick – Students will be excused due to illness or doctor’s appointment as long as a parent/guardian has called the school or has submitted a note either before or after the appointment.

Parents/Guardians of students who have been absent an excessive number of days during the school year, without the school’s knowledge of a long-term illness, will receive a letter home indicating concern and follow-up actions. “Excessive” will be defined as greater than 10% (18 days) of the total school year. Parents will be asked to work cooperatively with the school to improve their child’s attendance and avoid legal actions under truancy guidelines.

Please try to schedule all medical and dental appointments after school hours. If a student has an appointment during the school day and must leave early, please send a note. Parents are also encouraged to schedule their vacations to coincide with school vacations. We also recognize that there may be circumstances when this is not possible. When this occurs, please contact the classroom teacher ahead of time so that she can plan accordingly. Teachers may choose to send work with the family, or they may put work aside while the child is away for the child to complete upon his/her return, or a combination of both. Because each day’s instruction follows up on previous day’s learning, teachers cannot always plan in advance exactly what/work will be assigned and completed on each day.

Unless other arrangements are made, students are responsible for making up missed schoolwork.

Tardiness

Beginning the day at school with classmates is critical to a child’s sense of readiness and belonging and also insures greater awareness (less confusion) about the daily schedule, class expectations, and work completion. Learners who arrive on the scene “in the middle of things” have to spend time catching up while classmates are moving ahead. Arriving on time is important to the development of key school and work habits. Please make every attempt to see that your child arrives at school by 8:00 a.m. each day. Parents who bring their child(ren) to school late must bring the child to the Office to check in. Excessive tardiness (more than three occurrences per quarter) will necessitate follow-up procedures that could involve administrative action and/or referral to the Rutland Truancy Project, and parent-school conferences to address the issue.

Basketball Court/Playground Rules and Regulations

Whiting Elementary School and Friends of Whiting School are NOT responsible for any injuries resulting from the use of the basketball court and/or playground other than student use during school hours.

- Court hours are from dawn to dusk.
- By state law, there is no drinking of alcohol, smoking or illegal drug use on school property.
- Disrespect for the basketball court and/or playground will result in loss of the privilege of using it and costs of repair, if applicable.
- Keep the court and surrounding area clean. Please dispose of garbage.
- Do not drive vehicles beyond designated parking areas.
- Enjoy the basketball court and/or playground, but please use it safely and carefully!

Bike Riding

Students are welcome to ride their bikes to school if written permission to ride has been filed in the school office each school year. Once the student arrives at school, his/her bike remains parked in the bike rack until the bus leaves school property at dismissal time and the traffic circle is safe for riding.

Daily Schedule & Dismissal

Whiting Elementary School classes begin at 8:00 a.m. Any students arriving after that time will be considered tardy. Dismissal is at 2:45 p.m.

Any student who is to be picked up by anyone other than his/her parent or designated emergency contact, or who is getting off the bus other than at his or her regular stop, must have written permission/notification from his/her parents/guardians. This note should be shown to the classroom teacher for notification and signature and then given to

the bus driver, if riding the bus. Unless we hear directly from the parent by note or phone, your child will be put on the bus as usual. Unless participating in a school-sponsored activity, supervision of students left at school after 3:00 p.m. cannot be assumed or guaranteed. Kindergarten-2nd grade students will not be dropped off from the bus to an empty home; in the event no one is home when the bus arrives, the driver will be in radio contact with the RNESU Transportation Department and the Whiting School office, and the student(s) will be brought back to Whiting School where the attempt to reach parent/approved emergency contact person will be made.

Whiting School staff has the responsibility of achieving an orderly and safe close of the school day. As soon as the bus arrives, usually by 3:00 pm., students who take the bus home or to a pre-arranged after-school location line up to board the bus, and "walkers" will be dismissed. Students attending after-school programs/activities (i.e. Kids' Club) will move to that program location, and students being picked up by a parent/authorized adult will wait under supervision.

Parking Lot Safety – please help insure pedestrian safety by adhering to a one-way traffic flow of the Circle in front of the school at all times. Entrance into the Circle is the turn closest to Sudbury (south entrance), exit is by the road closest to the store. Peak bus drop-off and pick-up times are at 7:25 and 2:55-3:05, and it is advisable that cars plan on entering the Circle outside of those times. By policy, vehicles cannot be left unattended or idling outside of the school building. If you need to leave your vehicle and enter the school at any time, please turn off the vehicle and park in the spaces provided.

Damage Policy

Each student will respect the personal property of others and refrain from causing intentional damage or unnecessary wear and tear to books, facilities, school materials, electronic equipment, furnishings, and the personal property of others. Students and/or parents will be expected to reimburse the school for the cost of replacement or repairs, if intentional damage or wear and tear beyond expected use occurs.

Danger to Others

We believe that school should be a place where all who come to learn and work feel safe each day. If a student behaves in such a manner that he/she becomes a danger to other students or staff, approved discipline procedures will be followed, which includes parental notification and suspension from school. The student will be allowed to return to school only after a meeting has been held with the student, parent, teacher, administration and/or school board, and a plan for corrective actions with reasonable assurances of safety and consequences of repeated acts has been written and agreed upon.

Detention

Detention is when any student is assigned to stay after school for an infraction of school rules, inappropriate behavior or to make up missed schoolwork. Students should understand that any Whiting Elementary School staff member has the authority to correct misconduct at any time. Students may be asked to serve a supervised detention to complete homework after three homework assignments are missed during a marking period. Parents will be notified before any child serves a detention.

Dress Code

In order to keep our school building clean and air quality within safe limits, Whiting students will need separate footwear for indoors and outdoors. Having separate footwear helps to maintain a healthier school environment (i.e. mud that has been tracked in dries into dust that floats through the classroom by the end of the school day). We have students with allergies to dust and other airborne particulates. Students must have slippers or shoes for inside wear. For health and safety, they cannot go barefoot or in sock feet.

Students are expected to dress in such a way as to show respect for themselves and others in the school. Clothing determined to be inappropriate, obscene, offensive (saying or pictures), and clothing with slogans relating to drugs,

tobacco or alcohol will not be allowed. Parents will be called to bring change of clothes. Hats are not allowed to be worn inside the school building during school hours or at school activities.

Sneakers must be worn to participate in Physical Education classes.

Early School Closings and Delayed Start of School

In the event of an early school closing, every attempt will be made to notify parents/guardians as soon as the decision has been made. An announcement will be made on the radio (WFAD 1490 AM and WJJR 98.1 FM), and the One Call Now system of notification activated. When there is a 2-hr. delayed start of school due to weather conditions or other circumstances, the bus will pick riders up two hrs. later than usual and classes will begin at 9:30 a.m. when the bus arrives at school.

Educational Support Team

Our school has a number of services and supports to assist Whiting School students to become successful learners. Whiting adheres to the provisions of Vermont's Act 157 requiring the establishment of Educational Support Teams (EST) in Vermont schools. The Education Support System is a school-based system designed to help all students improve their school performance and help them grow academically, socially, emotionally and physically. It provides a way for schools to offer direct student, staff and parent support and resources to address students' varying level of needs.

The EST is composed of a team of staff members who meet to review student referrals. It receives referrals for assistance from teachers, parents or other staff members. At the initial meeting, the Team considers what classroom accommodations and interventions have been attempted and assists teachers in planning and providing additional services and accommodations to meet student needs. The Team develops a specific plan of action, assigns a case manager and schedules follow-up sessions to monitor student progress and the plan's effectiveness. You may obtain more information or discuss a referral to the Educational Support Team by calling the school.

Emergency Contact

It is critical that Whiting School staff know how to get in contact with parents and/or authorized adults in the event of need. We must have an emergency telephone number on file for each student at all times. If the home and/or work phone number(s) provided on the Emergency Card (completed at the beginning of the year) change, please notify the Office immediately to update your emergency contacts.

Federal Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights relating to student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask Whiting School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If Whiting School administration decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, Whiting School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which

permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

In compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act, parents/guardians must be notified yearly of:

1. As a parent of a child who attends a school that receives Title I funds, you have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher. This information could include:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualifications/licensing criteria for the grade levels/subjects taught.
 - Whether the teacher is teaching under licensure waiver.
 - A teacher's degree background.
 - Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.
2. Schools are required to provide upon request of a military recruiter or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers. Parents may request that their children's contact information not be released to military recruiters or institutions of higher education. This should be done in writing to the school by Sept. 15 of each year.
3. Parents have the right upon request to:
- Inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.
 - Be informed of the administration of any non-emergency, invasive physical examinations, or screenings that are not otherwise permitted or required by state law, including those without parental notification.
 - Inspect any third-party surveys before they are administered.
 - Be made aware of the collection and use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing that information (except for the purpose of developing educational products for services).
4. Parents are required to give written prior parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any Education Department-funded survey or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent.
 - Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
 - Sex behavior or attitudes.
 - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or, demeaning behavior.
 - Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships.
 - Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, ministers.
 - Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent.
 - Income (other than that required by law) to determine eligibility for participating in a program, or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

5. Parents or eligible students have the right to seek protective action for the student's education records if the School receives a judicial order or lawful subpoena that would otherwise require disclosure of a student record under 34 C.F.R. 99.31 (9).

Should you have any questions, please call the Principal or the Superintendent's Office.

Field Trips

The local and larger communities are important extension resources for many instructional programs. Out-of-classroom trips reinforce classroom activities and provide students with a "real world" perspective on their in-class learning.

Educational field trips can be taken during the school day, a portion of the day, or as an overnight trip. Although field trips can have significant educational value, they do require careful planning and supervision.

Funding of school-sponsored field trips and other activities bearing a cost shall be borne by the school budget or by contributions and support from grants, Friends of Whiting School, or other funding sources. In cases when the opportunity to enrich a student's learning experience through attendance on a school-sponsored field trip is dependent upon a small family contribution, families may be asked to help fund the cost of admission tickets, fees, busing (driver's costs and gas mileage), etc. Donations from alternative funding sources will be solicited to support families for whom this request is prohibitive. No student will be denied access to a field trip due to an inability to pay any additional cost.

Teachers will provide information about each trip in advance. A signed parental permission note is required for all activities occurring off school grounds. If the signed permission form is not returned, the student will not be able to attend the field trip. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with normal school behavioral standards on all trips. Students displaying inappropriate behavior will be excluded from the trip or brought back to school early. Parent volunteers are often needed to assist with supervision; we greatly appreciate this assistance.

For short local trips (within the Whiting-Sudbury-Brandon-Middlebury area) we may use private transportation for single class trips. When that happens, we use staff vehicles with booster seats for our younger students. Sixth graders only may ride in front seats.

Food/School Breakfast-Lunch Program

The Abbey Group has been contracted to operate the school meals program at Whiting School, and information will be shared at the beginning of the school year outlining the program, menus, costs and operations.

In general, students take responsibility for cleaning up after meals. We break for a mid-morning snack. Lunch is at 12:00, after recess. Microwaves are available to heat food at lunchtime only. Please have your child only bring **prepared food in a microwavable container that can be heated in two minutes or less. This is not a time to prepare food.** Caffeinated drinks, candy and high sugar soda are not permitted unless approved by classroom teachers for a specific occasion. We strongly encourage families to provide snacks from home that are low in fats and sugars and to avoid dessert-type foods such as cookies, cakes and puddings. Having a water bottle at school for periodic hydration is essential.

Health Services

All children deserve the best possible health care to insure personal safety, fulfillment of their learning potential and allow them to experience the true value of their individual worth. The Health Services Program is designed to meet the needs of children while they are in school but not to replace or supplant the services provided by a child's physician. Schools place children in close contact with each other for extended periods; it is not desired to expose them to illness. Children should not be sent to school in the morning if they have a fever, exhibit symptoms of illness in any other way, or had diarrhea or vomiting in the past 24 hours. Routine first aid is provided by the school nurse or other Whiting School staff. We remind parents to check for head lice on a regular basis (see below). Your physician or pharmacist will assist you if a problem develops. We appreciate being advised if children contract contagious diseases as soon as they are diagnosed as this assists us in attempts at controlling the spread of these illnesses. Serious injuries/illnesses while at school will be handled in accordance with the guidance provided by parents on the

Emergency/Health Update Form. In these instances, every attempt will be made to contact parents or designated emergency contacts. In cases where this is not possible, the child will be given appropriate care at school or transported to the designated medical facility.

Medication

Medication should be administered at home whenever possible as we do not have a school nurse full time. If your child has to have any medication during school time, it would be best if a parent could come to school to administer the medication. All medication must be in original containers, labeled by physician or pharmacist, and must be kept in the office. An RNESU form for any medication taken at school must be submitted prior to administration. This form needs signatures of parents/guardians and medical personnel that provides information which includes: (1) student's name, (2) name of medication, (3) purpose of medication, (4) time of administration, (5) dosage, (6) possible side effects, and (7) termination date.

The school nurse will: (1) inform appropriate school personnel of the medication, (2) record each administration, (3) keep medication in a locked cabinet, (4) return unused medication to parent only. Parents must assume the responsibility for informing the school of any change in the child's health or medication. The School District retains the right to reject requests for administration of medication.

Students who receive a detailed authorization from both his/her physician and parent will be allowed to carry medication for allergies or life-threatening illnesses on his/her person at school. The student's parent and school nurse will work to develop a plan of action in the event that the student must self-medicate that is based on the physician's authorization.

Screening

Annual health screening will be conducted for each student for vision and hearing. Evaluations may be requested by a parent, physician or teacher. If you do not want your child to participate in any screening, please notify the Health Office in writing by October 15th of each school year.

Immunizations - Vermont's Department of Education and Health mandates that all students entering a Vermont school meet the following requirements:

DTaP - Five (5) doses, unless 4th dose was given on/after 4th birthday, in which case only 4 doses needed.

POLIO – Four (4) doses, unless 3rd dose was given on/after 4th birthday, in which case only 3 doses needed.

MEASLES/RUBELLA (MMR) - Two (2) doses of each.

TETANUS BOOSTER - Every ten (10) years.

HEPATITIS B – Three (3) doses.

CHICKENPOX/VARICELLA – Two (2) doses unless student has had chickenpox disease, then no vaccine is needed. Parents will need to submit documentation of disease.

Children may be exempted from immunization for medical reasons if a signed statement from a physician that immunization is contraindicated and the reason and length of time the exemption is in force. Exemption requests for philosophical or religious reasons must be accompanied by a signed statement from the parent that immunization is against their religious or philosophical beliefs. PLEASE NOTE: In May 2015, House Bill 98 was signed by Governor Peter Shumlin, that eliminates the exemption that allows parents to opt their children out of vaccinations for philosophical reasons. The law eliminates Vermont's philosophical exemption goes into effect on July 1, 2016.

Pediculosis (Head lice)

Head lice tends to be a problem in school-age children, but not necessarily related to personal hygiene. Lice can happen to anyone! Lice are transmitted directly from one person to another, or by direct contact with articles (such as combs and brushes, hats, scarves, bedding, and upholstery) that have been used by an infested person. Once infested, head lice multiply rapidly, especially in the school environment where close personal contact is common in the classroom, on the playground and on the school bus. Parents can aid in the detection of head lice by observing children for intense itching of the scalp especially at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. If head lice are found, the child should be treated immediately. There are several over the counter preparations available. It is important that you notify the school as soon as possible so your child's classroom can be checked. If your child is found to have head lice at school, you will be notified so that your child can receive treatment.

Homework and Study Skills

Students will have regular homework assignments, which need to be done at home. This is important in helping teachers assess what students have learned, in helping students organize time and school work, and in teaching responsibility.

Homework also encourages students to learn and work independently. Assignments are expected to be done in a timely and thorough manner. Students are expected to meet deadlines and be responsible for their work. Homework may require parental assistance from time to time. This partnership between home and school is important to your child's success.

Leaving School Without Permission

Leaving school without permission will in most cases result in a minimum of a one day in-school suspension from classes. Parents will be called immediately when a student leaves school without permission. In serious cases, law enforcement officials will also be called.

Let's Talk!

Let's Talk! is another way to get in touch with us at Whiting Elementary School. It works through the **Let's Talk!** icon on the WES website. Your **Let's Talk!** messages will be promptly answered by the appropriate school staff member.

Lost and Found

Children sometimes lose personal clothing or equipment between home and school. We make every effort to locate and return items but a large number of articles go unclaimed. Parents can assist in the return of misplaced items by clearly marking clothing with the student's name. A "lost and found" box is set up so that lost articles can be identified and claimed by its owner. Calling as soon as you become aware that something is missing is very helpful in the search, identification and return process.

Lost Library Books

Students are responsible for the replacement cost of any library or school books or materials destroyed or lost. The cost will be based on the catalog price to replace items that are lost or beyond repair.

Money in School

Money sent with the younger students should be put in an envelope, on which is written the child's name and purpose for which the money is being sent. Children should not bring large amounts of money to school. Significant sums should be given to the classroom teacher for safekeeping. Students should bring in only what money is needed for the week and should be labeled as to the purpose. No Charging, for anything, please!

Moving Away?

If you are planning to move out of the Whiting District during the school year, please notify the school as soon and as early in the process as possible. This permits early contact with the new school and can make the transition much easier for your child and family.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Whiting Elementary School will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, place of birth, age, gender, or handicap/disability in all aspects of admission to, access to, treatment in, application for employment or employment in its programs or activities as required and to the extent provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (pertaining to race, color and national origin), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (pertaining

to unlawful employment practices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (pertaining to sex), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (pertaining to handicap), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (pertaining to disabilities), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (pertaining to age) 21 V.S.A. Chap.5, subchapter 6 (pertaining to fair employment).

Notices from School

Notice about school functions, activities or changes in schedule will be sent home with every child or emailed to parents. Please be sure to read each one for notification, information, requested permission, etc. Please be sure all notices requiring parental signature are returned by date due.

Parent Concerns

Any comments or concerns related to classroom issues should first be directed to the individual teacher or staff member. It is important that the appropriate channels of communication be open and that the parents contact school personnel most closely related to the issue with any concerns as soon as possible. If a problem still needs to be resolved, the Principal, and in rare cases, the School Board, will be involved. If there are issues concerning a child or anything related to Whiting School, please call and make an appointment at your earliest convenience.

Parent Conferences

At least twice yearly, all parent(s)/guardians are invited to participate in an individual or student-involved conference reviewing academic and social growth at school and progress towards specific goal attainment. Often, this involves a portfolio review of work and progress "to date." This is a very important part of a child's education as it provides an opportunity for teachers, parents and students to reflect on performance and exchange information supporting each child's opportunity for continuous growth and a successful school experience. If parents cannot attend the scheduled conference, please call for an alternate conference time.

Parent-Teacher Organization (Friends of Whiting School)

A vital Parent-Teacher Organization is critical to the well-being of any school, and Whiting is blessed with an active and organized parent group, the Friends of Whiting School. While FOWS raises funds to support and enhance school activities (i.e. artist residencies, playground equipment, family learning nights, field trips), it also plays a strong role in sponsoring an array of annual activities and advising the staff and administration on school curriculum and programs. Your attendance, participation and support are essential aspects of a rich connection to your child(ren)'s school, and FOWS participation can also provide connections to other parents and the entire Whiting community. FOWS meets monthly, and all parents/community members are encouraged to become active members. FOWS meets once every month: check the school calendar for dates.

Parties at School

During the school year children may be celebrating certain holidays or occasions with small classroom parties. Parents/guardians may be contacted to volunteer their services in planning or organizing these events or asked to provide refreshments.

Party Invitations (Out of School)

Distributing invitations to parties (i.e. birthdays) held outside of school if all students in a room are invited is permitted. If all students in your child's classroom are not invited, distributing invitations needs to occur outside of school. Selective distribution is disruptive in the classroom and a source of great disappointment and unhappiness. While we understand the convenience of delivering party invitations at school, we ask that parents avoid this practice and to contact invitees outside of school. By law, the school cannot supply addresses or phone numbers.

Personal Electronic Devices

Personal electronic devices (phones, MP3, radios, iPods, CD players, GameBoys, etc.) are not allowed to be used in school due to the distraction they present. Students may use these devices on the school bus if approved by the driver or teacher when on a field trip. However, parents must be aware that the school is not responsible for missing equipment and we strongly recommend that valuable equipment be left at home.

Policies of RNESU

The Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union and the Whiting Board policies and procedures are extensive and include all aspects covering students, staff, governance, and facilities. The policy manual is available to anyone who wishes to review it. All district policies can be found on the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union web page (rnesu.org) under the Policy section located on the side bar.

In particular, it is important that parents and students are aware of the referenced policies relating to harassment and bullying. For any questions or issues relating to policies or to report suspected incidents of harassment/bullying, contact Ed Barnwell, Principal.

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

RNESU Policy Code:JBEAA

Policy Code JBEAA (a full copy of the policy can be found at the RNESU website)

The Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union and its member districts are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. This policy addresses students¹ who are subjected to incident(s) and/or conduct that occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity, but where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated or the conduct can be shown to pose clear and substantial interference with a student's equal access to educational programs.

Unlawful Harassment is a form of discrimination that will not be tolerated. It is the policy of the districts within RNESU to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity, to the extent required by law. In addition, retaliation is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. Consistent with these purposes, annually,² each school shall select two or more designated employees to receive complaints and shall publicize their availability in any publication of the districts within RNESU that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.

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

The districts within RNESU shall promptly and effectively address all complaints of unlawful harassment and promptly end harassing conduct according to procedures established by policy, and shall take appropriate action reasonably calculated to stop unlawful harassment, found against any person, subject to the jurisdiction of the districts within RNESU who violates this policy, prevent its recurrence and remedy the impact of harassment on the victim(s). Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline. Such serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit

punishment of a person for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the school's other disciplinary policies or codes of conduct.

¹Grievances regarding employees and/or third parties being subjected to harassment should follow the procedures outline in Policy GBEEA.

²See 16 V.S.A. § 565(c)(1).

Any student or other person having inquiries or complaints concerning compliance with this Harassment Prevention policy may contact the principal or other building administrator of the school in question, or the Non-Discrimination Coordinator as follows:

Name: Marsha Bruce
Title: Non-Discrimination Coordinator
Address: 49 Court Dr., Brandon, VT 05737
Telephone number: (802) 247-5757

Name: Ed Barnwell/Janelle Ashley
Title: Principal/Special Educator
Address: 87 South Main Street
Whiting, VT 05778
Telephone number: (802) 623-7991

The Non-Discrimination Coordinator and building administrator(s) above have been designated by the RNESU to coordinate efforts to comply with the above stated anti-harassment policy and state anti-harassment laws. Copies of the policies and procedures are available from them.

POLICY ON THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING OF STUDENTS

RNESU Policy Code: JG

I. Purpose

The Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union and member Districts recognize that all students should have a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment. Bullying is a form of dangerous and disrespectful behavior that will not be permitted or tolerated. Bullying may involve a range of misconduct that, based on the severity, will warrant corrective action and/or discipline. Behaviors that do not rise to the level of bullying may still be subject to intervention and/or discipline under another section of the discipline plan or policy.

II. Definition of Bullying

For the purposes of this policy, "bullying" is defined as any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

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

- b. does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's right to access educational programs.

Examples of bullying include:

- Name-calling and verbal taunts
- Physical threats or actual physical harm
- Off-campus text messages or social media posts that ridicule or intimidate to the extent that the targeted student is not able to fully access the school's programs

In order to be bullying, incidents such as the ones described above must be repeated over time, directed at a particular student, and intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate.

In some cases, acts of bullying may constitute unlawful harassment, where the conduct is based on or motivated by a student's or student's family member's actual or perceived:

Race	Sexual Orientation
Creed	Gender Identity
Color	Marital Status
National Origin	Disability
Sex	

Any allegations of harassment will be addressed under the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union Policy on the Prevention of Harassment of Students.

III. Reporting Bullying Complaints

The principal of each school will annually designate two employees to receive complaints of bullying and harassment. The names and contact information for those designated employees at WES are:

Name: Marsha Bruce
Title: Non-Discrimination Coordinator
Address: 49 Court Dr., Brandon, VT 05737
Telephone number: (802) 247-5757

Name: Ed Barnwell/Janelle Ashley
Title: Principal/Special Educator
Address: 87 South Main Street
Whiting, VT 05778
Telephone number: (802) 623-7991

The Non-Discrimination Coordinator and building administrator(s) above have been designated by the RNESU to coordinate efforts to comply with the above stated anti-harassment policy and state anti-harassment laws. Copies of the policies and procedures are available from them.

For the purposes of this policy, "school employee" means any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the District/-Supervisory Union, an agent of the school, a school board

member/member of the board of trustees, a student teacher, an intern, or a school volunteer. “Agent of the school” includes supervisory union staff.

- A. Student Reporting: Any student who believes that s/he has been bullied under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute bullying, is encouraged to report the conduct to a designated employee or to any other school employee.
- B. School Employee Reporting: Any school employee who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute bullying shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and shall immediately report it to a designated employee. Any school employee who directly receives information about conduct that might constitute bullying will immediately report it to a designated employee.
- C. Parent Reporting: Any parent or legal guardian/custodian who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute bullying or who reasonably believes his/her child or ward is being bullied should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any school employee.
- D. Documentation of the Report: If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall reduce the complaint to writing, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, and the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator(s), and any witnesses.
- E. False Complaint: Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion with regard to students, or up to and including discharge with regard to employees. There shall be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of bullying when the person has a good faith belief that bullying occurred or is occurring.
- F. Confidentiality and Record Keeping: The privacy of the complainant, the accused individual, and the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the Districts’ obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.

IV. Response to a Bullying Complaint

For the purposes of this policy “school administrator” means a superintendent, principal, or his/her designee.

- A. Notification: Upon receipt of a complaint of bullying the designated employee will immediately notify the school administrator of the complaint. If either the complainant or the accused individual is under the age of 18, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be promptly notified that a complaint of bullying has been filed and be provided with a copy of this policy.
- B. Investigation: Unless special circumstances are present and documented, such as reports to the Department for Children and Families (“DCF”) or the police, school vacations, or other witness absence/unavailability, the school administrator shall:

- a. No later than **one school day** after the filing of the complaint with a designated employee initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning him/herself or a designated employee as the investigator.
- b. No later than **five school days** from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, the investigator shall submit a written determination to the school administrator. The report shall include a statement of the findings of the investigator as to whether the allegations have been substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes bullying.

C. Consequences for Violations of This Policy

- a. If, after investigation, the school finds that the alleged conduct occurred and that it constitutes bullying, the school shall take remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the bullying, prevent any recurrence and may take appropriate disciplinary action. Examples of remedial action include: mediation between the parties, education and counseling for the bully, and safety planning.
- b. Violators of the bullying policy shall - based on relevant surrounding facts and circumstances, including but not limited to a consideration of prior instances of similar behavior and the student's overall disciplinary history - be subject to the following potential discipline and/or remedial action(s):
 - b.i. Awareness/Education/Counseling;
 - b.ii. Acts of restitution;
 - b.iii. In-school suspension;
 - b.iv. Out of school suspension; or,
 - b.v. Expulsion.
- c. Safety Planning
 - c.i. A safety plan shall be developed in all instances where a student has been the target of bullying that results in physical harm and/or the student is known to be expressing suicidal ideation as a result of bullying. A safety plan shall not be considered a substitute for in-school procedures and policies that apply to students experiencing mental health crises.
 - c.ii. A safety plan should be considered in instances where the targeted student is known to have difficulty accessing the educational programs at the school as a result of bullying.
 - c.iii. A safety plan may include such measures as checking in with the target and his/her parents on a regular basis, identifying a safe in-school person for the target to seek out when s/he feels threatened, informing teachers to pay particular attention to interactions/ dynamics between identified students and rearranging the schedule of the perpetrator, and providing additional supervision in areas ordinarily subject to lesser supervision (e.g., lunchroom, playground).

D. Parental Notification: Upon completion of the investigation, the school administrator will notify the parent(s) or guardian of the complainant and accused individual(s) of the outcome of the

investigation. In cases where the school determines that bullying has occurred, a school administrator may seek a waiver of the confidentiality rights of the perpetrator(s) in order to inform the complainant of any specific disciplinary action taken.

- E. Appeal of Discipline Decisions: A person determined to be in violation of this policy and subjected to disciplinary action under it may appeal the determination and/or the disciplinary action(s) taken in the same manner as other disciplinary actions, in accordance with the District's disciplinary policy or applicable statutes.

V. Reporting to Other Agencies

- A. Reports to Department of Children and Families: When a complaint made pursuant to this policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. § 4911, *et seq.* must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 6901 *et seq.*
- B. Reports to Law Enforcement: Information obtained and documented by school administration regarding the school's response to notice of student conduct that may constitute bullying may constitute an "educational record" regarding the student or student(s) involved as defined by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Accordingly, such information may not be disclosed to local law enforcement without prior parent approval except in response to a lawfully issued subpoena, or in connection with an emergency if disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
 - a. Nothing in this policy shall preclude persons from reporting incidents and/or conduct witnessed first-hand that may be considered to be a criminal act to law enforcement officials. Such conduct includes but is not limited to: physical attacks resulting in bodily harm, assault, and simple assault.
- C. Continuing Policy to Investigate: Reports made to either DCF or law enforcement shall not be considered to absolve the school administrators of their obligations under this policy to pursue and complete an investigation upon receipt of notice of conduct which may constitute bullying.

VI. Dissemination of Information, Training, and Data Reporting

- A. Notice to Parents and Employees: Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, the School District shall provide notice to custodial parents or guardians, staff members, and contracted employees of its prohibition against bullying, the procedures concerning reporting and investigating bullying and the possible disciplinary consequences for bullying.
- B. Notice to Students: The superintendent shall develop and initiate age-appropriate programs to annually inform students about the substance of the policy and procedures in order to help prevent bullying. Notice to students shall be in age appropriate language and will include examples of bullying. Such notice shall inform students and parents that bullying that *does not* occur during the school day, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored event still may be subject to disciplinary action, pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §§ 11(a) (32) and 1162(a)(3), if the misconduct can be

shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs.

Notice to parents and students shall state that any student who knowingly makes false accusations regarding bullying may be subject to disciplinary action.

- C. **Training:** The superintendent shall implement training for school staff regarding this policy and to enable staff to prevent, recognize, and respond to bullying.
- D. **Date Reporting:** Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union delegates the responsibility of data collection to the building principal. S/he shall collect data on the number of reported incidents of bullying and the number of incidents that have been verified and shall make such data available to the Vermont Department of Education.

Hazing Policy

RNESU Policy Code: JFD

The State of Vermont has determined that hazing is unlawful. Vermont Act 120 – An Act Relating to the Crime of Hazing 16 V.S.A. 140a et seq. The Board also prohibits staff members and adults who are working with such groups from participating in, condoning and/or directing such activities by students or student groups. It is the policy of the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union (hereinafter “District”) that all its schools provide safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environments. Hazing has no place in the district's schools and will not be tolerated. Accordingly, the District adopts the following policy and procedures to prohibit hazing and will ensure the enforcement thereof.

Definitions:

“Hazing” means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the District; of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student. “Hazing” also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off school grounds. (Hazing Policy: JFD can be found in its entirety on Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union web page.)

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

RNESU Policy Code: JFC

I. Purpose

It is the policy of Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union and its member school districts to maintain a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment via a system of classroom and school management practices, supported by consistent, clear and fair disciplinary procedures. The goal of this policy is to create an environment where the expectations for student behavior are clearly stated, are understood and accepted by students, parents and staff, and are applied in compliance with due process requirements. This policy is to be applied in conjunction with the school's overall discipline plan developed pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1161a.

II. Definitions

1. Weapon means a device, instrument, material or substance whether animate or

inanimate, which, when used as it is intended to be used, is known to be capable of producing death or serious bodily injury.

2. **Knife** means any instrument that is capable of ready use as a stabbing weapon that may inflict bodily injury or death.
3. **School** means any setting which is under the control and supervision of the School District. It includes school grounds, facilities, and school-sponsored events whether held on or off of school grounds and vehicles used to transport students to and from school or school activities.
4. **Expelled** means the termination of educational services for the remainder of the school year or up to 90 school days, whichever is longer.

III. Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of each student to contribute to a safe and productive learning environment in the school by demonstrating respect and consideration for fellow students and adults. This includes complying with all policies and rules of conduct of the School District and individual classrooms.

IV. Administrative Responsibilities

The Principal, in consultation with the educational staff, will develop overall discipline procedures pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 1161a.

The plan will include clear guidelines for student behavior. The guidelines may include provisions for the suspension or expulsion of students who engage in misconduct on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity when the misconduct makes the continued presence of the student harmful to the welfare of the school. The guidelines may also include provisions for the suspension or expulsion of students who engage in misconduct not on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity where direct harm to the school can be demonstrated or where the misconduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs.

The guidelines for student behavior will also include prohibitions against the possession by students of dangerous instruments (i.e. knives or other weapons) while at school, and shall allow disciplinary action up to and including expulsion for violations of the prohibition against knives, weapons and dangerous instruments that are not possessed at school as part of an educational program sponsored or sanctioned by the school.

Behavioral expectations, and the consequences of misconduct, will be stated in the student handbook and other publications distributed to students and parents/guardians.

Recess

If students are in school for the day, they are expected to be outside for recess and Physical Education classes, weather permitting. They need to be dressed appropriately, **including proper footwear for outside conditions**. As the weather gets colder, students need hats, mittens, and ski pants as well as a coat. Dressing in layers is helpful given Vermont weather. As a guideline, outside recess is held if temperatures are above 10 degrees F., wind chill factor considered, and always at the discretion of staff.

Reporting Student Progress

Frequent exchange of information on student progress is an important element in establishing and maintaining a home-school partnership leading to the academic success of students. To strengthen this link, the Whiting School staff uses a variety of reporting formats:

- Report Cards - Issued three times per year (every twelve weeks), these provide a periodic review of student progress relating to learning standards. Parents are asked to review these indicators with students and sign and return the report card envelope to ensure that the report card was received and reviewed.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences - These are scheduled for all students during the first and third marking periods and at other times based on need. They provide an opportunity for teachers and parents to discuss student progress and other topics in depth. Often, students “lead” conferences and report out on their own learning progress to date.
- Criterion Referenced Standardized Tests - Administered to students at the 3rd-6th grade levels. These tests provide a measurement of individual and group progress in a wide variety of areas, and scores are based on the level of achievement to meet state and district standards. Results are sent home to parents shortly after their return to school and reported to the community. NCLB requires testing in reading and math for grades 3-8, science in grade 4, writing in grade 5. Vermont students are administered the New England Common Assessments (NECAPs) to meet this requirement. In addition, every other year, Vermont students in Grade 4 participate in testing under the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) program, with results charted by state only.
- Teacher Constructed Assessments - Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to monitor student progress. These results form the basis of the quarterly report card.

Responsive Classroom

The primary goals of the Responsive Classroom approach to discipline are:

- Establish a calm, orderly, and safe learning environment.
- Foster an understanding for the role of rules in school.
- Help children develop self-control and self-discipline.
- Teach children to be responsible, contributing members of a community.
- Promote respectful, kind, and healthy teacher-student and student-student interactions.

“We recognize that all children will forget the rules sometimes. This is part of learning to be a good citizen at our school and in life. Teachers and staff will use the following pathways in a consistent manner to handle rule breaking.”

1. **Proactive Discipline** (creating, modeling, and practicing the rules)

2. **Reminding and Redirecting**

When students act inappropriately, teachers will give them reminders and redirection. When the behavior is flagrant and frequently repeated, it may be appropriate to skip the reminding and redirecting, going directly to time-out (take a break, time away) instead.

3. **Time-out in the classroom**

When reminders are ineffective, teachers will tell students to take a brief time-out to gain self-control. Afterwards, the students will return to the lesson or activity. After the student is re-engaged in the learning, the teacher may check in briefly with the student to be sure he/she understands why the time-out was necessary.

4. **Time out in a buddy teacher’s room**

Sometimes it's easier for children to regain control when they're away from their class. If the student continues to behave inappropriately in time-out, the classroom teacher will escort the student to a buddy teacher. When the student has regained self-control the buddy teacher will allow the student to rejoin the class. The Buddy teacher, or classroom teacher will talk with the student about what caused the problem and how it can be prevented in the future.

5. Involve the principal or principal-designee

If a student becomes disruptive in the buddy teacher's room or continues to disruptive upon returning to class, the principal or designee will be called to take the student to a designated place in the school.

Adapted from: Rules in School

Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

In cases where there are court-ordered legal restrictions on the access to children for non-custodial parents, it is necessary for the school to have a copy of documents from legal authorities indicating the scope of these restrictions. Otherwise, we must afford the same rights to both parents. In all cases, unless otherwise determined by a judicial ruling, Whiting School will assign legal rights afforded non-custodial parents to participation in their child's education, including access to school records. Please call the principal or counselor if there are questions in this area.

RNESU School Bus Rules and Regulations

A copy of the School Bus Rules and Regulations can be found on the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union website under Parents then Bus Routes at www.rnesu.org

School Pictures

School pictures are taken each year, typically in the fall and through a commercial photography studio. While buying school photos and/or packages is a very popular program with many parents, the purchase of pictures/packages is a family decision and no parent should feel obligated to participate at any time.

Smoking

By law, smoking or the use of tobacco products in any form by students and adults is prohibited in the school or on the school grounds at **all** times, during and outside of normal school hours.

Telephone Use

Student use of the school's telephone must be restricted to emergency calls. Please try to make this clear to your child so that he/she develops the habit of planning after-school activities with you in advance. Help them to become organized so that they don't need to have a phone call made for missing lunches or notices. Students cannot be called out of class for personal phone calls or messages. Please leave messages with our school secretary. Emergencies will be handled appropriately. The use of cell phones/cell phone cameras is not permitted. Students who need to carry cell phones for after school hours are expected to leave it in their backpack at all times.

Tooth Tutor Program

Whiting School participates in the Tooth Tutor Access Program, sponsored by the Vermont Department of Dental Health. The VT DDH assigns a registered dental hygienist "Tooth Tutor" to the school who carries out several objectives regarding dental health. The first is providing dental health education. The second is providing a dental screen for students and consultation to parents, if necessary. Third, the Tooth Tutor program helps families find a dentist for their children and families, if needed. Whiting's participation in the Tooth Tutor program is early prevention grant-funded.

Visitors

Parents and visitors are always welcome in our school. Advance notice of anticipated visits is requested so that the staff can plan accordingly. Given their scope of responsibilities, teachers cannot normally be available for individual conferences during the school day unless arranged ahead of time. For security reasons, all visitors are asked to check in at the Office prior to visiting staff or rooms.

Volunteering at School

Community volunteers play an active role at Whiting Elementary School, representing a rich resource for our students. We welcome and encourage parents who wish to volunteer in our school. A wide variety of opportunities exist for those interested in working in our classrooms and supporting programs. Parent volunteers help run many curriculum enrichment programs, offer classroom assistance, and organize fundraising activities and other school programs. Areas of need include classroom help, individual or group tutoring, volunteer reading buddies, field trip chaperoning, tech lab support, learning center help, coordination of an activity, etc. You may want to participate on a regular basis, such as a weekly commitment to help with math, science, reading or computers, or to assist the teacher with clerical work (preparing projects, working on bulletin board, etc.). You can often tailor your volunteering to fit your time and interests. Teachers vary in the amount of parental assistance they desire. To find out more about opportunities within the classroom, talk with the teacher. As we work toward a safe and respectful learning environment, volunteers are asked to sign in and out at the front office, honor the privacy of students, and allow time to check in with the teacher/staff to review tasks. If you are unable to be here at the arranged date and time, please notify the teacher. Per Vermont law, volunteers may need to participate in a background check through fingerprinting.