

**Highgate Elementary School**  
**Family Handbook**  
**2024-2025**



**Administration**

**Yeshua Pastina, Principal**

**Important Phone Numbers**

School: 802-868-4170

Fax #: 802-868-4572

[Highgate Elementary School's Website!](#)

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## WELCOME BACK LETTER

Dear Highgate Elementary School Parents and Guardians:

We warmly welcome you and your child to Highgate Elementary School. Preschool through sixth grade are very special times of growth and learning. Here at Highgate Elementary School, we are committed to an educational program that addresses the intellectual, social, emotional and physical needs of all children. The staff has designed a rich and stimulating environment in which children are nurtured and challenged. At Highgate Elementary School, decisions are made according to what is best for students.

We are most fortunate to have a staff of dedicated and talented teachers who collaborate as a team in planning for your child. The excellence of our elementary school program is, in large measure, due to the unique talents and approaches of our committed professional staff. Their work and your partnership make our school a dynamic learning environment for all students.

We are truly delighted that you and your child are part of the Highgate Elementary School family. With you as active partners in your child's education, we look forward to making your child's school experience successful in every way.

We suggest that you take time to read (or at least skim!) our revised handbook. It contains important information and overviews of all components of our educational program. Please do not hesitate to call if you have questions, concerns or just want to talk.

Respectfully,



Yeshua Pastina

Principal

1-802-868-4170 ext. 4202

[yeshua.pastina@mvdschools.org](mailto:yeshua.pastina@mvdschools.org)

**HIGHGATE SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**—Tel: 802-868-4170 — Fax: 802-868-4572**

**MVSD School Board Reps from Highgate**

Jen Chevalier (School Board Chair)

Renick Darnell-Martin (School Board Vice Chair)

Elaine Nester

**Administration 868-4170**

Yeshua Pastina, Principal ext. 4202, [yeshua.pastina@mvsdschools.org](mailto:yeshua.pastina@mvsdschools.org)

**Main Office Staff 868-4170**

SEL Coordinator, Eric Becker x4300

Amber Lafar, Administrative Assistant/Fiscal Clerk x4200

Amanda Young, Front Desk x4200

**District Offices**

1-802-868-4967

Julie Regimbal, Superintendent x3317

Lora McAllister, Business Manager x3328

Kosha Patel, Director of Curriculum and Instruction x3313

Tania Hayes, Director of Student Support Services x3316

Jeff Benay, Director of Indian Education 868-4033

Derrick Garceau, Director of Technology x3314

Wendy Cunningham, Director of Early Childhood Education, x3334

Beth-Ann Miller, Afterschool Program Manager, x3321

## Faculty & Staff

### **Pre-School**

Apryl L'Esperance  
Allison Narkewicz

### **Kindergarten**

Paula Whitehead  
Matthew Carroll

### **First Grade**

Heather Bellrose  
Domye LaBrusciano

### **Second Grade**

Marilynn McSweeney  
Lora Vickers

### **Third Grade**

Tori Ward  
Caylin Bessette

### **Fourth Grade**

Bethany Bartlett  
Emma Holcomb

### **Fifth Grade**

Aly Tully  
Mallory Brown

### **Sixth Grade**

Autumn Blais  
Brandi Maskell

### **Special Education**

Alanna Freeman  
Brittany Tatro  
Eric Fortune  
Codi Gaudette  
Jen Luneau

### **Math Coach**

Kristen Hughes

### **Literacy Coach**

Edna Iannaco

### **Literacy/Math Interventionists**

Christina Therrien, K-3 Lit.  
Corynn LaBounty, K-3 Math  
Kyra Barrett, 4-6 Literacy  
Eren Rabideau, 4-6 Math

### **Director of Technology**

Caleb Kittell

### **Social Emotional Learning Coordinator**

Eric Becker

### **School Based Clinician**

Kristin Robideau

### **Behavior Consultants**

Stacey Clark

### **PBIS and Restorative Practices Coordinator**

Craig Aylward

### **Nurse**

Nichole Shumway

### **School Psychologist**

Mary Mihuta

### **Speech and Language Pathologist**

TBD, SLP (K-6)  
Kerry Trombley, PreK  
Sharon Rheaume, SLP  
Paraprofessional

### **Art**

Jacey Rivers

### **Library**

Kelly Enterline

### **Music**

Julian Cunningham

### **Physical Education**

Krisy Tatro

### **Guidance**

Arlee Hiskey

## Faculty & Staff Continued

<p><b><u>Para-Educator Staff</u></b></p> <p>Dawn Britch</p> <p>Steven Daviau</p> <p>Dawn Decker</p> <p>Lainey Domina</p> <p>Sasha Domina</p> <p>Heather Dumeny</p> <p>Dawn Furlow</p> <p>Venessa Kane</p> <p>Meagan Kobelt</p> <p>Joyce Lafar</p> <p>Christine Messier</p> <p>Carla Noel</p> <p>Wendy Oddy</p> <p>Cecile Paradee</p> <p>Tracy Parsons</p> <p>Stephanie Racine</p> <p>Rebecca Rainville</p> <p>Misty Reader</p> <p>Erin Shaw</p> <p>Tricia Wrye</p> <p>TBH</p> <p>TBH</p>	<p><b><u>Behavior Support Team</u></b></p> <p>Stacey Clark, Behavior Consultant</p> <p>David Beyor, 4-6 Behavior Interventionist</p> <p>Audrey Barnier, Behavior Interventionist</p> <p>Stacey Lafar, Planning Room Coordinator</p> <p><b><u>Custodial Staff</u></b></p> <p>Jason Butler, Facilities Director</p> <p>Kevin Moss, Facilities Supervisor</p> <p>Randy Pudvah, Head Custodian/Maintenance</p> <p>Heather Bockus, Custodian</p> <p>Matt Greenia, Custodian</p> <p>TBD, Custodian</p>
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## Highgate Elementary School Expectations Matrix

	Highgate Elementary School Behavior Expectations				
	Cooperation	Assertion	Responsibility	Empathy	Self-Control
<b>Classroom</b>	-Work together in a respectful and caring way -Attempt all work -Listen to all ideas	-Share ideas -Persevere/ Ask questions -Ask for what you need -Own your learning	-Be honest -Be polite -Respect individual differences	-Be considerate of others' feelings -Help others	-Stay focused -Hands/feet/objects to yourself -Use property appropriately
<b>Bus</b>	-Talk quietly -Share your seat	-Report problems/concern to adults -Help others in need	Voice level 2 Speak nicely to others -Be a good role model -Keep a clean bus	-Respect the bus driver's needs	-Keep hands and feet to yourself -Keep all objects inside the bus -Stay seated
<b>Hallways &amp; traveling</b>	-Keep self-space -Walk safely	-Model indoor voice -Keep hallways neat and clean	-Voice level 1 -Walk quietly -Respect walls and displays -Stay on the right side of the hallway	-Say "Hi" with a smile & a wave -Pick up trash -Walk softly in the stairwell	-Respect the walls and displays -Walk safely and calmly
<b>Playground</b>	-Share equipment -Listen to recess teachers -Follow all directions	-Invite and include others -Stand up for yourself and others respectfully	-Voice level 3 -Share equipment -Include everyone -Help others	-Include others in your play -Encourage and appreciate others	-Control your body at all times -Keep hands to yourself -Use kind words -Use equipment appropriately
<b>Assemblies &amp; Presenters</b>	-Stop, look, and listen when the quiet signal is given	-Expect to learn something new -Help peers listen attentively	-Listen attentively -Give the presenter your attention -Stay with our class	-Show appreciation (applause, thank you, cards)	-Applaud at appropriate times -Sit with your group -Maintain self-space
<b>Bathrooms</b>	-Wait your turn	-Report problems, messes and vandalism	-Voice level 0 -Honor privacy -Keep area clean	-Be considerate of others -Clean up your own mess	-Use only as much soap, water and towels as you need. Keep feet on the floor
<b>Cafeteria</b>	-Stay in one seat	-Offer help when needed -Report problems to adults	-Voice level 2 -Use please and thank you -Clean your table -Put trash and recycling in the appropriate bin	-Invite others to sit -Help others when needed -Show appreciation to the staff -Include ALL in conversations	-Keep hands and feet to yourself -Walk to your seat -Sit while eating -Eat only your own food
<b>Technology</b>	-Listen to teachers -Be gentle with technology	-Be an online upstander -Try to troubleshoot problems, be curious -Respectfully share your successes	-Keep food and drink away from electronics -Hold computers with both hands, close to your chest -Do not give out personal information online -Safely put away all technology when you're done using it.	-Do not use another's computer or account -Think before you post -Use kind words online	-Stay on the apps and sites that your teachers direct you to use -Keep your passwords private -Practice patience when technology isn't working properly

## Highgate School Response to Behavior Policy

Highgate School's Response to Behavior Policy helps to ensure that we can consistently and transparently support students, staff, and families when challenging behavior arises at school. Parent communication will come through multiple avenues:

See the next three pages of this handbook for Highgate School's Response to Behavior Policy.

# Highgate Response to Behavior Policy

Behaviors	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense	5th Offense
<b>Classroom Managed Chronic Behaviors:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor disruption</li> <li>Minor defiance</li> <li>Minor disrespect</li> <li>Minor inappropriate language</li> <li>Minor hands on interaction</li> <li>Minor property misuse</li> </ul>	<p>After 5 minor behaviors within a week, an <i>OBR</i> is generated.</p> <p><b>Teacher calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>- teacher follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul>	<p>After <u>another</u> 5 minor behaviors within <b>two weeks of the first offense</b>, the OBR is considered a second offense.</p> <p>If more than two weeks, Admin data reviews to determine next steps</p> <p><b>Teacher calls home.</b></p> <p>Working apart from the community until a successful student teacher reentry meeting or 1 hour max.</p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>- teacher follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>Meeting to discuss next steps within 48 hours.</p>	<p>After <u>another</u> 5 minor behaviors within <b>two weeks of the second offense</b>, the OBR is considered a third offense.</p> <p>If more than two weeks, Admin data reviews to determine next steps</p> <p><b>Teacher calls home.</b></p> <p>Working apart from the community until a successful student teacher reentry meeting or 2 hours max.</p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>- teacher follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>Meeting to discuss next steps within 48 hours.</p>	<p>After <u>another</u> 5 minor behaviors within <b>two weeks of the third offense</b>, the OBR is considered a fourth offense.</p> <p>If more than two weeks, Admin data reviews to determine next steps</p> <p><b>Teacher and Administrator calls home together.</b></p> <p>Working apart from the community until a successful student teacher reentry meeting or 2 hours max.</p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>- teacher follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>Meeting to discuss next steps within 48 hours.</p>	<p>After <u>another</u> 5 minor behaviors within <b>two weeks of the fourth offense</b>, the OBR is considered a fifth offense.</p> <p>If more than two weeks, Admin data reviews to determine next steps</p> <p><b>Administrator calls home.</b></p> <p>Working apart from the community for one full school day (7.5 hours), including an alternative recess.</p> <p>Meeting with family and school personnel to determine next steps.</p>



Behaviors	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense	5th Offense
<b>Other Behaviors:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major property damage</li> <li>Sexually inappropriate behavior or language</li> <li>Major inappropriate school language</li> <li>Spitting</li> <li>Weapons</li> <li>Drugs/Alcohol</li> <li>Defiance</li> <li>Disrespect</li> </ul>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator or behavior support team calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>-a follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>Student is away from the learning environment until next steps are determined by the administrator.</p>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator or behavior support team calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>-a follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>The student is away from the learning environment until next steps are determined by the administrator.</p>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator or behavior support team calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>-a follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>The student is away from the learning environment until next steps are determined by the administrator.</p> <p>Stakeholder data review to determine next steps.</p>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator or behavior support team calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>-a follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>The student is away from the learning environment until next steps are determined by the administrator.</p> <p>Stakeholder data review to determine next steps.</p>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>-a follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>The student is away from the learning environment until next steps are determined by the administrator.</p> <p>Meeting with family and school personnel to determine alternative behavior supports.</p>

Behaviors	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense	5th Offense
<b>Unsafe behavior:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fighting</li> <li>Major physical aggression</li> <li>Major verbal aggression and threats of harm or violence</li> <li>Humiliating conduct</li> </ul>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator or behavior support team calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>-follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>Student is away from the learning environment until the next steps are determined by the administrator.</p>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator or behavior support team calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>-follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>The student is away from the learning environment until next steps are determined by the administrator.</p>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator or behavior support team calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>-follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>Learning apart from the community for one half of a school day (4 hours), <i>or more</i>, as determined by the administrator.</p> <p>Admin data review to determine next steps.</p>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator or behavior support team calls home.</b></p> <p>School Supported <i>Restorative Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-repair conversation or action</li> <li>-return to classroom with support</li> <li>-follow up with student on next school day for coaching of the plan to work through issue in the future</li> </ul> <p>Learning apart from the community for one full school day (7.5 hours), <i>or more</i>, as determined by the administrator.</p> <p>Meeting with family and school to determine next steps.</p> <p>Admin data review to determine next steps.</p>	<p>An OBR is generated.</p> <p><b>Administrator or behavior support team calls home.</b></p> <p>Review and amend action plan made in step 4.</p>

## **BUS EXPECTATIONS**

Students are expected to follow Highgate Elementary School expectations (C.A.R.E.S.) while riding school buses and waiting at bus stops.

Through **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**, students will learn the following C.A.R.E.S. on the bus looks like this:

- Talk quietly
- Share your seat
- Report problems to bus driver
- Keep the bus clean
- Keep all objects inside the bus
- Stay Seated
- Control your body at all times (keep hands to yourself)
- Use appropriate language and kind words

Inappropriate behavior at the bus stop or on the bus will be handled by following our school's student behavior and discipline procedures. If students are given an office discipline referral (ODR) by the bus driver, parents will be contacted. At this time, students will receive instruction on appropriate bus behavior.

Bus Misconduct – Disregarding instructions of school bus drivers, distracting drivers, or interfering with the safe operation of school buses, whether from inside the bus or out is a significant safety issue. Therefore, misbehaviors on the bus will be dealt with accordingly:

**1st incident** – Office Discipline Referral, parent contact (including discussion of possible bus suspension for subsequent infractions), and instruction on proper bus behavior.

**2nd incident** – 1-day loss of bus riding privileges.

**3rd incident** – 3-day loss of bus riding privileges.

**4th incident**– Possible loss of riding privileges for the remainder of the school year.

**In the case of a severe offense, a student may immediately lose bus privileges for periods up to and including the remainder of the school year.**

### **Items Not Allowed On the Bus:**

Any items that cannot be contained safely in a student's lap.

Students who normally ride a particular bus will need a note from their parents if his/her schedule changes at any time during the school year. If a student wants to get off at a separate stop than his/her usual stop, they will need to submit a note to the front office with the address of the stop and a phone number where someone can be reached to confirm.

**Parents who have concerns regarding the school bus should contact Grand Avenue Enterprise, Terricel Transit, at 802-868-2761 (for bus and/or driver concerns) or Eric Becker, SEL Coordinator, at 868-4170 x4300 (for bus discipline and student concerns)**

## **PLAYGROUND EXPECTATIONS**

The playground is an important part of the educational facility. Not only do children use it for necessary exercise, relaxation, and play, many important qualities of citizenship are developed there. Sportsmanlike conduct, fair play, taking turns, and sharing the equipment are learned on the playground.

Our school wide behavior expectations are to:

- Use equipment safely.
- Use kind words.
- Follow teachers' directions.
- Take turns and share equipment.
- Include and encourage others.
- Control your body at all times (keep hands to yourself)
- Stand up for yourself and others respectfully.

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY EXPECTATIONS: TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, CHROMEBOOKS**

The Highgate School District furnishes textbooks supplies, and, in grades 3-6, ChromeBook computers. Students are responsible for the return of textbooks, library books, and supplies issued by the school, and families are to be held financially responsible for the loss, or destruction of textbooks, library books, and supplies. The school reserves the right to bill students' families for damage to ChromeBook computers in grades 3-6, as well. Bills will be sent to parents or guardians when textbooks, library books, supplies, or ChromeBooks have been damaged or lost.

## **FIELD TRIP EXPECTATIONS:**

Field trips are an important part of the curriculum, and therefore, are encouraged at school. Students are reminded that they are representatives of Highgate Elementary School while they are on field trips. Good manners and conduct will make it possible for other students to make similar trips. Students must observe all school bus rules when traveling by bus to field trip locations. Students are required to present signed permission slips prior to departure in order to attend field trips. Permission slips will be sent to parents by the teacher in charge with directions for their return. Parents who wish to volunteer as chaperones must complete a background check. Background check forms can be picked up in the main office.

## **ASSEMBLY EXPECTATIONS:**

Assemblies are often scheduled as part of the curriculum, and as such, are designed to be educational and fun experiences. During the course of the year, there will also be celebratory assemblies, including bi-weekly Community Gatherings. Regardless of the type of program,

courtesy dictates that students should be respectful and appreciative. Our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program offers the following guidelines for assemblies: sit with your class, respond to quiet signal, listen attentively, give the presenter(s) your attention, show appreciation by applauding at appropriate times, and respect peers' personal space.

### **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Students should not have cell phones, iPods, iPads, electronic gaming consoles, or any other personal electronic devices in the school building or on school grounds. If your child chooses to bring such an item, it must remain in his/her backpack during the school day. If the item does not remain in the backpack, the following consequences will occur:

1. First infraction: The item will be confiscated for the day and returned to the student at the end of the day.
2. Second infraction: The item will be confiscated for the day and returned to the student at the end of the day.
3. Third infraction: The item will be confiscated for the day and will need to be picked up at school by a parent or guardian. It will not be returned to the student.

The school assumes no responsibility in the event of the item being lost or stolen.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Highgate School District adheres to a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion, handicap, and sexual orientation in all matters related to the operation of the school.

### **TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

It is the policy of the School District to use electronic resources including the Internet to support and enrich the curriculum. The Board believes that the benefits to students from access to electronic information resources and opportunities for collaboration far exceed the disadvantages.

Students in the School District have access to the school's electronic resources for the purpose of enhancing learning. The school has taken precautions to eliminate student access to controversial materials. However, users and parents/guardians must recognize it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials. Teachers, staff, administrators, and the school board are not responsible for students gaining access to such material.

All students in grades 3-6 (district wide) will go through a digital citizenship course called “Digital Passport.” It takes about 4 - 5 hours to complete and will be completed over the first 4-6 weeks of the school year.. Students will NOT be allowed to use their Chromebooks in a 1-to-1 capacity until they have completed the digital citizenship course.

**MVSD Policies:** A complete listing of Missisquoi Valley School District’s policies on responsible technology use can be found on the MVSD website at the following link: [MVSD District Policies](#). Parents/guardians will be mailed a copy of these policies over the summer. They should bring a signed copy of these policies to their child’s conference in August. Students will not be allowed to use electronic devices until they bring in a signed copy of the MVSD responsible use policies

**Highgate ES Policies:** Highgate Elementary School has decided to clarify and provide specificity to some of the MVSD policies. Please see the next page for Highgate technology responsible use policies.

## **Highgate Elementary School Technology Expectations**

### **Introduction**

At Highgate Elementary School, we are attempting to provide some building specificity to Missisquoi Valley School District’s “Acceptable Use of Electronic Resources and the Internet Policy,” (Responsible Use Policy from here forward) which can be found on the MVSD website [Responsible Computer, Network and Internet Use](#)

Our district’s policy provides for individual users’ responsibilities when using electronic resources and the Internet within the school; however, it does not specify building administrators’ responses to inappropriate use of technology. At Highgate, we are attempting to balance the reality that a 21st-century education requires students to access media in ever-evolving ways, the online safety of all of our students, and the need to enforce safe and responsible use of electronic equipment that is very expensive. The following are policies that attempt to strike this balance.

### **Major and Minor Violations**

At Highgate, we will be classifying technology violations as ‘major’ or ‘minor,’ in much the same way that our PBIS programming differentiates between major and minor behavioral infractions. The following are major and minor violations of the MVSD Responsible Use Policy:

#### Major Violations

- Intentional destruction of property (iPad, Chromebook, other equipment)
- Accessing hardware, software, or accounts that are not the student's own
- Use of school device or Internet to violate our school's Bullying or Harassment policies
- Grossly inappropriate use of Internet or electronic applications
- Frequent, repeated minor violations, as stipulated below

#### Minor Violations

- Leaving electronic resources unattended
- Sharing passwords or leaving accounts open on communal electronic devices
- Wasting technological resources (e.g. paper, ink, electronic memory)
- Careless use of technology resulting in damages
- Inappropriate use of Internet or electronic applications

### **Highgate Elementary School Technology Expectations, Continued**

#### **Responses to Responsible Use Violations**

Responses to Responsible Use violations are the purview of the school's administration, in concert with our school's Technology Coordinator, Christie Mitchell. Building administrators, technology team members, and classroom teachers all play a role in responding to students who violate the Responsible Use policy.

Responses to minor violations of the Responsible Use Policy by students may include:

- Education about responsible use, provided by either the classroom teacher or Technology Team member. Education can include verbal directions/prompts, written passages, and/or requiring students to complete responsible use or digital citizenship modules online.
- Use of a "hardened device," meaning students still may have access to the device, but be restricted from using certain applications or Internet websites.
- Loss of device/Internet privileges for a time mutually agreed upon by school administration and the Technology Team.

Responses to major violations of the Responsible Use Policy by students may include:

- Use of a "hardened device," meaning students still may have access to the device, but be restricted from using certain applications or Internet websites.
- Loss of device/Internet privileges for a time mutually agreed upon by school administration and the Technology Team.
- Administrative action, including family contact, loss of privileges, and/or suspension

### To report a student

#### Absent / Tardy

**Please call the Highgate Elementary School voicemail at 868-4170 24 hours a day. Please leave the following:**

- **You name and relationship to the student**
- **The student's name**
- **The student's teacher**
- **Reason for student's absence**
- **Phone number at which you can be contacted**

**Our office personnel will attempt to reach the home of any student who has not been accounted for each day.**

#### SCHOOL HOURS

**7:30 AM — 3:50 PM**

(Since there is no supervision until buses arrive, students who walk, ride their bikes, or get dropped off, should not arrive before **7:30 AM**.

**If students arrive before 7:30 a.m. they should report to the school entrance and sit quietly until they are directed to go out to class.**

### EARLY DISMISSAL

We ask that any changes as to your child's bus route, or who will pick your child up at dismissal time on a specific day, be shared with the office **before 2:00 PM**

- A student will not be permitted to leave the school premises during a school day unless signed out by a parent / guardian. If someone else is to take the student out of school, the parent must write a note specifying who has been given this responsibility. If need be, office personnel will request proper identification from those picking up children.

- It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to provide the office copies of all updated legal information (such as trespass, restraining orders) that restricts those who may pick up a child.

- Please note that all children will be picked up at the office, not the student's classroom.

- Written requests for bus passes to friends' houses are required. A bus pass will not be given unless the office receives this request in

### VISITORS

**All visitors must check in at the office to get a visitor's badge before going anywhere on school grounds. Visitors will need to identify themselves and their reasons for visiting to the main office personnel. They will be given a visitor's badge.**

**Parents are cordially invited to visit school at any time, as we welcome the opportunity to provide parents a chance to become better informed about their child's school. Prior arrangements for a classroom visit should be made with the classroom teacher.**

**We discourage students from other schools visiting our school as it often disrupts the learning climate.**



<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>BELLS</u></b></p> <p>Highgate Elementary School no longer uses a Bell system.</p>	<p>writing.</p> <p>- If possible, medical, dental, and other appointments should be made for non-school hours.</p>	
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## **ATTENDANCE**

Vermont law requires school attendance for students between the ages of 6 and 16. Highgate Elementary School believes consistent attendance is a prerequisite for ensuring the academic, social, and emotional growth of students. In addition, regular and punctual attendance is important in the development of responsible and effective work/study habits as well as a demonstration that students are assuming responsibility for their own behavior. Encouraging students to take full advantage of their education is a shared responsibility for students, families, schools and communities.

### **Definitions:**

1. A **truant** student is one who is subject to compulsory school attendance (16 V.S.A 1121) and who is absent without valid cause or excuse.
2. **Valid Excuses** for absences include illness, observance of religious holiday, death in the family, family emergency, situations beyond the student's control as determined by the School Board, or other circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the parent or guardian for the health or safety of the student and are confirmed in writing or verbally by the parent/guardian of the student.

Vermont law requires schools to keep an accurate register of student attendance. Students who arrive at school after 8:00 a.m. will be noted as **tardy** in their student record, with the exception of late bus arrivals. Students who leave prior to dismissal will be noted as having an **early dismissal**. Students who are not in school will be marked either **absent excused** or **absent unexcused**.

If your child is going to be absent from school, please call before 8:00 a.m. to let us know. If we have not received notice from you by 9:30 a.m., we will call you either at home or work to ensure that your child is safe. **Parents requesting homework for students absent due to illness should call the school before 9:15 a.m.** to let us know your child will be absent and that you would like to pick up homework or you would like it sent home with a sibling. You can pick up homework up until 3:30 pm in the main office.

Also:



- When a student is dismissed early from school, the parent must provide a written request (a verbal request will be accepted in an emergency) prior to dismissal.
- When a student is going to have a planned absence of multiple days, we ask that you notify the school in writing and give the note to Danielle Bennett, Registrar, in the main office so that she can notify your child's teacher.

These measures are extremely helpful to us so that we may keep a record of excused absences and early dismissals. We also encourage families to take family vacations during scheduled vacation times, as time away from the classroom could have an adverse affect on a child's academic progress.

#### Procedures for Notifying Parents of Student Absences:

- You will receive a letter if your child is absent from school five (5) times in a school year, a second letter when your child reaches ten (10) absences, and a third letter when you child reaches fifteen (15) absences in a school year.
- When your child reaches 10 absences, the school *may* call a Coordinated Service Plan meeting, where parties from multiple agencies (the school, Department of Children and Families, and Northwest Counseling and Support Services) meet with you to discuss strategies to improve a student's attendance.
- When your child reaches 15 absences, the school will contact the Franklin County Truancy Intervention Panel to ask a Truancy Specialist to review your child's absences.
- After 20 absences, your child may be referred to the Department of Children and Families for formal truancy proceedings.

### **WITHDRAWING A STUDENT**

When withdrawing a student from school (enrolling the student in another school or deciding to home-school), please notify the school office several days in advance. This will enable teachers to complete all records prior to the student's last day of school. Your new school will request your child's records.

### **SCHOOL TELEPHONE**

Students, teachers or other staff members will not be called to the telephone -- except for an emergency -- during the school day. If a student is not feeling well, we ask that they report to the Health Office (Nurse's Office) and parents/guardians will be contacted from that office.

## CONTACTING STUDENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Any parent or guardian needing to contact a student should call the main office (868-4170). In an emergency, the student will be contacted immediately. In a non-emergency, the student will be contacted at the next available non-academic time. Please do not call or text message your child's cell phone during the school day. Cell phones pose a significant distraction to instruction, and we can contact your child much more quickly in an emergency if you call the main office than if you call his/her cell phone.

## COMMUNITY ALERT SYSTEM - SCHOOL MESSENGER

Highgate Elementary School will use an automated system, known as the "BrightArrow" to alert students and staff of unexpected school closings, early dismissals, and delayed openings. We may utilize School Messenger in other unforeseen circumstances that require prompt parent notification.

**Please let the Office know if your personal address, home telephone number, cell phone number, or work telephone number has changed.**

## STUDENT PROPERTY: LOST & FOUND

Each year we have boxes of unclaimed, unlabeled sweaters, rubbers, boots, shoes, sneakers, jackets, coats, mittens, gloves, hats, lunch boxes, etc. This year, the majority of lost and found items will be stored outside the gymnasium. As the school year progresses, the number of articles in lost-and-found increases dramatically, creating a storage problem. Items will be disposed of on a regular basis to reduce the overflow. **Please label all student belongings** so that they can be returned to your children. Parents are invited to stop at the lost and found areas in order to claim lost-and-found articles.

## STUDENT ACCESS TO THE BUILDING

No student may enter the building before or after school unless he/she is under the direct supervision of an adult (teacher, parent, coach, etc.).

Students are not allowed to re-enter the school building after dismissal. After dismissal, students are to leave the school grounds and go directly home, unless they have a note saying otherwise.

## BICYCLE AND WALKER REGULATIONS

All students who ride bicycles or walk to school must bring a note from the parent/guardian granting permission from home. The permission slip must be turned into the office **before** the student is granted permission to ride his/her bicycle to school or to walk.

Students are not to ride their bikes around or near other students during dismissal. All students who ride a bike to school must use a safety helmet at all times.

## MANDATED REPORTING

As educators and mandated reporters, it is our duty to help protect students from abuse and neglect. Act 60 of 2015 provides that any educator who reasonably suspects abuse or neglect of a child shall report to the Department of Children and Families.

## NEW AMERICANS

Under Federal law, undocumented children and young adults have the same right to attend public primary and secondary schools as do U.S. citizens and permanent residents. And, under state law, all Vermont children, including undocumented children are required to attend school until the mandated age of 16.

## Nurse's Office/ Medication Dispensation Procedures

Highgate Elementary School recognizes that many children are able to attend school because of the effective use of medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities or illnesses. It is the feeling of the administration and the school nurse that it is always more desirable for medication to be administered in the home. However, any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day may do so upon compliance with school and state regulations.

1. Written orders from a physician regarding any prescription medications to be administered at school will be provided to the school nurse. Written permission from the parent/guardian of the student must accompany the physician's order. This information must include:

- **child's name**      · **name of medication**      · **dosage**      · **time to be administered**
- **purpose of medication**

The permission forms can be obtained from the school nurse and, once signed, will be kept on file for the school year.

2. Medication must be brought in by the parent/guardian in the original, labeled container and given to the school nurse.

3. The School Nurse will:

- inform appropriate personnel of the medication and pertinent instructions
  - keep medication in a secured location
  - administer medication to best ensure confidentiality
  - keep a record of the administration of the medication
4. Medications on field trips: School field trips are an extension of the school day and therefore all policies apply. The school nurse will provide the medication to the appropriately trained staff member in the originally labeled container to be administered as prescribed by the physician.
  5. Students with life threatening allergies or with asthma, whose parents or guardians comply with all of the requirements of 16 V.S.A. §1387, shall be permitted to possess and self administer emergency medications at school, on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, on school provided transportation, and during school-related programs. A physician's order and parent/guardian permission are required to be on file in the health office for all prescription medications to be administered at school, even those that are self carried.
  6. **Non-prescription medication:** If a child should require non-prescription medication that is not carried in-stock (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen, Benadryl, calcium carbonate), the parent/guardian must bring the medication they request to be given to the school nurse and complete a permission form. Medication must be left in the custody of the school nurse. If non-prescription medication will be needed at school for more than one week, the parent or guardian shall provide the health office with a note from the doctor requesting that the student have the medication at school, along with permission from the parent/guardian to administer the medication and speak to the doctor as necessary.
  7. A limited number of non-prescription medications and ointments will be available to be administered by the School Nurse **if it is determined to be medically necessary** and parental permission is given on the Annual Health Update form. These medications are:

Acetaminophen (Tylenol)	Calcium Carbonate (Tums)	Cough drops
Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)	Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin)	Triple Antibiotic Ointment (Neosporin)
Calamine/Caladryl lotion		

## **EMERGENCY DRILL PROCEDURE**

Periodically at Highgate, we conduct one of four emergency drills (Clear the Halls, Secure the Building, Evacuate the Building, or Fire Drill) to practice components of our school's emergency operations plan. Consistent practice with safety protocols help students to recognize these procedures as a routine and a crucial part of their school experience so that, if we ever need to use these procedures in a real emergency, students feel prepared and confident about what is expected of them. Our school's emergency operations manual reflects how students and staff will respond to emergent situations that arise inside or outside the building.

Below is language concerning each of the three emergency drill types used with members of our staff:

**HOLD:** "In Your Classroom or Area" Students are trained to: • Clear the hallways and remain in their area or room until the "All Clear" is announced • Do business as usual Adults and staff are trained to: • Close and lock the door • Account for students and adults • Do business as usual

**SECURE:** "Get Inside. lock outside doors" Students are trained to: • Return to inside of building • Do business as usual Adults and staff are trained to: • Bring everyone indoors • Lock the outside doors • Increase situational awareness • Account for students and adults • Do business as usual

**LOCKDOWN:** "locks, lights, out of Sight" Students are trained to: • Move away from sight • Maintain silence • Do not open the door Adults and staff are trained to: • Recover students from hallway if possible • Lock the classroom door • Turn out the lights • Move away from sight • Maintain silence • Do not open the door • Prepare to evade or defend

**EVACUATE:** "To a location" Students are trained to: • Leave stuff behind if required to • If possible, bring their phone • Follow instructions Adults and staff are trained to: • Bring roll sheet and Go Bag (unless instructed not to bring anything with them, dependent on reason for evacuation.) • Lead students to Evacuation location • Account for students and adults • Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.

**SHELTER:** "State Hazard and Safety Strategy" Hazards might include: • Tornado • Hazmat • Earthquake • Tsunami Safety Strategies might include: • Evacuate to shelter area • Seal the room • Drop, cover and hold • Get to high ground Students are trained in: • Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies Adults and staff are trained in: • Appropriate Hazards and Safety Strategies • Accounting for students and adults • Report injuries or problems using Red Card/Green Card method.

## EMERGENCIES

When the school must be closed because of an emergency situation, such as a snowstorm, notification of the emergency closing will be made using School Messenger, which is an automated notification system, as well as the Vermont Broadcast System, which contacts TV and radio stations. School Messenger will notify parents by phone and email in these situations.

The Highgate Elementary School maintains emergency information on each child registered at the school. From time to time, there are changes that occur which requires the emergency information to be updated. A new emergency form must be completed each time a change occurs. Please request a new emergency form from the office if there are any changes in the information you provided earlier. **The completion and return of these emergency forms is extremely important:** these forms are taken on field trips in case of an unexpected emergency and are used by staff during any building evacuation. All legal documents must be updated and on file at the school office.

## SCHOOL LUNCH

The Highgate Elementary School, with support from The Abbey Group, serves nutritious meals daily for **\$3.25 (free for the 2024/25 school year)** per lunch and **\$0.50** milks. Breakfast is **free** for all students and is served each morning in the classroom.

**Students may qualify for free or reduced meals.** Free & reduced applications are sent home at the beginning of each school year, or may be picked up at the office. Manage your students' accounts and make payments for their lunches by going to: [the Abbey Group Website](#).

The lunch menu is posted online before the beginning of each month and can be found on our school's [website](#) (under "Families" tab) or the Abbey Group [website](#)

Our food service director, Patty Riopel, and her team from the Abbey Group do a wonderful job of preparing meals for our staff and students that are nutritious and low cost.

Questions about school lunch, including billing and your account? Contact:

Patty Riopel, The Abbey Group

highgate@abbeygroup.net

<http://www.abbeygroup.net/school-highgate.php>

## SNACKS

We suggest that beverages sent to school for snacks or celebrations include the following: milk,

water, or 100% fruit juice. Please do not send soda or energy drinks.

We suggest that snacks sent from home each day also follow these guidelines.

**Healthy Snack Suggestions:** Fresh or dried fruit, vegetables, cheese slices/sticks, yogurt, unsweetened applesauce, cooked whole wheat breads or pastas, or cooked meats.

**Nut-safe Practices at Highgate:** If your child is in a nut-free classroom, you will be notified at the beginning of the school year. All snacks for children in these classrooms (and food brought in for celebrations) will need to be nut-free. A list of snack suggestions will be sent along with the notice. Thank you for keeping all of our students safe!

## RECESS

Recess is an important part of the school day and programs. In addition to allowing children the opportunity to positively expend energy, recess also allows for regular exercise and social interaction. In many ways recess is an extension of our physical education and social skills programs.

**Generally, all students are expected to participate in recess; it should not be used to make up missed assignments or for behavioral consequence.**

There may be occasions when the teacher or parent may want the child to stay in during recess. Parents may request, for health reasons, that their child stay in during recess by contacting the child's teacher. However, the school requires a physician's letter explaining the circumstances if the child needs to stay in for an extended period of time. Teachers may ask a student to remain in class during afternoon recess for no more than 10 minutes for the purpose of processing a situation or event that occurred that morning.

During the winter and spring months, the playground can become wet, frozen, or muddy. Please make sure that your child(ren) is/are dressed accordingly. Vermont weather dictates hats, gloves/mittens and boots during the cold and wet months. If for some reason, recess is being canceled, an announcement will be made. The decision to send students out to recess is the responsibility of the school administration. This year we will be considering a number of factors in our decision about daily recess. A wind chill of below zero will result in the cancellation of outdoor recess.

## PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

We host 3 sets of parent-teacher conferences during the school year. The exact dates vary year to year; however, the first conference is held at the end of the summer, right before the start of

school; the second conference is held in late fall, around Thanksgiving; and the final conference is held in the spring, sometime between February and April breaks.

The purpose of the first conference, at the end of the summer, is for the classroom teacher to meet every parent and student that is a part of their classroom community, and to get to know students ahead of the first day.

The purpose of the next two conferences are to check in on student progress in all areas of their school experience - academic, social-emotional, and behavioral.

Parents will schedule conferences using our online scheduling technology, Pick-A-Time, which can be found at the following link: <https://pickatime.com/hes>. If you do not have access to the Internet, conferences can be scheduled by calling the school at 868-4170.

### **EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT TEAM (EST)**

The primary purpose of the EST TEAM is to assist classroom teachers and staff in developing a plan that will support students in the educational program. For each student, the educational support team could include: the principal, classroom teachers, math and literacy interventionist teachers, behavior interventionists, and any other staff who work closely with your child.

A child's EST team meets, as needed, to do the following:

- Identify support and services for individual students
- Help teachers to develop strategies for supporting individual students
- Develop plans to support each child in school
- Evaluate what's working, make changes or close existing plans when appropriate

### **REPORT CARDS**

At Highgate Elementary School we believe reporting student progress is an essential part of the communication between parents and teachers. Three times during the year (fall, winter, and spring) we will provide a detailed report that reflects your student's progress with meeting the skills and concepts of Common Core State Standards for their grade level. Report cards reflect a "Snapshot" of your child's achievements throughout the year. Please feel free to ask about achievement at other times if you have questions or concerns.

### **GRADING PERIODS 2024-2025**



Highgate Elementary School operates on a trimester schedule. Generally speaking, each trimester is approximately 12 school weeks long. Student learning is a progression, and grading period end dates are arbitrary points along that progression, chosen to ensure that parents and guardians are apprised of students' academic progress throughout the year. These dates should not be seen as the "end" of learning in any subject.

Trimester 1: August 26 - November 15

Trimester 2: November 18 - March 14

Trimester 3: March 17 - June 13

## HOMework

Highgate Elementary School has a minimum expectation that students will be reading each night. Reading can take many forms -- students can read independently, parents can read to children, parents and children can co-read, or parents can read a book of their choice while children read a book of their choice. The amount of reading per night will vary by grade, but will not be overwhelming. Teachers will generally do something to check in with reading each week -- this can take the form of a reading log, a written response to a question about the book a student is reading, or some other measure.

As students get older, they may be asked to complete some math homework as well. That homework will generally be limited and driven by individual student needs.

Importantly, at Highgate, we believe in limiting homework to activities that research shows to be successful and activities that are driven by specific student needs. School is only part of the child's life. We need to restrict the time for homework to allow the child to have time for play, to plan his/her own activities, to be with parents and friends, to be active elsewhere, or to relax.

What can parents and guardians do to help promote healthy homework practices?

1. Show interest in your child's reading or math homework.
2. Communicate with the classroom teacher if you have any questions/issues.
3. Offer help/specific tips where appropriate, but remember to foster independence too. Please don't do for your child what your child can do for him/herself.
4. Show that you believe in your child as a learner -- students' self-perceptions are key to developing a growth mindset.
5. Schedule a time each evening to do reading and/or math homework.
6. Stand up for your rights as a parent; it is important to be involved!

7. Provide a quiet, relaxing place for your child to read or do his/her homework.

A guiding principle is 10 minutes of homework each evening, per grade level. (i.e. Grade 5 = 50 minutes). If your child is exceeding this guideline, please contact your child's teacher or principal.

## **VISUAL ARTS AT HIGHGATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

The Highgate Art program serves all students; K-6 students have art once per week, for 45 minutes. Students in grades four and five will have one extra art class every three weeks.

The Art program is project based, hands on. The Art Teacher introduces a variety of skills and techniques, which carry over throughout the years. Students will experience working with many different art mediums. They may study famous artists, cultures around the world, or literacy as an inspiration in creating their own artwork. As a child progresses in development, students become more independent when creating art.

Student work will be displayed in the hallways, as well as frequently in the gymnasium. All work will be sent home at the end of the school year. Sixth grade work will be displayed in the gym at their graduation.

## **MUSIC AT HIGHGATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

The Music Department at Highgate Elementary school is housed in the basement of the White Building and is intended to be a safe space for all students to explore the power of music. Students will interact with many different concepts within the music room, including but not limited to rhythm, notation, composition, dance and music history. Students will learn how to move safely through a space, as well as create their own original content both in groups and individually.

The Music Department also runs two Instrumental Ensembles and one Choral Ensemble. Ellis Music and Advanced music provide instrument rental at the beginning of the school year, as well as maintenance throughout the school year. Band will be offered both as 30 minute push-in

lessons for the fourth, fifth and sixth graders, as well as in two level ensemble groups (Advanced Band and Beginning Band) that meet once a week.

General music will be offered to students in grades K - 6. Students will have the opportunity to sing, play instruments and move to music within the music classroom. The goal of each class is to learn about music in a comfortable atmosphere where one of the rewards is creating original products together. Beyond this, music classes have been shown to assist students with emotional development, as well as creating a healthy sense of school community. Highgate Elementary School's Music program shares these ideals for the purpose of building healthy, productive citizens.

The Music Department will be planning several concert opportunities for the 2023-2024 School Year. There will be two different concerts during the winter and spring months for a band and chorus concert, which features students in grades 4 - 6. There will be a concert in January and May of 2025. There will also be a Fine Arts Night, which will include a student concert of grades K - 3. These events will occur in February which will also feature a library and art presentation. These are incredible nights for our students, staff, and families!

### **FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

#### **Annual Notice to Parents and Eligible Students:**

As a parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the Highgate School District, you have certain rights concerning the education records that the school district maintains. These rights are afforded by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and other legal requirements. For students on an IEP, parents maintain rights equal to those of the student through the period of the student's special education eligibility.

To summarize, you have the following rights:

- a. To a list of the types of locations of student education records maintained by the School District and the titles and addresses of the school officials responsible for those records.
- b. To inspect and review your education records within a reasonable time after such a request (no more than 45 days after the request is made, and before any IEP meeting or hearing related to the identification, evaluation, or placement of a student with a disability). This

includes the right to:

1. a response to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the education records.
  2. to have a representative of your choice (i.e. an advocate, relative, etc.) to inspect and review the records on your child's behalf.
  3. a copy of any of your child's education records if failure to provide a copy effectively prevents you from exercising your right to inspect and review the records.
- c. To seek the correction of your education records through a request to amend them, or through a hearing procedure provided for by law.
- d. To review the access log (record of disclosure of personally identifiable information) from your child's record.
- e. To examine and receive a copy of any policies or procedures of the Highgate School District regarding education records by contacting the principal of the school.
- f. To receive this notice in your home language, if it is other than English, or by any other primary mode of communication that you use unless it is clearly not feasible for the school district to do so.
- g. To file complaints, regarding the Highgate School District's failure to grant these rights by writing to the Family Policy Compliance Office,  
U.S. Dept. of Education, Washington, DC 20202-4665.
- h. To have information from your education records withheld from disclosure to third parties without your prior written consent, except:
1. to school officials with legitimate educational interests.
  2. to officials of another school or school system in which you (your student) seek(s) or intend(s) to enroll.
  3. to federal or state government officials and other authorities, as provided by law.
  4. to appropriate individuals in health and safety emergencies.
  5. to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
  6. for directory information\* (at the instructional leader's discretion) which includes student's name, address, telephone number,  
current grade enrolled in, dates of attendance and most recent previous education agency or institution attended, date and place of birth.

**\*You have the right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all these categories as directory information for your child by contacting the Instructional Leader of your school in writing fourteen (14) calendar days of the date of this notice.**

### **PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to: Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)-

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of -

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use -

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

Highgate Elementary School has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration

of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Highgate Elementary School will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Highgate Elementary School will also directly notify, such as through U.S. mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation in the specific activity or survey. Highgate Elementary School will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.
- *Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:*

**Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901**

### **HAT/HOOD WEARING EXPECTATIONS**

At Highgate Elementary School, we want to promote hat wearing expectations that are respectful in a school environment. Although it is known that baseball cap and hat wearing is widely done within our community, we are promoting a shift within the school. During the school day, students are expected to not wear any sort of hat or hood while in the school building. Students are welcomed to wear their hat or hood as they arrive in the morning, but will put them with their belongings until the end of the day. Then, during recess or dismissal, students can wear their hats. Other than those times, it is expected hats or hoods will not be worn by students.

However, some students may choose to have a classroom celebration through PBIS and earn to wear hats or hoods. This would be an acceptable use of hat or hood wearing. There may also be times during Spirit Weeks hats or hoods are worn as well as during school wide celebrations. During normal school day operations, hats and hoods will not be worn during the school day.

### **GUM IN SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS**

Gum chewing and gum being used is something that we will avoid doing at Highgate Elementary School. With gum chewing, there comes times that gum is left under tables, chairs, or even lunchroom trays. To help ensure a clean and healthy environment, gum chewing will be almost completely avoided. If there are individual student plans where gum chewing can support a student to access their learning through a team meeting, IEP, 504, or EST, it could be allowed by individual student basis. However, final determination of gum chewing will be done by the school principal.

### [Section 504](#)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is Congress's directive to schools receiving any federal funding to eliminate discrimination based on disability from all aspects of school operation. It states: *"No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."* Since the Highgate School District is a recipient of federal dollars, we are required to provide eligible disabled students with equal access (both physical and academic) to services, programs, and activities offered by our schools. Section 504 is a civil rights statute and not a special education statute. Therefore, it is the responsibility of regular education staff and administration to implement those practices and procedures necessary for a school to fulfill this law's requirements. It is also important to understand that schools receive no additional funding to implement Section 504 accommodations. At each school, the responsibility for ensuring Section 504 compliance rests with the Director of Student Services and/or designee.

If you should have Section 504 questions or complaints, the contacts listed below will respond or direct you to the appropriate person.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Phone Numbers</b>
Superintendent of Schools	Julie Regimbal	802 868-4967
Co-Director of Student Special Services	Tania Hayes	802 868-4967

504 Coordinator	Brittany Tatro	802 868-4170
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## **BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY**

It is the policy of the Highgate School District to provide a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment for all students. Bullying [as defined in 16 VSA 1161(a) and 1162] 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 a measured response of corrective action and/or discipline. Behaviors that do not rise to the level of bullying, as defined below, still may be subject to intervention and/or discipline under the MVSD Policies and Procedures, Section F1: Student Conduct and Discipline. (see link below):

[Missisquoi Valley School District Policies](#)

### **Definitions:**

Bullying means any overt act or combination of such acts directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

- occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity;
- is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student
- is repeated over time.<sup>1</sup>

**Faculty and Staff Responsibility:** Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying or receive student reports of bullying are required to promptly notify **Eric Becker or Yeshua Pastina**, so that an inquiry can be begun.

**Student Responsibility:** Students will be encouraged to report acts of bullying<sup>2</sup> to any teacher or school administrator.

### **Notice to Parents/Guardians of Students Who Were Bullied:**



To the extent permitted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, (FERPA), school staff will notify the parent or guardian of a student who is a target of bullying of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying.<sup>3</sup>

The superintendent is responsible for determining the staff development programs, interventions and procedures necessary to implement this policy. At a minimum, these procedures will include data collection, reporting, and notice procedures. The superintendent will collaborate with principals, guidance counselors, and others with expertise in addressing bullying in schools to determine the staff development programs and interventions that will be implemented in the district and in individual schools.

<sup>1</sup> Conduct that might otherwise be considered bullying but 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. §§1161(a) and 1162; however, such misconduct would not meet the definition of bullying.

<sup>2</sup> Any student, who knowingly makes false accusations regarding bullying, may be subject to disciplinary action.

<sup>3</sup> FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the confidentiality of student records and the school district must comply with this law, as well as a similar state law. When the school administrator contacts a parent about the school district's response to a bullying incident, he/she may discuss information about an investigation and corrective action taken, but only to the extent that it may be done without disclosing information about any students other than the student subjected to the bullying.

### **Discipline and/or Corrective Action.**

If after investigation, bullying has been found, the District shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the bullying.. There will be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of bullying when the complainant has a good faith belief that bullying occurred or is occurring or for participating in or cooperating with an investigation. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding bullying will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY**

The Highgate Elementary School is committed to providing a safe and supportive school environment in which all students are treated with respect. This policy regulates incident(s) and/or conduct that occurs on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or misconduct where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated. The purpose of this policy is to prevent harassment of students.

### **Definitions:**

- A. Harassment: means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining, detracting from, or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.**
- B. Harassment includes conduct which violates subsection (A) of this definition and constitutes one or more of the following:
- i. Sexual harassment, which means conduct that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur:
    - Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education.
    - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.
  - ii. Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to racial customs.
  - iii. Harassment of members of other protected categories, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

**Reporting of Student Harassment Complaints:**

1. A student who believes that s/he has been harassed, or who witnesses conduct that s/he believes might constitute harassment, should report the conduct to **Eric Becker or Yeshua Pastina**
2. An employee who witnesses conduct that s/he believes might constitute student harassment under this policy shall take prompt and appropriate action to stop the conduct and immediately report the conduct to **Eric Becker or Yeshua Pastina**.
4. Any other person who witnesses conduct that s/he believes might constitute student harassment under this policy should report the conduct to **Eric Becker or Yeshua Pastina**.

### **Discipline and/or Corrective Action.**

If after investigation, harassment has been found, the District shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment.. There will be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of harassment when the complainant has a good faith belief that harassment occurred or is occurring or for participating in or cooperating with an investigation. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding harassment will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Complaints to the Vermont Human Rights Commission and the U.S. Office of Civil Rights.**

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

## **PROCEDURES FOR PARENT CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS**

We are confident your Highgate School District experience will be a positive one for you and your child. We also know that there may be times when you have a concern or question. Our goal is to resolve any misunderstandings as quickly and efficiently as possible. If you follow the procedures described in this handbook, you will help the school respond promptly and appropriately to your concerns. The information below reflects school board policy and the administrative guidelines that support them.

### **Matters Regarding a Professional Staff Member (Teacher etc.):**

#### **Step One:**

**Contact the staff member.** The staff member should discuss the situation promptly with you and make every effort to provide a reasonable explanation or take appropriate action within his/her authority, district policies, and administrative guidelines. **Please note:** This step does not apply if the issue involves suspected child abuse, substance abuse, or any other serious allegation that may require investigation or inquiry by school officials before approaching the staff member. In such cases, begin with Step Two.

#### **Step Two:**

If the situation is not resolved satisfactorily with the staff member, contact the building principal. The principal will make arrangements to discuss the matter with you.

#### **Step Three:**

If the issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may request a meeting with the Superintendent and/or designee (if the matter is related to Special Education, contact the

Director of Special Services). Please include the following information in your request:

- A brief statement of the situation
- A description of how you, your child or other students have been affected by the situation
- The action you would like the district to take and a statement of why you would like that action taken

The Superintendent and/or designee will arrange a meeting with you.

#### **Step Four:**

If the Superintendent and/or designee is unable to satisfy your concerns, you may request, in writing, a meeting with the Board. The Board will review materials relating to the issue and schedule a hearing. You will be notified of the Board's decision, in writing, within 10 business days after the hearing. The Board's decision is final.

#### **Matters Regarding an Administrator**

The above procedures should be followed, beginning with a discussion with the administrator. Then, if necessary, discuss the issue with the Superintendent and/or designee. Finally, if necessary, request a meeting with the Board of School Trustees.

### **PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTKO)**

The Highgate School District school-home partnership is strong. We consider parents to be valued members of our team and essential partners in their child's education. We are pleased to have active, enthusiastic parent interest and support and encourage every parent to attend school functions and communicate with staff. Research clearly shows that parent involvement promotes success in learning.

The school's Parents Teachers and Kids Organization is comprised of individuals who meet to discuss educational matters and plan various functions for children, volunteers and teachers. Active membership and financial support of this organization is strongly encouraged and represents a practical and concrete way to help your child and the educational programs at the school. All parents are invited to attend the PTKO monthly meetings, held in the Library Media Center. Meetings are held typically at 6 PM and each meeting date will be put out in the Friday Memo to families.

## **FACULTY DIRECTORY/VOICEMAIL:**

Our phone system is meant to enhance communication between school and parents/guardians. Each staff member has a voice mailbox for direct parent communication. In order to access this service, you should dial 868-4170, followed by the extension number listed below:

Administration		Teachers		Special Services	
4202	Pastina, Yeshua - Principal	4129	Bartlett, Bethany- 4th Grade	4235	Barrett, Kyra- 3-6 Literacy Interventionist
4300	Becker, Eric - SEL Coordinator	4230	Bellrose, Heather- 1st Grade	4304	Fortune, Eric- Special Educator
4313	LaFar, Amber- Confidential Admin Asst.	4242	Bessette, Caylin- 3rd Grade	4303	Freeman, Alanna- Special Educator
4100	Young, Amanda - Registrar/ Admin Asst.	4106	Blais, Autumn- 6th Grade	4316	Gaudette, Codi- Special Educator
4200	Front Office	4103	Brown, Mallory- 5th Grade	4204	Hiskey, Arlee- School Counselor
		4229	Carroll, Matt- Kindergarten	4108	Hughes, Kristen- Math Coach
		4216	Cunnigham, Julian- Music	4222	Iannaco, Edna- Literacy Coach
		4249	Enterline, Kelly- Library	4307	Jarvis, Jennifer- Occupational Therapist
Nurse		4130	Holcomb, Emma- 4th Grade	4201	Kittell, Caleb- Technology Support
4212	Shumway, Nichole	4233	LaBrusciano, Domye- 1st Grade	4317	LaBounty, Corynn- K-3 Math Interventionist
		4223	L'Esperance, Apryl- PreK	4306	Lamos, Ellen- Crossroads Director
Kitchen		4107	Maskell, Brandi- 6th Grade	4312	Luneau, Jennifer- Special Educator
4133	Riopel, Patty	4248	McSweeney, Marilyn- 2nd Grade	4219	Mihuta, Mary- Psychologist
	Alyssa Turner	4125	Narkewicz, Allison - PreK (3yr olds)	4235	Rabideau, Eren- 4-6 Grade Math Interventionist
	Reynolds, Bridgitte	4234	Rivers, Jacey- Art	4315	Robideau, Kristen- NCSS Clinician
	Benouire, Kim	4102	Ryea, Aly- 5th Grade	4302	Tatro, Brittiny- Special Education Team Lead
		4121	Tatro, Krista- P.E	4317	Therrien, Christina- K-2 Literacy Interventionist
Additional Areas		4244	Vickers, Lora- 2nd Grade	4308	WB Open Classroom
4309	WB Planning Room	4241	Ward, Tori- 3rd Grade	4220	TBH- SLP
4305	Maker Space	4226	Whitehead, Paula- Kindergarten		
4134	BB Planning Room				
4310	Band and Choir Room				
Custodians		Highgate Elementary Fax 802-868-4572		BST	
4120	Kevin Moss			4301	Aylward, Craig
	Greenia, Matthew			4300	Barnier, Audrey
	Pudvah, Randy			4301	Beyor, David
	Bockus, Heather			4301	Clark, Stacy- Behavior Consultant

## **SECURITY CAMERA POLICY**

Student, faculty, staff and public safety, and the protection of school facilities/property and

equipment are primary responsibilities of Highgate Elementary School. To better achieve these goals, there are security cameras installed at various locations around the school. Because Highgate School District respects the privacy of all members of the school district and the public, the following guidance is provided to govern the use of security cameras:

- 1. The school shall not cause or allow security cameras to be used in any way that is unlawful or that violates the mission and core values of the school district.
- 2. The use of security cameras shall be publicly posted at entrances to the schools, and this policy shall be included in the school handbook.
- 3. It shall be considered appropriate use of security cameras for the following:
  - a. The protection of school equipment and facilities/property.
  - b. The protection of students, faculty, staff.
  - c. The monitoring of public areas within the buildings and building entrances/exits.
  - d. The investigation of criminal activity.

**VOLUNTEERING & FIELD TRIPS**

In order to protect our students from abuse and exploitation, anyone wishing to volunteer at the school or on school field trips needs to complete a background check. Background check forms can be picked up in the main office.

Volunteers must use designated adult bathrooms while on school property, and they must sign in and sign out in the main office during each visit to the school.

It is the responsibility and prerogative of the school principal to accept/not accept specific individuals as volunteers, arrange the assignments of volunteers, identify appropriate tasks for volunteers, and make decisions regarding the continuation of a volunteer’s service.

<p><b><u>POLITICAL FREEDOM</u></b></p> <p>The district shall in no way infringe upon individuals’ rights and freedoms of political involvement. However, employees and volunteers of the district must not misuse their position in the school to influence the academic process in the interest of their own political ambitions or those of a political group. Employees, volunteers and other citizens of the district will not engage in political activity on school premises during school hours.</p>	<p><b><u>SMOKING AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE</u></b></p> <p>No smoking is permitted in any school building or on school grounds at any time. The possession, use or distribution of cigarettes, alcohol and drugs in school or on school property is strictly prohibited. Any observed student violation should be reported to the principal or classroom teacher at once. I</p> <p><b><u>WEAPONS AND FIREWORKS POLICY</u></b></p> <p>In conformance with federal and state law, possession of firearms, fireworks, or other weapons is strictly prohibited. Any observed student violation should be reported to the</p>
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### **ALLERGENS**

It is the policy of the Highgate School District to take reasonable steps to provide an “allergen safe environment” through accommodations to enable all students to participate in all school programs and activities. This means an environment in which precautions have been identified and undertaken to minimize exposure to an identified allergen or allergens. It does not mean an environment guaranteed to be free of the allergen.

principal immediately.

### **VIDEOTAPING, FILMING, AND PHOTOGRAPHY OF STUDENTS**

Videotaping, filming, or photographing students while participating in school activities may constitute a disruption in the planned instructional process if it is done without adequate preparation and justification and may violate a student’s right to privacy. Highgate Elementary School reserves the right to approve or disapprove of any filming or videotaping on school property and at school events other than public functions such as athletic games, plays, etc.

There are numerous occasions during the school year when the school district, local media organizations, or authorized individuals will photograph, videotape, or interview students in or outside our schools for legitimate purposes.