

***SAU 35: BETHLEHEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
STUDENT & PARENT
HANDBOOK
2026-2027 FINAL***



***STUDENTS WHO READ FOR JUST 20 MINUTES PER DAY
SEE 18 MILLION WORDS EACH YEAR AND
HAVE SCORES ON THE STANDARDIZED TESTS
IN THE 90TH PERCENTILE.***



WELCOME TO BETHLEHEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL!

Dear BES Families,

Welcome to Bethlehem Elementary School and the 2026-2027 school year. Your student is a member of one of the best schools in New Hampshire which is both rich in tradition and success. I am proud to be a member of this school community and look forward to working with all of you.

This handbook serves as a valuable tool in opening the lines of communication between both home and school. It is our goal to provide clear, meaningful, and consistent communication with you. We hope that this handbook serves as the first step in accomplishing that goal.

This Parent/Student Handbook includes school procedures, student and family information, required policy text, and direct links to the School Board policies referenced throughout the handbook. The policy references and links in this handbook have been aligned with the 2026-2027 BES Faculty Handbook. Additional district policies are also available through SAU 35.

Please read this handbook with your student and discuss its importance as it contains useful information that will answer most questions you may have regarding policy and procedures.

If you have any questions after reading through the handbook, I would be more than happy to answer them and can be reached at 603-869-5842 or at bsmith@bethlehem.k12.nh.us.

Please return the signed acknowledgement page by the date communicated by the school office at the start of the school year.

Thank you for your help in providing your child with the best possible education. I am delighted to be on board as the Bethlehem Elementary School Principal and look forward to working with you and your student(s) this year in hopes of making it an exciting and successful school year.

Yours in education,

Bryan Smith
Principal

Table of Contents

Important Dates, School Calendar, RTI Information, and Signature Page are located at the end of the handbook.

Section	Page
Staff List	4
Attendance, Absenteeism, Tardiness, & Dismissal	5
Behavior Management & Intervention	6
Bus Transportation	7
Cell Phones & Personal Communication Devices	7
Chain of Command	8
Closing of School & Delayed Entry	8
Conscious Discipline, Trauma Sensitivity, & Social Emotional Learning	8
Drop Off & Pick Up	9
Field Trips	10
Homework	10
Illness & Dismissal from School	11
Lost & Found	11
Lunch Program	11
Medication	12
MTSS: Multi-Tiered System of Supports	12
Music Program	12
Notices	13
Parent Teacher Conferences	13
Recess & BES Recess Philosophy	13
Report Cards	13
School Property	14
Student Use of School Telephones	14
Valuables	14
Vandalism	14
Visitation to School	14
Parental Bill of Rights (Appendix A)	15
Bullying and Violence Prevention (Appendix A)	19
Hazing (Appendix A)	23
Policies Glossary and link Links (Appendix B)	23
Signature Page	25

2026-2027 B.E.S. STAFF

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Cascadden, Sara	Paraprofessional	scascadden@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Choate, Kendal	2nd Grade Teacher	kchoate@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Clark, Tina	Paraprofessional	tclark@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Cohen, Paige	Paraprofessional	pcohen@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Cox, Devin	1st Grade Teacher	dcox@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Girouard, Tandy	Paraprofessional	tgirouard@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Greenlaw, Christine	Reading & Writing Specialist	cgreenlaw@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Halsey, Allison	School Nurse	ahalsey@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Hubbard, Janelle	6th Grade Teacher	jhubbard@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
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Kerstetter, Nicole	Office Manager	nkerstetter@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
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Kristoff, Matt	3rd Grade Teacher	mkristoff@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
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Rivers, Krystin	School Psychologist	k.rivers@sau35.org
Roberts, Stacie	Health & PE Teacher	sroberts@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Sanborn, Tammy	Guidance Counselor & Student Services Coordinator	tsanborn@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Senter, Kim	2nd Grade Teacher	ksenter@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Shapiro, Stefan	Enrichment/Library Media/Technology	sshapiro@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Sloan, Samantha	Speech & Language Pathologist	ssloan@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Smith, Bryan	Principal	bsmith@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Smith, Danielle	Kindergarten Teacher	dsmith@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Turner, Amy	Art Teacher	aturner@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Vashaw, Abbie	Special Education Teacher/PreK Special Education Coordinator	avashaw@bethlehem.k12.nh.us

Walters, Brigitte	Paraprofessional	bwalters@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Wilkins, Casey	5th & 6th Grade Teacher	cwilkins@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Young-Rineer, Christine	Kindergarten Teacher	cyoung@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Symonds, Bill	Crossing Guard	

Staff assignments may change during the school year. Please contact the main office at 603-869-5842 if you need current staff contact information.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENTEEISM, TARDINESS, AND DISMISSAL

See Policy JH - Attendance, Absenteeism, and Truancy; and Policy JHC - Student Early Release Precautions. (Appendix B)

SCHOOL HOURS

7:50 AM - 2:30 PM

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Please note that the school building opens at 7:20 AM; do not drop your child off before 7:20 without arranging it with the office ahead of time. Children will come in the front door and either be directed to breakfast or out back for morning recess. Students will come in from morning recess at 7:45. Plan your children's arrival and clothing accordingly. Classes officially begin at 7:50 AM and any children who arrive after 7:50 are marked tardy unexcused.

Bus students depart at approximately 2:30 PM, and walkers and riders (by car) will be dismissed immediately following the departure of the buses from the school. (Please refer to drop off and pick up for more details.)

ABSENCE AND TARDINESS

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential for the continuous progress of your child in school. A child is required to attend school regularly per New Hampshire Statute 193.1. All absences will be considered unexcused except those listed below;

1. personal illness
2. death in family
3. religious holiday
4. medical appointment
5. Principal approved situations or events
6. Vacations (determined case by case with Principal approval and based on work student has completed while away as determined by classroom teacher)

Absences/tardiness need to be communicated to the school via School Dismissal Manager, a handwritten note, or a phone call to the OFFICE. Please leave us a message on the answering machine if we cannot get to your call or it is before office hours. An email TO NICOLE KERSTETTER OR ALLISON HALSEY is also acceptable. Emails or messages to any staff member outside of those individuals will not be accepted. This allows for accurate, updated information to be obtained for records and a lowered chance of miscommunication to the school.

Five unexcused absences will warrant a letter to parents reminding them of the total number of unexcused absences. A copy of the letter will also be placed in the child's school file. NH State Law RSA 189:35-a defines "Truant" as a student who misses 10 half days of school or five full days of school which requires notification from BES to both the Superintendent and the Police Department.

PROCEDURES REGARDING ABSENCES

On the morning of the absence, please contact the office by any of the above mentioned methods by 8:15 am. Only parents or legal guardians should make this call. The automated messaging system, or school nurse, will call home if the parents have not contacted the school by 8:30 AM. This is a safety issue. We are checking to see if the child has left home and has not reported to school.

Students who are not in attendance by 11:00 AM are not allowed to participate in school sponsored co-curriculum activities on that day; i.e.: practice sessions, school-sponsored events, concerts, etc., unless previous arrangements for the absence were made through the office.

TARDIES

Parents will receive a notice of excessive student tardiness at the end of each month, if applicable. WRITTEN EXCUSED TARDIES, i.e., doctor's appointments, illness, etc., WILL NOT count against the student. WRITTEN UNEXCUSED TARDIES i.e., oversleeping, finishing homework, etc., WILL count against the student. A student is considered tardy after 7:50 AM for K-6 students and after 8:00 for PreK students. It is important to understand that when a child is tardy, their day gets off poorly, and the whole class is disrupted by their late arrival. Please make sure you get your child/children to school on time. Excessive tardies will result in a meeting with the principal, the guidance counselor, and the classroom teacher.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Requests for early dismissal must be made by a parent or guardian. Under no conditions, during school hours, will your child be released directly from the classroom to leave school prior to dismissal; nor will a child be allowed to wait outside the school building for someone to pick him/her up. **Students are released to parents or guardians from the main office;** or the nurse's office in case of illness or injury. We require that you come to the office where your child will be called down to have their dismissal marked down and then released to your care. Students will not be allowed to walk home alone from school during school hours. We request that appointments for outside activities and doctor's appointments during school hours be avoided whenever possible.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT & INTERVENTION

See Policies JIC - Student Conduct; JICD - Student Discipline and Due Process; and JLDBA - Behavior Management & Intervention.

At Bethlehem Elementary School we believe in fostering a positive and supportive environment where every student can thrive. Our approach to behavior management is proactive rather than punitive. We focus on teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors, ensuring that students understand the expectations and have the tools they need to meet them.

Our Key Principles:

- **Safety:** The safety of our students is our top priority. We expect all students to contribute to a safe and secure school environment by following rules and guidelines designed to protect everyone. This includes physical safety, emotional safety, and a commitment to preventing bullying and harassment.
- **Respect and Responsibility:** We expect students to show respect for themselves, their peers, the school property and all members of the school community. This includes taking responsibility for their actions and understanding how their behavior affects others.

- **Clear Expectations:** We provide clear, consistent expectations for behavior in all areas of the school. Students know what is expected of them and understand the consequences of their actions. Please refer to the [BES Student Behavior Chart](#)
- **Support and Guidance:** We are committed to helping students develop the social and emotional skills they need to succeed. This includes providing support through counseling, social groups, and through SEL curriculums including, Responsive Classroom, Choose Love and the Zones of Regulation.
- **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** When issues arise, we work collaboratively with students and families to find solutions. Our goal is to understand the underlying causes of behavior and address them in a constructive manner.

By focusing on these principles, we create a school environment where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued. Together, we can help our students grow into responsible, compassionate individuals.

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules. Section Ed 306. 04(a) (1 6), Behavior Management and Intervention for Students

BUS TRANSPORTATION

See Policies EEA - Student Transportation Services; EEAE - School Bus Safety Program; and JICC - Student Conduct on School Buses.

Bus transportation is provided by Notchview Transport. Contact them at kim@notchviewtransport.com or by phone at 603-823-3377.

A bus schedule is carried out in cooperation with the Profile Jr./Sr. High School. Sometimes it becomes necessary to change bus routes to accommodate more students. Parents will be notified of these changes.

Bus transportation is a privilege and not a right. Improper behavior may result in a suspension of the privilege (in accordance with established School District policy). Pursuant to NH RSA 189:9A bus conduct procedures will be adopted. The Superintendent of Schools has designated the building principal as the official having authority to make student suspensions from a school bus. This is always done in cooperation with the transportation contractor, parents and central office. All bus complaints should be reported to the principal for further follow-up.

CELL PHONES & PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES

See Policy JICJ - Unauthorized Communication Devices.

Per RSA 189:1-a, student use of personal communication devices is strictly prohibited from when the first bell rings to start instructional time until the dismissal bell rings to end the academic school day (referred to as “the school day”). The school day includes lunch periods, passing time, and recesses.

Students participating in extracurricular activities, co-curricular activities, field trips or other activities outside of the school day shall abide by the rules and consequences established for personal communication devices set by the coach, instructor, sponsor or other designated supervisor for the activity. However, in no event shall personal communication devices (or any other device with photographic or recording capabilities) be used in locker rooms, bathrooms, or any other location where such use could violate another person’s reasonable expectation of privacy.

Upon arrival at school, students need to turn off all cell phones and personal communication devices and store them in their backpacks and/or lockers. Students caught with their cell phones during the school day will report

to the principal for further action. Students and families concerned about the safety of a student device can choose to have their child drop off and pick up their device from the main office. Please be aware that the office closes at 2:45 most days and devices will need to be picked up on the following school day. No exceptions.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

To ensure that questions and concerns are handled efficiently, respectfully, and by the person closest to the issue, the following communication hierarchy should generally be followed:

Parent/Guardian → Teacher or Appropriate Staff Member → Principal → Superintendent → School Board

- ☐ Teacher or Support Staff
- ☐ Principal
- ☐ Superintendent
- ☐ School Board

Families should begin with the teacher or staff member closest to the concern whenever appropriate. Matters that are not resolved at that level should be brought to the principal, followed by the superintendent and, when appropriate, the School Board.

CLOSING OF SCHOOL/DELAYED ENTRY

In the event of inclement weather or other emergencies, school may be canceled for the day. The notice of closing will be sent to parents via the current school alert system and Class Dojo. The primary means of contact will be the daytime phone numbers and emails on your child's emergency form. Notice of closings will also be made on WLTN (1400 AM), WMTK (106.3 FM) WPKQ (103.7 FM) radio and WMUR (Channel 9) TV communicated directly from the SAU Office. The day(s) missed will be made up during the school year as outlined in the school calendar as "snow days" and are subject of discussion at Spring Board Meetings. Any delayed opening of school due to weather will always mean a two-hour delay, so please plan your bus pick up (which will also be delayed two hours), school drop off, and school start time accordingly.

CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE, TRAUMA SENSITIVITY, & SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

WHAT IS CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE?

Conscious Discipline is guidance for the whole organization including teachers, leaders, children and families. It is about wise, adaptive decision-making, not compliance.

Adaptive decision-making is central to our lives. The prefrontal lobes of the cortex of the brain are particularly important in such decision making. Adaptive decision-making demands children feel safe enough and connected enough to access the higher centers of their brains to determine the wisest action in each situation. Each person must, to paraphrase an old country western song, "Know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em and know when to walk away." This is a complex process. It involves recognizing and interpreting a situation, assessing and valuing events and behaviors in terms of what is personally relevant, accessing a repertoire of skills and responses, and making a continuous series of small and large decisions with both short term and long term consequences. Conscious Discipline teaches everyone how to respond wisely to life events rather than

react unconsciously from a set of pre-programmed skills that may or may not be effective or wise.

Conscious Discipline is about transformational change. It asks adults to:

- See misbehavior as a call for help instead of disrespect
- See conflict as a teaching opportunity rather than a disruption to learning
- See children as capable of self-regulation instead of needing to be controlled
- See connection as the most powerful motivating force for achievement
- Understand that the only person we can truly make change is ourselves
- Understand that interdependence is the basis for problem-solving
- Understand that internal state dictates external behavior
- Understand that what you focus on, you get more of

TRAUMA SENSITIVITY & SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

OUR PHILOSOPHY ON TRAUMA SENSITIVITY AND SEL

BES shares a philosophy of trauma sensitivity and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). A trauma-sensitive approach ensures that the school environment is safe, supportive, and responsive to the needs of all students, particularly those who have faced adversity. By recognizing and addressing the signs of trauma, our educators implement strategies that help students feel secure and understood, reducing barriers to academic and personal success.

Social-Emotional Learning is integrated into our daily curriculum through Responsive Classroom and Zones of Regulation because it equips students with essential skills to manage their emotions, build healthy relationships, and make responsible decisions. Through SEL, our students develop resilience, empathy, and self-awareness, which are critical for their personal growth and academic success. Introducing trauma education in elementary schools offers numerous benefits. Firstly, it normalizes emotional responses to adversity, reducing stigma and promoting open communication among children. By teaching age-appropriate concepts of trauma, schools empower children with the vocabulary and tools to express their feelings constructively. This education also fosters empathy and understanding among classmates, creating a supportive environment where children feel safe sharing their experiences and supporting one another.

Specifically, in Guidance class, we utilize the Zones of Regulations, Choose Love and a book called “Trauma” by Robert Edelman for 5th and sixth grade. We introduce this topic in an educational and supportive way at least one time per year. This topic encourages students to share information with one another in a safe and supportive manner.

DROP OFF & PICK UP

DROP OFF: Morning drop off **begins at 7:20AM** for students in grades **K-6** and goes until 7:50AM. Students may NOT be dropped off earlier, please plan accordingly. Students need to come in through the main doors at the front of the building. Students will be directed to the cafeteria if they are having breakfast from school, otherwise *all students* will be directed out back for morning recess. Any K-6 student who arrives after 7:50 is considered tardy.

Preschoolers, arrival time is 8:00, enter the building using the handicap entrance (left hand side of the building and following the driveway down to the side). Any preschool students dropped off after 8:00AM are considered tardy and must then be dropped off at the main office and will be walked down to class by a BES staff member.

PICK UP: Bussers are dismissed approximately at **2:30PM** and sent straight to the busses. The circle at the front

of the school is closed off for all cars until BOTH the buses and walkers have left the school property. ALL CARS waiting to pick up their students are to park (or line up if possible) in the bottom parking lot. **PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN OR BLOCK ANY CARS in the upper parking lot or block traffic on Rt. 302.** There are staff members and visitors who need to get out before or during dismissal as well. Once cars are allowed into the circle at the front of the building, please plan to do the following.

At this time, if your child is in grades K-2, please pick them up in the lane closest to the school. If your child is in grades 3-6, please plan to pick them up in the lane closer to the road. *If you have children in multiple grades, we will always have your older child waiting with your younger child.* Children must wait until a staff member tells them to head to their car for pick up. PLEASE be mindful of the traffic on route 302, adults and children in the lanes, staff leaving the parking lot, and DO NOT pass another car in the line. Please reach out with questions if needed.

FIELD TRIPS

See Policy IJOA - Field Trips and Excursions. (Appendix B)

Field trips are scheduled throughout the school year to enhance the curriculum and to introduce students to area resources. ***Participation on a field trip is a privilege, not a right.*** Any student who does not meet the school standard for conduct may be excluded from a field trip.

Parents/guardians will receive advance notice of field trips. A signed parent/guardian permission slip is required for each field trip. Students who do not have a signed permission slip may not leave school property for the trip and will remain at school with appropriate supervision and instruction.

Field trips are an extension of the school program and school behavior expectations remain in effect. Chronic or repeated behavior that creates a safety concern may result in loss of field-trip privileges. The principal will make exclusion decisions after consultation with the classroom teacher(s), and parents/guardians will be notified. When a student is excluded from a trip because of chronic behavior concerns, supervision for that day will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Behavior or discipline problems during a field trip may result in the student being returned to school when feasible and may result in loss of attendance on a future field trip. Any consequence will be determined based on the severity and circumstances of the behavior and applicable student supports, plans, due-process requirements, and School Board policy.

Students who remain at school because a required permission slip was not received will be provided appropriate supervision and alternative instruction.

HOMEWORK

Homework at the elementary level (K-3) should be assigned with the aim of building self-regulation and independent work skills. The goal should be to invite students to continue thinking, reflecting, and building relationships among experiences in school and in other places in their lives.

To support balanced academic and personal development, the following homework time expectations should not be exceeded. Homework should generally take no more than 10 minutes per grade level. For example:

- 1st Grade: Up to 10 minutes per night
- 2nd Grade: Up to 20 minutes per night
- 3rd Grade: Up to 30 minutes per night

At the intermediate level (4-6), homework is designed to increase student achievement and enhance basic skills by reinforcing classroom instruction. Successfully completed homework promotes responsibility, organizational skills, and positive work habits. At Bethlehem Elementary School we believe that:

- Homework should serve a valid purpose and provide practice of a particular skill already taught.
- Homework assignments should be clear and easily understood by students and parents.
- All assignments should be specifically geared toward a student's needs.
- Homework activities should be reviewed or evaluated with timely feedback as an integral part of classroom learning.
- Homework should not exasperate students or parents. If a student is struggling to complete homework assignments, parents are asked to communicate with the classroom teacher to problem solve.

*Parents and teachers may choose to amend the above recommendations to best serve the needs of individual students.

ILLNESS AND DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

See Policies JLCE/EBBC - Emergency Care and First Aid; and JHC - Student Early Release Precautions. (Appendix B)

If a student becomes ill, the classroom teacher will send the student to the nurse's office with a note or accompany the student if necessary. The nurse will then assess the urgency of illness and decide whether or not to send the student home.* Any telephoning needing to be done will be done only by the authorized adults in order to be sure that parents or guardians, as listed on the Emergency Medical Card, are home and will make provisions for coming after the student.

Any student absent on the day of a school-sponsored activity (e.g., concert, sporting event, etc.) will not be able to participate in that activity without the approval of the principal and/or main office.

(*NOTE: In the absence of the nurse, the Principal or the Principal's designee will respond to student medical needs and will seek emergency assistance when necessary.)

LOST AND FOUND

Parents/guardians are **highly encouraged to place students' names on each article of clothing**. If your student's labeled clothing item is found, we will make sure that her/she gets the items back. Items that are lost will be put in the Lost & Found organizer for temporary storage. On a bi-weekly basis, to keep the Lost and Found under control, items will be donated to either the health office or to the local donation bins. **Class Dojo will no longer be used for posting lost items. You can help us with this by simply putting your child's name in clothing and encouraging your child to check the Lost and Found at lunchtime.** Parents are invited to check Lost & Found before school starts and/or after dismissal has ended, and must park their car in the parking lot (not out in front of the school).

LUNCH PROGRAM

See Policies EFA - Availability and Distribution of Healthy Foods; and EFAA - School Lunch Program - Meal Charges.(Appendix B)

Lunch services at Bethlehem Elementary are provided by Whitsons'. Monthly menus are available on the BES website. If a parent is sending a snack to be eaten during school, please be sure that the snack is nutritious, i.e., fruits, vegetables, crackers, etc. Please eliminate candy, soda, etc. They are not permitted. Certain classrooms may be allergy zones and are subject to certain "free-of" classrooms based on student safety – that information is sent on a case by case basis. Students have both breakfast, snack, and lunch at the school as part of our regular program. Milk and juice are available at school. Parents are encouraged to go over the lunch menu each week so they will know what days students would prefer a cold (bag) lunch from home. Lunches at this

time continue to be ordered a day in advance. **Free & Reduced Meal Applications** are sent home with **all students within the first week of school**. We highly encourage families to use the application to see if they qualify for any assistance.

MEDICATION

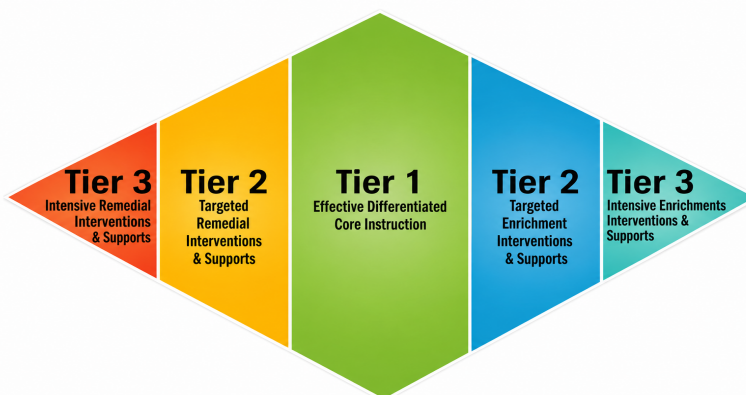
See Policy JLCD - Administering Medication to Students. (Appendix B)

With winter come colds, sore throats, and headaches. If your children are ill, please do not send them to school. If children must use cough drops because of constant coughing, please keep them at home. Constant coughing not only interferes with the child's ability to concentrate; it also spreads germs and disturbs the concentration of others.

SPECIAL NOTE: Do not send medication, either prescription or over-the-counter, to school unless you have a doctor's permission slip authorizing us to give the medication and have communicated with the school nurse. This is in accordance with New Hampshire State Law RSA 541:A. These forms are available, upon request, from the school nurse. **All medication**, no matter how harmless it may appear, must be kept in the Health Office during school hours.

MTSS: Multi-Tiered System of Supports

At Bethlehem Elementary School, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a collaborative, data-informed process used to meet the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students. Tier 1 provides high-quality, differentiated core instruction and classroom supports for every student. Students who need additional assistance may receive Tier 2 targeted interventions in small groups, while students requiring a greater level of support may receive Tier 3 intensive, individualized interventions. Student progress is monitored regularly at every tier so staff can determine whether supports are effective and adjust the frequency, intensity, grouping, or instructional approach as needed. Classroom teachers work collaboratively with Title I, special education, guidance, and the MTSS team to review data and coordinate supports. Families are an important part of the process and are encouraged to communicate with teachers, ask about interventions and progress, and share strategies that are successful at home. The goal of MTSS is to provide early, appropriate support while increasing the level of intervention when needed and helping every student continue to grow and succeed.



BES MTSS Framework: This model illustrates how Bethlehem Elementary School provides a continuum of support for students. **Tier 1** includes effective differentiated core instruction for all students. **Tier 2** provides targeted remedial or enrichment interventions for students needing additional support or challenge. **Tier 3** provides the most intensive, individualized remedial or enrichment interventions and supports. Student progress is monitored throughout the process so supports can be adjusted based on need.

MUSIC PROGRAM

The music director prepares approximately three months for each of the two concerts that take place at Bethlehem Elementary School in December and May. The performing groups include the individual

classrooms, band, and chorus. Any student who does not show up for the concert unless they are sick, will be marked down in his/her music grade for that quarter. Students, who have been absent the day of the concert, may not attend the concert if they were scheduled to perform in it.

NOTICES

Important information and messages are sent through the Class Dojo app and, as needed, through the school's alert system. Long-term important information is also posted on the Bethlehem Elementary School website. However, additional paper notices are also sent home with the students. Students are reminded to bring the notices home. Parents/guardians can be of tremendous assistance by checking Class Dojo daily, frequently checking the BES website, reminding students to bring all notices home, and to check their child's backpacks weekly, if not daily in the younger grades.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Report cards alone are not sufficient for keeping home and school mutually informed about student progress. Formal parent-teacher conferences provide an opportunity to review student progress, assessment information, work habits, strengths, needs, and next steps. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to request a conference whenever questions or concerns arise.

Parents, teachers, or the Principal may request conferences whenever the need arises. Parents are cordially invited to visit school at any time with an appointment. Conferences, which provide an opportunity to discuss all aspects of your child's progress, may be conveniently arranged.

RECESS

See Policy JLLA - Supervision of Students. (Appendix B)

Recess is a normal part of our elementary school's program. Students should come to school assuming they will be going outside. Please review the following procedures:

1. Students are expected to go outdoors for recess unless it is raining, the wind chill is below 5 degrees Fahrenheit, or weather or playground conditions make outdoor recess unsafe. When outdoor recess is not appropriate, students will participate in supervised indoor recess.
2. All students will take part in recess unless a doctor's note is received or parents request it due to a minor past illness, such as a cold. The essence here is the health and safety of the students. If students are too sick to go outside for recess, they should not be in school.

BES RECESS PHILOSOPHY

BES believes in a recess that facilitates physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth of the whole child by providing opportunities that promote respect, inclusion, self-expression and healthy play.

REPORT CARDS

See also the New Hampshire Parental Rights provisions summarized in Appendix A. (Appendix B)

Report cards in grades K-6 are issued three times per year. Progress reports and other informal updates may also be used to keep families informed. Report cards and progress reports should be reviewed by a parent/guardian, and families are encouraged to contact the teacher with any questions about student progress.

First Trimester: 8/31/2026 - 12/4/2026

Second Trimester: 12/7/2026 - 3/19/2027

Third Trimester: 3/22/2027 - last day of school REPORT CARDS: 12/11/2026, 3/26/2027, & Last Day of School

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are expected to care for the books and equipment loaned to them by the school. Students must pay for damaged or lost books or other school property deliberately damaged. Report cards will not be issued at the end of the school year to students who owe money for lost and/or damaged books/equipment.

STUDENT USE OF SCHOOL TELEPHONE

Students can use the telephone with teacher permission from either the classroom or office. Students may NOT use the phone to make after-school plans with friends or changes in their dismissal if not previously arranged. Student use of the phones at school is a privilege. If it comes to our attention that students are using the phones to make plans that were not previously arranged or contact others they are not permitted to, they will be asked to no longer use the phone on their own and all phone calls will be through an adult.

VALUABLES

It is recommended that students leave all valuables at home. The school and staff cannot be responsible for valuables and personal possessions that students bring to school. If special circumstances make it necessary for a student to bring money or other important possessions to school, these items can be safeguarded by leaving the item or items at the office or by making arrangements with the classroom teacher.

VANDALISM

Our school building and equipment (including textbooks and Library books) cost the taxpayers money to purchase and maintain. ***Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay for losses or damages. If students willfully destroy school property, suspension and/or expulsion may result. Bathroom vandalizations will be handled as a very serious matter.*** If a student happens to damage something by accident, he/she should notify a teacher or the administrator.

VISITATIONS TO SCHOOL

Visitors must follow school sign-in and appointment procedures. See the Visitors section below.

Parents may visit school if they set up an appointment with staff and are only allowed in the building to attend meetings that are set up in advance. Parents/guardians are **required** to sign-in and notify the school office when they arrive in the building and pick up a visitor's pass. This will help the school to be informed of everyone in the building in case of emergency calls while in school.

Policies Glossary, Resources, and Links

PARENTAL BILL OF RIGHTS

SCHOOL VISION, MISSION, CORE VALUES, AND PHILOSOPHY

Vision: At Bethlehem Elementary School, students will show individual academic growth as measured by benchmark assessments. Instruction will be data driven and provide opportunities for enrichment and intervention. This will be achieved through research-based teaching strategies, authentic learning tasks and experiences, as well as multiple opportunities for success.

Core Values: Belonging • Connections • Curiosity • Stewardship

Mission: Bethlehem Elementary School is committed to providing a safe, caring educational community where students are encouraged to reach their full potential; actively acquire knowledge and skills for future endeavors; experience the joy of discovering and valuing themselves, others, and the world; and become informed, independent thinkers who contribute as local and global citizens.

Philosophy: Bethlehem Elementary School is dedicated to the individualized educational development of all students and to their physical, moral, emotional, academic, aesthetic, and social growth. BES strives to provide diverse learning opportunities, challenge students to develop their skills and talents, and involve parents and community members as vital partners in student development.

SAU 35 Mission: In concert with its member districts and their students, families, and broader communities, SAU 35 works to prepare all students to be responsible citizens and to acquire the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to make informed decisions that lead to meaningful and productive lives.

BETHLEHEM SCHOOL BOARD

Robert Weir — term 2028

Margaret Hocking — term 2027

Erin Campbell — term 2029

Susan Greenlaw — term 2029

James Noyes — term 2027

SCHOOLWIDE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Bethlehem Elementary School's schoolwide behavior expectations are represented by the three Bs – be respectful, be safe, and be responsible. These expectations apply in classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, the cafeteria, playground, buses, assemblies, field trips, Winter Program, Explorations, and all other school-sponsored activities. Further details can be found on the visual representation page [HERE](#).

Consistent expectations help create a safe, predictable, and equitable learning environment. Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, and individualized behavior plans may include supports or procedures that differ from general expectations. These individualized supports may change how expectations are taught, how behavior is addressed, and which interventions or consequences are appropriate.

Routine concerns are generally addressed through redirection, reteaching, restorative conversations, logical consequences, family communication, and other appropriate supports. Serious, repeated, unsafe, or substantially disruptive behavior may involve guidance, special education staff when applicable, and administration. Formal disciplinary decisions are made by the principal or designee.

See Policies JIC - Student Conduct; JICD - Student Discipline and Due Process; JLDDBA - Behavior Management & Intervention; and JLIA - Supervision of Students. (*Appendix B*)

BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING, AND REPORTING

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited. A student who believes they have been bullied, or who witnesses or has reliable information that another student has been bullied, should report the concern to the principal or guidance counselor. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report concerns about possible bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation to the principal.

The school will investigate reports in accordance with Policy JICK and RSA 193-F. Parents of students directly involved will be notified as required by law, and the school will communicate the general investigative determination while protecting confidential student information. A parent may appeal an investigative determination in accordance with the procedures referenced in Policy JICK and Board Policy ACA.

See Policy JICK - Student Safety and Violence Prevention - Bullying. The required annual policy text is included in Appendix A.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION, RESTRAINT, AND SECLUSION

Physical intervention is used only as a last resort and only in compliance with New Hampshire law and district policy. Restraint may be used only to protect the immediate physical safety of a student or another person when there is a substantial and imminent risk of serious bodily harm, and only by trained personnel. Restraint or seclusion may not be used as punishment or for staff convenience. Families will receive required notification and follow-up when restraint or seclusion is used.

See Policy JKAA - Use of Restraints and Seclusion.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Bethlehem Elementary School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Bethlehem Elementary School to amend a record should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and 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.

The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from 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 school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer 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.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Bethlehem Elementary School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

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

See Policies IJO / KA - School, Family and Community Partnerships. (*Appendix B*)

Clear, respectful, and timely communication with families is essential to building trust and supporting student success. Staff are expected to communicate proactively with parents and guardians and to provide families with meaningful opportunities to ask questions, share information, and participate in decisions affecting their children.

Classroom teachers will provide regular classroom or grade-level updates. ClassDojo and Google Classroom are the primary approved communication platforms used by Bethlehem Elementary School. School email, telephone calls, conferences, newsletters, and other principal-approved methods may also be used when appropriate.

Staff must use school-approved accounts and platforms for school-related communication. Personal email accounts, personal social-media accounts, and personal text messaging should not be used to communicate with students or families unless specifically authorized by the principal. Google Classroom supports teacher announcements and class communications, while ClassDojo provides family messaging and classroom updates.

Staff are expected to contact families promptly when there are significant concerns involving:

Academic progress or a noticeable decline in performance;

Repeated or serious behavioral concerns;

Attendance, tardiness, participation, or engagement;

Social-emotional well-being or student safety; or

A pattern of missing work, incomplete assignments, or difficulty accessing instruction.

Report cards and scheduled parent-teacher conferences should not be the first time a family learns about an ongoing academic, behavioral, attendance, or engagement concern. Early communication allows families and staff to work together before concerns become more serious.

See Policy JRA - Student Records and Access (FERPA), and Policy EHAB - Data Governance and Security.

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND TITLE IX

It is the policy of the Bethlehem Elementary School not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, marital status, color, religious creed, national origin or physical and mental disability in the educational programs, activities and employment practices which it operates in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any inquiries concerning these statutes should be directed to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, SAU # 35, 760 Main Street, PO Box 780 Franconia 03580, 444-3925.

See Policies AC - Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity Employment, and District Anti-Discrimination Plan; and AC-R - Annual Notice of Anti-Discrimination Contact Information.

Bethlehem Elementary School does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities. Sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, is prohibited. Bryan Smith, Principal, serves as the school's Title IX Coordinator. Reports may be made in person, by mail, by telephone at 603-869-5842, or by another method that results in the Coordinator receiving the report. A complaint involving the Coordinator should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools, SAU 35.

After receiving a report of possible sex discrimination or sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will explain the applicable complaint process and available supportive measures. Supportive measures may include counseling, schedule or seating changes, increased supervision, safety planning, academic support, or restrictions on contact. The district will use a prompt and impartial process, and both parties have appeal rights as provided by federal regulation and School Board policy. Retaliation, intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against a person for reporting, filing a complaint, participating, or declining to participate in a Title IX matter is prohibited.

See Policies AC and AC-R. Questions about Title IX reporting, supportive measures, complaint procedures, or appeals may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator or the SAU 35 Superintendent's Office. (*Appendix B*)

PARENT'S RIGHT TO KNOW

Requirements - A school that receives Title I funds must provide to each individual parent –

Information on the level of achievement the child has made on all state assessments; and

Timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

Qualifications: At the beginning of each school year, a LEA that receives Title I funds must notify parents of each student attending any Title I school that the parents may request, and that agency will provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner) information regarding the professional qualification of the student's classroom teachers, including at minimum the following:

Whether the teacher has met State qualifications for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;

Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other professional status that the State has waived;

The degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and

Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

PROGRAM OF STUDIES AND CURRICULUM

We consider student academic achievement to result from a combination of effort, participation, attitude and aptitude. In assessing minimum and maximum competencies and expectations, all of these factors are considered important. Our marking system (assessment tool) used to represent relative achievement of expected outcomes is currently a work in progress as we move toward standards based reporting.

PROMOTION/RETENTION OF STUDENTS

If a teacher is considering recommending that a student not be promoted to the next grade, the teacher will inform the principal by May 1. A team that includes the teacher(s), principal, and other staff directly involved with the student will review the student's progress and readiness and will communicate with the parent/guardian.

If the school team recommends retention and the parent/guardian disagrees after the review process, the student will be assigned to the next grade level and a letter documenting the school's recommendation will be placed in the student record.

GRADE PLACEMENT

The following is a summary of what are the most reasonable means of assigning the students to classrooms, some of which may contain students of two grades. This is an effort to lower the pupil/teacher ratio, thereby more adequately serving all students' needs.

The current teacher will recommend classroom placement of students on the basis of a combined evaluation of individual classroom performance, current reading level, math level, achievement tests (where appropriate) and peer relations

The administrator will consult with the teachers and make the final administrative placement.

Classroom assignments will be indicated on the end of the year letter with the report card.

If the school team (teachers, counselors, principal) recommends that a student be retained but the parents refuse permission for the retention, the student will be placed in the grade desired by the parent. A letter stating the school's position and recommendation will be placed in the student's file.

If a parent would prefer their child to not have a particular teacher for the following year due to clearly defined circumstances, the parent must submit a letter to the Principal outlining the reasons by May 1. The Principal will consider the parent's request along with all other pertinent information.

VISITORS AND WALKING FIELD TRIPS

Adult visitors are always welcome at BES, but must sign-in. Parents must have an appointment if they wish to speak directly with a staff member. Teachers should clear parent volunteers/guest speakers, etc. through the Principal and make the office aware of expected guests. Student visitors must have prior approval by the Principal to be allowed to visit the school during school hours. No visitor whose actions may disrupt the educational environment for one or more students will be allowed into the building.

Walking Field Trip Permission

From time to time throughout the school year, we take our students to local places around the town of Bethlehem. These include activities such as historical walk, roadside cleanup, performance at the Colonial Theatre, etc. Parents/guardians will always be notified in advance of a Walk-About and initial paperwork will be signed at the start of the school year by a Parent/Guardian.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND STUDENT WELLNESS POLICIES

JLCA - Physical Examinations of Students(*Appendix B*)

JLCB - Immunization of Students(*Appendix B*)

JLCD - Administering Medication to Students(*Appendix B*)

JLCJ - Concussions and Head Injuries(*Appendix B*)

JLCJA - Emergency Plan for Sports-Related Injuries and Athletics Participation(*Appendix B*)

EBB - School Safety(*Appendix B*)

EBBC - Emergency Care and First Aid(*Appendix B*)

JLCE - Emergency Care and First Aid(*Appendix B*)

JICG - Prohibitions Regarding Tobacco Products, E-Cigarettes, and E-Liquids(*Appendix B*)

JICH - Drug and Alcohol Use by Students(*Appendix B*)

JICFA - Hazing (*Appendix B*)

JICA - Student Dress Code (*Appendix B*)

JI - Student Rights and Responsibilities (*Appendix B*)

School employees are mandated reporters under New Hampshire law. See Policy JLF - Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect. This handbook does not reproduce staff reporting procedures, but families should understand that school personnel must act when they have reason to suspect abuse or neglect.

ACCIDENTS, INJURIES, AND EMERGENCY CARE

If a student is injured or becomes seriously ill at school, staff will request assistance from the school nurse or the designated nurse substitute. The student will be assessed and the family will be contacted as appropriate.

When an injury or medical condition appears serious or presents an immediate threat to health or safety, staff will call 911 and notify the main office. The absence of the school nurse will not delay emergency medical assistance when it may be necessary.

APPENDIX A — REQUIRED POLICY TEXTS

New Hampshire Parental Bill of Rights

New Hampshire Parental Bill of Rights

All parental rights are reserved to the parents of a minor child in this state without obstruction or interference from any school. These rights include, but are not limited to, the right:

To direct the upbringing and the moral or religious training.

To direct the education, including the right to choose to enroll the minor child in an assigned resident public school, a public charter school, a non-public school, including a religious school, a home education program, or any other state-based education program, as authorized by law, as an alternative to public education, as set forth in RSA 193:1 and RSA 194-F:1, et seq.

To request that a minor child be enrolled in a public school other than the public school assigned to them by their residence to avoid a manifest educational hardship, as set forth in RSA 193:3.

To enroll his or her minor child in gifted or special education programs if the child qualifies for such programs.

To inquire of the school or school personnel and promptly receive accurate, truthful, and complete disclosure regarding any and all matters related to their minor child, unless an immediate answer cannot be provided when the initial request is made, in which case, the answer shall be provided no later than 10 business days after the request.

To be informed of the school's policy regarding discipline policies and procedures, as set forth in RSA 193:13.

To obtain access for a minor child to public curricular courses and co-curricular programs offered by the local school district where the student resides while choosing to enroll their child in a non- public, public chartered, home education, or any other state-based education program, as set forth in RSA 193:1-c and RSA 194-F:2, II(d).

To inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum within a reasonable period following a request, as set forth in 20 U.S.C. section 1232h(c)(1)(C).

To opt out of health or sex education and any other objectionable material, as set forth in RSA 186:11, IX-b and IX-c.

To be advised of and have the right to opt the minor child out of any nonacademic survey or questionnaire.

To opt out of any district-level data collection relating to his or her minor child not required by federal or state law.

To exempt their public-school minor child from participating in required statewide assessments in English, language arts, mathematics, and/or science, as set forth in RSA 193-C:6.

To receive information regarding the level of achievement and academic growth of their minor child in the state academic assessments in English, language arts, mathematics, and/or science, as set forth in the Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. section 1112 (e)(1)(B)(i).

To receive a school report card and be informed of his or her minor child's attendance requirements and compliance with such requirements.

To access and review all education records relating to their minor child within 10 business days after the day the school receives a request for access, as set forth in RSA 189:66, IV and 34 C.F.R. 99.5.

To consent in writing before the state or any of its political subdivisions, including, without limitation, any school pursuant also to the provisions of RSA 189:68, III-V, makes a video or voice recording, unless such recording is made during or as part of a court proceeding or part of a forensic interview in a criminal or other investigation by the bureau of child protective services or it is to be used solely for the purpose of a safety demonstration, including the maintenance of order and discipline in the common areas of a school or on student transportation vehicles.

To be notified whenever seclusion or restraint has been used on their minor child as set forth in RSA 126-U:7.

To access and review all medical records of their minor child maintained by a school or school personnel, unless otherwise prohibited by law.

To exempt their minor child from immunizations if, in the opinion of a physician, the immunization is detrimental to the child's health or because of religious beliefs, as set forth in RSA 141-C:20-a and RSA 141-C:20-c.

Federal law provides for additional parent and family involvement for schools that are receiving Title I, Part A; Title I, Part C (migrant); Title III, Part A (EL) funds, including:

The right to receive information, including student reports, in an understandable and uniform format and to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand, as set forth in 20 U.S.C. sections 1112(e)(4); 1114(b)(4); 1116(e)(5); and 1116(f).

Upon request of the parent, the right to receive information regarding state qualifications of the student's classroom teachers and paraprofessionals providing services to their minor child, as set forth in 20 U.S.C. section 1112(e)(1)(A)(i-ii).

The right to receive an annual local educational agency report card that includes information on such agency as a whole and each school served by the agency, as set forth in 20 U.S.C. section 1111(h)(2)(A- B)(i-iii).

Dissemination

Pursuant to RSA 189-B:5, II, the Board directs that the Superintendent cause a complete copy of Section A (the Parental Bill of Rights) of this policy to be published:

Each year in the School District's annual report each year;

Permanently on the District's website; and

Each year in every student and employee handbook.

Bullying Prevention – Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention

Purpose and Intent. SAU 35 is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Through education, prevention, and consistent enforcement, we aim to eliminate bullying and promote positive peer relationships for all of our students.

Prohibition of Bullying or Cyberbullying of a Student - RSA 193-F:4, II(a). This policy is intended to comply with and implement RSA 193-F. Bullying, in any form—whether physical, verbal, social, or cyber—is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This policy defines bullying and related conduct, and establishes clear procedures for reporting, investigating, and responding to incidents. Protection of all School Aged Children - RSA 193-F:4, II(c). This policy shall apply to all students and school-aged persons on school district grounds and participating in school district functions, whether or not such school-aged person is a student within the District and regardless of status.

Prohibition of Retaliation and False Accusations - RSA 193-F:4, II(b). This policy prohibits retaliation or false threats against a victim, witness, or anyone else who, in good faith, provides information about an act of bullying or cyberbullying.

Definitions - (RSA 193-F:3).

"Bullying" means a single significant incident or a pattern of incidents involving a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any student which:

Bullying shall also mean and include actions motivated by an imbalance of power based on a student's actual or perceived personal characteristics, behaviors, or beliefs, or motivated by the student's association with another person and based on the other person's characteristics, behaviors, or beliefs.

As used throughout this or other Board policies, and unless the context indicates otherwise, the term "bullying" as used in this policy will include cyberbullying.

Bullying prohibited and covered by this policy includes any action or communication described above that

Physically harms a student or damages the student's property;
Causes emotional distress to a student;
Interferes with a student's educational opportunities;
Creates a hostile educational environment; or
Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

occurs on, is delivered to, school property or a school-sponsored activity or event on or off school property; or
Occurs off of school property or outside a school-sponsored activity or event, if the conduct interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operations of the school or any school-sponsored activity or event.

"Cyberbullying" means conduct defined above as bullying committed or undertaken through the use of electronic devices. Unless the context indicates otherwise, the term "bullying" as used in this policy will include acts of cyberbullying.

"Electronic devices" includes, but is not limited to, telephones, cellular or smartphones, computers, pagers, or any other device which is used for or can transmit: voice calls or messages; electronic mail; text/instant or other verbal messaging; images or videos; and websites.

"Parent" means a person who has legal custody of a minor child as a natural or adoptive parent, as a legal guardian, or who is functioning in a parental role if the actual parent or guardian is absent from the child's daily life. Additionally, "parent" may include students who have been emancipated, either by age or legal process. The term "parent", shall not, however, include a parent as to whom the parent-child relationship has been terminated by judicial decree or voluntary relinquishment.

"Perpetrator" means a student who engages in bullying or cyberbullying.

"Principal" shall mean and include the building Principal or other senior building administrator of a school, as well as any qualified person appointed by the Principal to carry out all or some Principal functions as described in this policy.

"Retaliation" means and includes such conduct as intimidation, threats, coercion, harassment, or discrimination in response to (or an effort to prevent) a victim, witness or other person, who in good faith provides information about an act or conduct that the person providing the information believes is bullying or cyberbullying.

"School property" means all real property and all physical plant and equipment used for school purposes, including public or private school buses or vans.

"Staff" means and includes all district, school or SAU employees, designated volunteers (as defined in Board policy GBCD), or other volunteers who are regularly on school property, or who have significant contact with students, and any employees of a company under contract to the District or SAU and who have significant contact with students.

"Student" shall have the same meaning as "pupil" as used in RSA 193-F and this or any other Board policy.

"Superintendent" means the Superintendent (Senior Education Official) or other person designated by the Superintendent to carry out all or some Superintendent functions as described in this policy.

"Victim" means a student against whom bullying or cyberbullying has been perpetrated.

Retaliation - RSA 193-F:4, II(b). Retaliation or false accusations related to bullying or cyberbullying shall be deemed a violation of this policy. Upon receiving any report of bullying or cyberbullying, the Principal will immediately assess the need to develop a plan or take steps to protect the alleged victim or any witnesses against retaliation. The same assessment shall be made at any point upon a report of retaliation or false accusations made during or after a bullying/cyberbullying investigation.

Reports of retaliation or false accusations relating to a bullying/cyberbullying report may be made in the same manner as for reports of bullying/cyberbullying as provided in this policy.

Investigations, and responses (i.e., interventions, supportive measures, disciplinary consequences) to reports of retaliation or false accusations may be made as provided in the same manner as provided in Sections E - H for reports or incidents of bullying/cyberbullying, or in accordance with procedures and provisions set forth in the Code of Conduct / Student handbook.

Procedures for Reporting Bullying, Cyberbullying, Retaliation or False Accusations - RSA 193-F:4, II(f). At each school, the Principal is responsible for receiving reports or complaints of bullying or cyberbullying.

Student Reporting. Any student who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying/cyberbullying, retaliation, or false accusations should report the alleged acts immediately to the Principal, or to a school district employee or volunteer that the student feels more comfortable making the report.

Staff Reporting. Any school employee or volunteer who receives a report of, witnesses, or has knowledge or belief that bullying/cyberbullying or retaliation may have occurred, shall inform the Principal as soon as possible, but no later than the end of that school day.

Parent Reporting. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report any concerns about possible bullying/cyberbullying or retaliation of students to the Principal.

Report Forms. The administration may develop student reporting forms to assist students and staff in filing such reports. An investigation shall still proceed even if a student is reluctant to fill out the designated form and chooses not to do so.

Anonymous Reports. The Principal may develop a system or method for receiving anonymous reports of bullying within the building. Although students, parents, volunteers and visitors may report anonymously, an investigation based upon such reports may by necessity be incomplete. More significantly, formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on an anonymous report, and, likewise, other remedial or supportive measures may require some form of evidentiary verification.

Actions Upon Receipt of Report of Bullying or Cyberbullying.

Receipt of Report. Upon receipt of a report of bullying, the Principal shall commence an investigation consistent with the provisions of Section F of this policy, shall assess the need for a plan to protect students against retaliation,

whether the conduct may be construed as illegal discrimination or harassment related to a protected class as set forth in Board policy AC (if so, the Principal shall confer with the District staff member(s) charged with handling such discrimination or harassment to determine how to proceed (e.g., parallel or combined investigations); and whether such conduct constitutes a safe school violation requiring a report pursuant to RSA 193-D:4 and Ed 317.05.

Parental Notice of Bullying Report — RSA 193-F:4, II(h). Within 48 hours of receiving a report of bullying, the Principal will notify the parents of any student reported as a victim of bullying, as well as the parents of any student who has been reported as a perpetrator of bullying. Such notification may be made by telephone, writing or personal conference. The date, time, method, and location (if applicable) of such notification and communication shall be included in the investigative report. Notifications shall be consistent with the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) relative to the student privacy rights of each student indicated in the report.

The Principal may request of the Superintendent designee a waiver of the parental notification requirement, which may be granted only if the Superintendent deems such a waiver to be in the best interest of either the alleged victim or alleged perpetrator. Details of any request for a waiver and any grant of such request will be included in the investigative report.

Investigative Procedures - RSA 193-F:4, II(j).

Upon receipt of a report of bullying, the Principal shall, within 5 school days, initiate an investigation into the alleged act. If the Principal is directly and personally involved with a complaint or is closely related to a party to the complaint, then the Superintendent shall direct another district employee to conduct the investigation.

The investigation should include documented interviews with the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator and any witnesses. All interviews shall be conducted privately, and shall be confidential to the extent permitted by law. Each individual will be interviewed separately and at no time will the alleged victim and perpetrator be interviewed together during the investigation.

The investigation should include review of any available surveillance recordings subject to the provisions of Board policies ECF and EEAA.

If the alleged bullying was in whole or in part cyberbullying, the Principal may ask students and/or parents to provide the District with printed copies of e-mails, text messages, website pages, or other similar electronic communications, consistent with Board policy JIH and RSA 189:6. The Principal may not, however, require or request a student to disclose or to provide access to a personal social media account through the student's user credentials.

Factors the Principal or other investigator may consider all relevant facts and circumstances during the course of the investigation, including but not limited to:

- Description of incident, including the nature of the behavior;
- How often the conduct occurred;
- Whether there were past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior;
- The characteristics of parties involved, (name, grade, age, etc.);
- The identity and number of individuals who participated in bullying behavior;
- Where the alleged incident(s) occurred;
- Whether the conduct adversely affected any student's education or educational environment;
- Whether the alleged victim felt or perceived an imbalance or power as a result of the reported incident;
- Whether the conduct violated any District or school policies or rules; and
- The date, time and method by which parents or legal guardians of all parties involved were first contacted.

The Principal shall complete the investigation within 10 school days of receiving the initial report. If the Principal needs more than 10 school days to complete the investigation, the Superintendent may grant an extension of up to 7 school days. In the event such extension is granted, the Principal shall notify in writing all parties involved of the granting of the extension.

Without limiting what might constitute sufficient cause for an extension under this paragraph, the Superintendent may consider the interests of the victim or alleged perpetrator related to any investigation into some or all of the same alleged conduct which other investigation includes procedures and timelines mandated by a regulation or statute other than RSA 193-F (e.g., Title IX, criminal investigations, etc.). Before waiving the time requirement on account of such other investigation, the Superintendent should confer with counsel and or the District's Human Rights/Non-Discrimination Officer.

Completion of Investigation and Report.

Investigative Determination and Report. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes bullying/cyberbullying, retaliation or other violation of this policy – requires review and consideration of available evidence of all facts and surrounding circumstances. The investigative determination along with a summary of the investigation, shall be included in a comprehensive report. If the determination is that the bullying allegation is substantiated, the report shall include provisions describing any disciplinary consequences, interventions, supportive measures or other assistance for the victim or perpetrator, and, when indicated, any steps appropriate to protect all students from retaliation of any kind. The report may also include policy, training or other recommendations for preventing future bullying conduct within the school.

Communication with Students and Parents Upon Completion of Investigation - RSA 193-F:4, II(m).

The Principal will meet promptly with each student directly involved in the incident(s) and communicate the general investigative determination as to whether the allegations of bullying/cyberbullying were substantiated, and any initial consequences or interventions appropriate to the determination.

Within 10 school days, the Principal will notify the parents of the alleged victim and of the alleged perpetrator regarding the school's remedies and assistance, within the boundaries of applicable state and federal law. The initial communication may be in writing, in

person or by telephone, but if verbally, the Principal will also send a letter confirming earlier determination to the parents within 2 school days confirming the earlier notification.

If the parents request, the Principal shall schedule a meeting with them to further explain the investigative determination.

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and other laws concerning student privacy, the District will not disclose educational records of students, including the discipline and remedial action assigned to those students and the parents of other students involved in a bullying incident.

Appeals. A parent aggrieved by the investigative determination of the Principal may appeal the determination in accordance with the standards and procedures set forth for Level II and Level III appeals in Board policy ACA.

Additional Reporting Requirements.

Reporting Substantiated Incidents - RSA 193-F:4, II(l). The Principal shall forward all substantiated reports of bullying to the Superintendent upon completion of the Principal's investigation.

Department of Education Reports - RSA 193-F:4, II(g). The Principal shall be responsible for completing such reports/forms as required by the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHED) for all substantiated incidents of bullying. Irrespective of the time/date a form/report is due to be filed with NHED, the report/form or the information required for the report/form shall be completed/compiled within 10 school days following an investigative finding of a substantiated bullying/cyberbullying report. The Principal or designee shall retain a copy and shall forward one copy to the Superintendent. Hard copies are not necessary if the digital form/data is retained and accessible to both the building administration and SAU.

Reporting to NH Department of Education - RSA 193-F:6, I. The Superintendent shall annually report the District's substantiated incidents of bullying to the New Hampshire Department of Education. Pursuant to FERPA, such reports shall not contain any personally identifiable information pertaining to any student.

Substantiated Instances of Bullying or Retaliation: Interventions, Remedial Measures and Disciplinary Consequences — RSA 193-F:4, II(k).

While students who have been found to have committed an act of bullying/cyberbullying can face disciplinary consequences, the Board encourages the administration and school district staff to explore alternative or additional measures and interventions to address the substantiated instances of bullying/cyberbullying, and prevent their reoccurrence.

Interventions and Other Remedial Measures. Examples of interventions and remedial measures include, but are not limited to: Restitution, Parent conferences, Student counseling, Behavior assessment, Corrective instruction or other relevant learning experience, Peer support group, and Mediation (but only after the investigation has been completed).

Interventions and other remedial measures shall be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the problem, protect and provide support for the victim, and take corrective action for documented systematic problems related to bullying.

Disciplinary Consequences - RSA 193-F:4, II(d). Disciplinary consequences for students shall be consistent with the Student Code of Conduct or student handbook for the conduct that constituted bullying/cyberbullying. Disciplinary consequences should be varied according to specific circumstances such as: the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, the student's prior disciplinary history, performance. Students will be afforded any due process applicable to the level of consequences as provided in Board policy JICD, RSA 193:13 and Ed 317.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a staff member who commits one or more acts of bullying/cyberbullying or retaliation may range from up to and including dismissal from employment for staff members, with additional reports, if appropriate, in accordance with the Code of Conduct for New Hampshire Educators.

Dissemination of Policy and Bullying Prevention Education - RSA 193-F:4, II(e) and 193-F:5.

Staff and Volunteers. All staff will be provided with a copy of this policy annually. The Superintendent may determine the method of providing the policy (employee handbook, hard copy, website, workshops, etc.). The Superintendent will ensure that all school employees and volunteers receive annual training on bullying and related Board policies, consistent with RSA 193-F:5.

Students. All students will be provided with a copy of this policy annually. The Superintendent may determine the method of providing the policy (student handbook, mailing, hard copy, website, etc.).

Each year, all students will participate in programming that includes anti-bullying/cyberbullying materials presented in age-appropriate language. The materials and information should, among other things, describe expectations for student behavior, emphasize an understanding of what bullying/cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation is and looks like, the District's prohibition of such conduct and the reasons why the conduct is destructive, unacceptable, and how and when the conduct can lead to disciplinary consequences.

The Superintendent, in consultation with staff, will, to the extent reasonably possible, integrate student anti-bullying training and education into the district's curriculum, behavior programs and other violence prevention efforts.

Parents. The Superintendent will ensure that all parents are annually provided with a copy of this policy or informed in writing where a copy of the policy may be located on the District and/or school's website. Student/family handbooks will include information of the District/school's anti-bullying program, as well as the means for students to report bullying acts either experienced or witnessed, and how parents, themselves, may inform/report to the school when they believe their child is being bullied or is bullying other students and encourage their children to report bullying when it occurs.

Additional Notice and School District Programs. The Board may, from time to time, host or schedule public forums in which it will address this anti-bullying policy, discuss bullying in the schools, and consult with a variety of individuals, including teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, school psychologists and other interested persons.

Summary of School Officials' Duties to Implement Policy - RSA 193-F:4, II(n).

The Superintendent, as the person charged with supervision of all employees of the District, is responsible for the implementation of this policy and the provisions of RSA 193-F. The School Principal(s) are expected and required by statute to implement this policy within their respective school buildings and ensure the procedures are followed.

Consistent with this Policy, the Principal(s) shall receive reports of alleged bullying or retaliation, investigate the alleged conduct, and communicate with the parties involved (including their parents) consistent with privacy laws, and communicate/report to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall oversee the Principal(s) in their duties relative to this policy and shall ensure each school is compliant with this policy. Additionally, the Superintendent will receive reports of substantiated incidents, review waivers and time extension requests, and communicate with the Principal(s), the School Board, and the NH Department of Education, all as provided in this policy.

Immunity and Liability – RSA 193-F:7 & 9.

Under 193-F:7, employees, volunteers, students, parents and any other person covered by this policy will be immune from civil liability for good faith conduct arising from or pertaining to the reporting, investigation, findings, recommended response, or implementation of a recommended response under this policy or RSA 193-F. (Note – civil liability could arise, (including for attorney's fees) in the event of gross negligence or willful misconduct for violations of this policy.)

Hazing

It is the policy of the District that no student or employee of the District shall participate in or be a member of any secret fraternity or secret organization that is in any degree related to the school or to a school activity. No student organization or any person associated with any organization sanctioned by the Board of Education shall engage or participate in hazing. This District does not permit or condone student hazing.

For the purposes of this policy, hazing is defined as any act directed toward a student, or any coercion or intimidation of a student to act or to participate in or submit to any act, when: (1) Such act is likely or would be perceived by a reasonable person as likely to cause physical or psychological injury to any person; and (2) Such act is a condition of initiation into, admission into, continued membership in or association with any organization. Hazing includes but is not limited to an activity which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any organization sanctioned or authorized by the Board of Education.

"Endanger the physical health" shall include, but is not limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping; beating; branding; forced calisthenics; exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, alcoholic beverage, drug or controlled dangerous substance; or any forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual.

"Endanger the mental health" shall include any activity, except those activities authorized by law, which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual.

Any hazing activity upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with an organization sanctioned or authorized by the Board of Education is conditioned, directly or indirectly, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if the student willingly participates in such activity.

This policy is not intended to deprive School District authorities from taking necessary and appropriate disciplinary action toward any student or employee. Students or employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include expulsion for students and employment termination for employees.

The Superintendent shall take reasonable measures within the scope of the District's authority to prevent student hazing. All hazing reported to the District or which any District staff member has knowledge of shall be promptly reported to law enforcement, as required by RSA 631:7, Student Hazing.

A copy of this policy will be furnished to each student and teacher in the School District, including being printed in the student handbook.

APPENDIX B — SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES AND LINKS

The policy codes below match the references and links used in the 2026-2027 BES Faculty Handbook. The policy code is the active hyperlink.

Policy Code

[AB](#)

[AC](#)

[AC-R](#)

[EFA](#)

Title

Parental Rights

Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity
Employment, and District Anti-Discrimination
Plan

Annual Notice of Anti-Discrimination Contact
Information

Availability and Distribution of Healthy Foods

[EFAA](#)

[JEBA](#)

[JFAA](#)

[JICC](#)

[JICG](#)

[JICJ](#)

[JH](#)

[JHC](#)

[JJ](#)

[JIC](#)

[JICA](#)

[JICD](#)

[JICFA](#)

[JICH](#)

[JICK](#)

[JJIC](#)

[JLCA](#)

[JLCB](#)

[JLCD](#)

[JLCJ](#)

[JLCJA](#)

[EBB](#)

[EBBC](#)

[EEA](#)

[EEAE](#)

[EHAB](#)

[GBEAA](#)

[IJO / KA](#)

[IJOA](#)

[JKAA](#)

[JLCE](#)

[JLDBA](#)

[JLIA](#)

[JLF](#)

[JRA](#)

[KD](#)

[KDC](#)

School Lunch Program - Meal Charges

Early Entrance into Kindergarten

Admission of Resident Students

Student Conduct on School Buses

Prohibitions Regarding Tobacco Products,
E-Cigarettes, and E-Liquids

Unauthorized Communication Devices

Attendance, Absenteeism, and Truancy

Student Early Release Precautions

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Student Conduct

Student Dress Code

Student Discipline and Due Process

Hazing

Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

Student Safety and Violence Prevention - Bullying

Eligibility for Interscholastic Athletics

Physical Examinations of Students

Immunization of Students

Administering Medication to Students

Concussions and Head Injuries

Emergency Plan for Sports-Related Injuries and
Athletics Participation

School Safety

Emergency Care and First Aid

Student Transportation Services

School Bus Safety Program

Data Governance and Security

Confidential Student Information

School, Family and Community Partnerships

Field Trips and Excursions

Use of Restraints and Seclusion

Emergency Care and First Aid

Behavior Management & Intervention

Supervision of Students

Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

Student Records and Access (FERPA)

School District Social Media Websites

Website Publishing

Parent & Student Signature Page

for the 2026-2027 Student/Parent Handbook

Please remove this page, sign, and return it to school by the date communicated by the school office.

By signing this form, you, the parent/guardian, and student, acknowledge that you have reviewed the contents of the BES Student/Parent Handbook and understand the expectations stated in it. You, the parent and/or guardian, agree that the school district may send all school related notices via email / electronic platforms, including meeting notices, student concerns, etc. You, the parent and/or guardian, also understand that the *Bethlehem Elementary School Policies & Procedures* document is available on the BES website and can review it at any time.

Please contact Bryan Smith, bsmith@bethlehem.k12.nh.us , with any questions regarding the Parent & Student Handbook. Thank you!

Student's Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____