

# CLARENDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Student Handbook  
2025~2026



84 Grange Hall Road  
North Clarendon, VT 05759  
Tel: 802-786-3940  
Fax: 802-747-9888  
[www.millriverschools.org](http://www.millriverschools.org)

## **Clarendon Elementary School**

84 Grange Hall Road  
Clarendon, Vermont 05759

Phone: 802-786-3940

Fax: 802-747-9888

Office Hours: 7:00 AM-3:00 PM

School Hours: 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Home of CES Pride  
School Colors: Blue and White

Principal: Summer Stoutes

This online version of the parent and student handbook is posted as a courtesy for reference and guidance as we matriculate through each school year.

According to the Vermont Education Law Book, 16(VSA)244 (a), MRUUSD Policy C-5 Subject 1, and MRUUSD Policy A1 (procedures), the Principal acts with the authority of the Superintendent and is responsible for the operation of the school. School board policy clarifies that the procedures are adaptable and may be revised without Board involvement.

Over the course of a ten-month school year, local, state, and national events may take place that may require clarification of or even change to school procedure, and the administration reserves the right to update the online version of the handbook throughout the school year with the authority granted in the above-mentioned policies and statutes.

In an effort to keep parents and students informed of any clarification, changes, or updates, said modifications will be annotated in the text of the handbook, while a running list of any changes will be referenced in the appendix at the end of the handbook for quick reference.

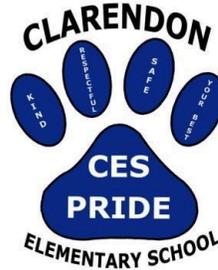
## Mission Statement

Every Student, Every Day; Our Personal Best in Every Way

### OUR PBIS CORE VALUES

CES Pride is:

-  Be Kind
-  Be Respectful
-  Be Safe
-  Be Your Best



### MRUUSD Foundational Beliefs

- All students feel respected, cared for, and loved.
- Educators feel valued, respected, and supported.
- Students, educators and families work together to build positive relationships.
- Every student knows why they are learning.
- Students know what they are expected to learn.
- All learners have voice and choice in their pursuit of personal growth.
- Students and educators have ongoing, rigorous opportunities to learn.
- Educators believe in and model learning as a lifelong process.
- Educators communicate with families before, during, and after challenges and successes.
- The entire community benefits from the strengths of its students, educators, and schools.

EVERY STUDENT, EVERY DAY - OUR PERSONAL BEST IN EVERY WAY

Dear CES Community,

This handbook is designed to assist you with some of the everyday expectations of Clarendon Elementary School. This document serves as a reference and is not inclusive of all policies that regulate this school. Extra copies of handbooks are always available in the school office, and you may also access the handbook, as well as school and district policies, online at [www.millriverschools.org](http://www.millriverschools.org). You may also request a print copy of any of the district policies not included in this handbook. The Clarendon Elementary School staff is happy to be an additional resource for you. It is my hope that all educators and families work together to communicate and support our students.

I have an open-door policy every day. If you have a concern, I ask you to first speak with your child's teacher. If you feel that the issue is unresolved, please bring it to my attention so I can do everything possible to help. If I am unavailable, please leave me a message or make an appointment to see me, and I will work to get back to you quickly.

Thank you for all your support in making Clarendon Elementary School the wonderful place it is!

Sincerely,  
Summer Stoutes, Principal



AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2025				
M	T	W	TH	F
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			
Cumulative				
Student Days		24	24	
Teacher Days		29	29	
OCTOBER 2025				
M	T	W	TH	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31
Student Days		21	45	
Teacher Days		22	51	
NOVEMBER 2025				
M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
Student Days		16	61	
Teacher Days		16	67	
DECEMBER 2025				
M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		
Student Days		15	76	
Teacher Days		15	82	
JANUARY 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30
Student Days		19	95	
Teacher Days		19	101	

<b>MRUUSD Calendar</b> 2025-2026 School Year	
8/18	New Teacher Orientation
8/19	New Teacher Orientation
8/20	Teacher Flex Day
8/21	Inservice Days Begin
8/26	Inservice Last Day
<b>8/27 School Begins</b>	
9/1	Labor Day
10/10	No School - Conferences STC Closed
10/13	Indigenous Peoples' Day
11/11	Veterans' Day
11/26 - 11/28	Thanksgiving Break
12/22 - 1/2	December Break
1/5	School Resumes
1/19	Martin Luther King Day
2/23 - 2/27	February Break
3/13	No School - Conferences STC Closed
4/20 - 4/24	April Break
5/25	Memorial Day
6/11	<b>Tentative Last Student Day</b>
6/12	Tentative Last Teacher Day
<b>OPEN HOUSE</b>	
TES - 8/27, CES 9/10, SMS - 9/16, WES - 9/24, MRU - 9/25	
<b>Monday Early Release Days</b>	
9/22, 10/20, 11/24, 12/15, 1/26, 3/9, 4/13, 5/18	
<b>PreK closures (due to training or registration)</b>	
10/17 no PreK at any site 5/4 no TMS PreK 5/8 no CES PreK 5/11 no WES PreK 5/15 no SMS PreK	

FEBRUARY 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
Cumulative				
Student Days		15	110	
Teacher Days		15	116	
MARCH 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			
Student Days		21	131	
Teacher Days		22	138	
APRIL 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	
Student Days		17	148	
Teacher Days		17	155	
MAY 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29
Student Days		20	168	
Teacher Days		20	175	
JUNE 2026				
M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12*
15*	16*	17*	18*	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			
Student Days		9	177	
Teacher Days		10	185	
*First 5 scheduled storm/emergency days to maintain 177/185 days				

## 2025-2026 Important Dates

Aug 20-Aug 26	Professional Development
Aug. 24	PTO Touch-A-Truck Event
Aug. 25	Welcome Back BBQ 5:00-6:30 p.m.
Aug. 27	School Begins
Sept. 1	No School/Labor Day
Sept. 10	CES Open House
Sept. 22	Early Dismissal/Professional Development
Sept. 24	Picture Day
Sept. 29	PBIS Assembly
Oct. 7	Lions Club eye screening
Oct. 9	Learner Led Conferences - Evening
Oct. 10	No School/Learner Led Conferences
Oct. 13	No School/Indigenous Peoples' Day
Oct. 17	Fire Safety Day
Oct. 17	PreK Closed for Training
Oct. 20	Early Dismissal/Professional Development
Oct. 27	PBIS Assembly
Oct. 28	Picture Make Up/Retake Day
Oct. 31	Halloween Parties and Parade
Nov. 11	No School/Veterans Day
Nov. 14	Trimester 1 Ends
Nov. 20	Family Thanksgiving Luncheon
Nov. 24	Early Dismissal/Professional Development
Nov. 25	PBIS Assembly/Report Cards Go Home
Nov. 26-28	Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 15	Early Dismissal/Professional Development
Dec. 15	Holiday Store
Dec. 19	PBIS Assembly
Dec. 22-Jan. 2	No School/December Break
Jan. 19	No School/Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Jan. 26	Early Dismissal/Professional Development
Jan. 29	PBIS Assembly
Feb. 20	PBIS Assembly/Trimester Ends
Feb. 23-27	No School/February Break
Mar. 3	Music in Our Schools
Mar. 4	Music in Our Schools rain date
Mar. 9	Early Dismissal/Professional Development
Mar. 10	Report Cards Go Home
Mar. 12	Learner Led Conferences - Evening
Mar. 13	No School/Learner Led Conferences
Mar. 30	PBIS Assembly
Apr. 13	Early Dismissal/Professional Development

Apr. 20-24	No School/April Break
Apr. 30	PBIS Assembly
May 8	Pre K Registration Day - Pre K Not in Session
May 18	Early Dismissal/Professional Development
May 22	Memorial Day Observance
May 25	No School/Memorial Day
May 28	Whole School Picnic
May 29	Trimester Ends
June 4	Tentative Pre K Graduation/ 6th Grade Graduation
June 8	Tentative Field Day
June 9	Tentative Field Day rain date
June 11	Early Dismissal/Tentative Last Day of School, Report Cards Go Home

### **ABOUT OUR SCHOOL**

CES is a public Pre K-6 school in North Clarendon, Vermont. One of four elementary schools in the Mill River Unified Union School District (MRUUSD), CES has about 150 students and approximately 50 adults on the premises. Located in Rutland County, 2 miles south of Rutland City, the town of North Clarendon is nestled in a valley of Vermont in the shadows of the Green and Taconic Mountains. Clarendon is considered a bedroom, suburban community with some local businesses and farms. Most students who graduate from the 6th grade attend the local public high school, Mill River Union High School (MRUHS).

### **ACCESS AND SECURITY**

Following MRUUSD board policy G15, access to the school building is restricted and governed by school staff and district leadership. A scanner is installed on main entrances for staff access. Please make sure when entering the building, the door is pulled shut behind you. Security measures, including surveillance cameras, may be in use in public areas of school property. Use of these cameras is governed by the expectations outlined in policy G15.

### **ALL VISITORS MUST SIGN IN AT THE OFFICE.**

### **ASBESTOS AND LEAD CONTROL**

Plans for asbestos and lead control at CES are filed at the central office with the Facilities Manager.

### **ACCIDENTS**

All accidents must be reported and documented by a school official. Anyone injured while on school property, during a school-sponsored activity, must immediately report the injury to the teacher/coach or any other school personnel. An Accident Report must be completed and submitted to the Main Office immediately following the incident.

### **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

AFTERSCHOOL or “CES ASP” is made possible through generous funding by the 21st Century Community Learning Center federal grant. The program hours are 3:00 to 5:15 PM. There are fees to participate, but financial assistance is available. The goals of the program are to provide safe, high quality, enriching activities for students in Grades K through 6 within a positive social environment. In addition to offering academic support and enhancement to students, we provide a broad assortment of enrichment programs in areas that may include, but not be limited to, indoor and outdoor recreation, fine arts, technology, nutrition, drama, music, wellness, culture, and history. Shannon Phillips is our CES ASP Site Director. If you have any questions regarding CESASP, please contact her at: [saphillips@millriverschools.org](mailto:saphillips@millriverschools.org)  
Website: <https://sites.google.com/millriverschools.org/afterschoolprograms?usp=sharing>

### **ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL**

Students may begin getting dropped off at 7:40 a.m. They will immediately go to the cafeteria for breakfast or activities. Buses arrive at approximately 7:50 a.m., at which point all students will be dismissed to their classrooms. Classrooms do not open until 7:50 a.m. **School officially starts at 8:00 a.m.** Parents bringing or picking up students should enter the school road at the fire station entrance. The school road is a ONE WAY street during school hours. In addition, we ask everyone driving into the school yard to **please drive slowly at all times and do not pass a school bus loading or unloading students when the lights are flashing.** Children may be present and we want them to remain safe. NO IDLING of vehicles in front of the school building during school hours for the safety of our students.

If you need to come into the school for any reason, please park your vehicle in one of the spots out front and be sure to come into the main office and sign in. Children should be dropped off at the door and will be helped to the classroom by staff. **Caregivers may walk students to the classroom on the first day of school. After the first day, students will walk themselves to the classroom, or staff members will be available to help.**

**All car riders and walkers will be dismissed starting at 2:50 PM.** Pre-K students should be picked up at their classroom doors outside of the school. All walkers and car riders will be escorted to the pickup point in front of the school. All parents should back into a parking spot in front of the school and in front of the fence. For safety reasons, Pre-K parents should try to use the spaces in front of the school. **Students riding the bus will be dismissed when all buses have arrived** and will exit the building at the gym/cafeteria and walk directly to the buses parked in the circle by the Foundations building. Everyone must wait until the cars are loaded before exiting the parking lot. Wait for the signal to proceed slowly. Cars will be stopped when the buses are exiting the school grounds.

### **CHANGES IN STUDENTS' NORMAL DESTINATION**

We must always have a note or phone notification from parents/guardians to allow students to change their after-school destination. We must also have a note if someone other than a parent

is to pick up a child. **For the safety of all children, you should call the office before 1:15 p.m. to change a student's after-school plans or to change buses.** Students are allowed limited use of school telephones only with permission from their teacher in emergency situations.

### **ASSEMBLIES**

Assemblies are a regularly scheduled part of the curriculum, and as such, are designed to be educational as well as entertaining experiences. They provide one of the few opportunities in school to learn formal audience behavior. Regardless of the type of program, courtesy demands that the student body be respectful as outlined by our PBIS expectations.

### **ASSESSMENTS AND REPORTING**

The primary purpose of assessment is to provide meaningful feedback for the advancement of student learning and to improve instruction. Assessing student work is a continuous process. Observation and accurate documentation are fundamental. Anecdotal records, reading logs, running records and teacher checklists are examples of this type of assessment. At times, a simple short answer test is the appropriate tool. In addition, teacher-created open-ended tests, which involve students explaining their answers, provide important information. Portfolios of student work and assessment of this work by rubrics are powerful tools.

Preschool and PreK utilize Teaching Strategies GOLD. This system is an anecdotal, observation-based assessment that connects data with daily instructional resources. This creates an ongoing feedback loop of information to individualize learning.

### **ATTENDANCE/CALL BACK**

Clarendon Elementary School supports the philosophy that the instructional program is a vital part of a child's education. Parents/guardians should strive to have their students in school and on time every day that school is in session, except in cases of emergency, illness, or school approved absences. **If your child is going to miss a day of school for any reason, please call the school between the hours of 7:45 and 9:00 a.m.** We will contact parents if a child is absent and we have not been notified. A note should also be sent with your child when he/she returns to school stating the reason for the absence. For absences of three consecutive days or more, a doctor's note is required.

### **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE**

Class attendance and participation are critical elements of the educational process and may be taken into account in assessing academic achievement. School personnel shall notify parents and take all steps required by local authorities for excessive absences.

In order to be considered in attendance, a student must be present in the school for the school day or at a place other than the school with the approval of the appropriate school official for the purpose of attendance or a school activity that has been officially authorized under the

school administration. Such activities may include field trips, athletic contests, student conventions, musical festivals, or any similar approved activity.

The responsibility for school attendance will be that of the home. Parents and students are expected to cooperate with teachers and administrators to ensure regular attendance. To achieve an efficient and workable program regarding student attendance, the following procedures will be implemented:

### **Mill River Union Unified School District Attendance Procedures 25-26**

Parents can excuse their children from school for up to 10 days without documentation. Students will be marked Absent Excused if the parent/guardian calls the school with an AOE approved reason for the absence. Students absent for a reason unapproved by the AOE will start to accumulate unexcused absences, and this may begin the truancy process after 20 days of unexcused absence.

AoE Approved Reasons for Absence:

- \* Personal illness;
- \* Appointments with health professionals that cannot be made outside of the regular school day;
- \* Observance of recognized religious holidays when the observance is required during a regular school day;
- \* Emergency family situations such as a death in the family;
- \* Planned absences for personal or educational purposes which have been approved.
- \* Absences due to suspension or expulsion

After a student has missed 10 days of school without documentation, MRUUSD requires a note from a doctor or a related professional. If there are any further absences, the child may be considered truant. The consequences for excessive truancy may include summer work or meetings with staff to create an attendance plan.

### **APPOINTMENTS FOR MULTIPLE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:**

1. Parents/Guardians of students who have excessive absences will receive additional school correspondence.
2. Notices will be sent home for 5, 7 and 10 days of UNEXCUSED ABSENCES.
3. Once a child has reached the 10 UNEXCUSED ABSENCES mark, a meeting will be set up with the student, the parent(s), classroom teacher and an administrator to resolve the attendance issue. Additionally, a BARJ and/or PSSYF referral will be made during this attendance meeting.
4. If a child reaches the 20 day UNEXCUSED ABSENCES mark, the school district is mandated to send a 20 day UNEXCUSED ABSENCES letter to the State Attorney and is carbon copied (CC) to the Department of Children and Family (DCF). This is a directive of the Rutland County State's Attorney and an affidavit will be sent to the court for continued unresolved attendance issues.
5. The court will decide whether to set up an appointment with the student and parents to look at the attendance record.

Students who are absent for ten (10) consecutive days without notifying the school could be unenrolled. Students between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) will be considered truant, and the appointed truant officer will act in accordance with all relevant sections of Vermont Statute, Title 16, Chapter 25. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student who has been absent five (5), seven (7), or ten (10) days (lawful or unlawful) in a year will be notified by mail of the absences and reminded of attendance procedures.

We encourage you to plan any trips during scheduled school vacations. If you are unable to do so, please prepare a plan for your child's instruction while away. You will be responsible for providing for your child's educational needs. Trips of more than three days require an approved plan signed by the principal at least one week prior to your departure. Please contact the administrative assistant of your school to receive a copy of the form to submit to the principal for approval. Teachers will not be required to provide work for your child. As work is presented in the classroom, it can be set aside for your child to complete upon their return. You may need to help your child with any new tasks missed while away. Your child will be given a reasonable amount of time to complete this work.

When a student is ill, homework may be requested by emailing the teacher. Otherwise, when the student returns, it is their responsibility to work with the teacher to make up work that was missed. Unfortunately, homework assignments alone cannot take the place of classroom instruction, projects, demonstrations or discussion.

Upon return to school, students need to check on what they have missed and seek assistance in addressing any gaps. \*If a student is absent from school, they will not be allowed to participate in any school sponsored after-school function, such as practices, games, clubs or school dances.

### **BUILDING USE**

The Clarendon Elementary School building is available for use by various organizations. We encourage community members to use the school. A request form for the use of the building is on the [district website](#). The form must be filled out in advance and is subject to the conditions and approval as outlined by the school principal.

### **BULLETINS, NOTICES & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Announcements of calendar events, upcoming school activities, and general information are available in the weekly update and on our website <https://ces.mruusd.org/> or go to <https://www.mruusd.org/> and click on the Clarendon Elementary School tab. Parents, students,

or organizations who wish to make announcements should send the announcements electronically to [sstoutes@millriverschools.org](mailto:sstoutes@millriverschools.org) and contain less than 300 characters and must have the appropriate contact information regarding the activity. If you wish to receive the newsletter electronically, please send your email address to Mrs. Stoutes.

## **BUS ROUTES**

All buses and drivers transporting Clarendon Elementary School students are now coordinated by Connie Erickson whose office is at Mill River UHS. Questions regarding routing should be addressed to her. 786-3993 x265. Bus discipline will still be handled by Mrs. Stoutes at school.

### **TO ALL PARENTS OF PUPILS RIDING ON A SCHOOL BUS:**

#### **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

- Transportation to and from school is provided for students in grades K-12.
- Driving a school bus is not an easy job. The driver must not only pay attention to their driving, but must always be concerned with the safety of the students. Riding the school bus is a privilege, and students are expected to meet the bus expectations listed below.
- For student safety, we ask that an adult be at the bus stop with all children in grades K-3. Drivers have been directed to bring a child back to school if there is not an adult at the bus stop. If this is the case, someone from the after school program will try to contact you.
- Bus drivers may not stop in between stops to pick-up or drop-off students.
- Students must ride their assigned bus. Students may not ride any other bus without written permission from their appointed guardian and approved by the main office

#### **Bus Expectations**

- Great the driver politely, say thank you.
- Remain seated. Students should ride with their backpacks either on their lap or on the seat next to them.
- Keep head, hands, feet, and backpacks to yourself and inside the seat. Remember to have a safe body and keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Talk to your neighbor in a quiet manner. Save conversations with people in front or behind you for the playground. *Remember there are children of all ages around you – use language that is appropriate for all to hear.*
- If you are spoken to and corrected by the bus driver, you are expected to follow the driver's directions.
- Remember to be patient and help others.
- Hands, arms, or any objects must remain inside windows or doors.
- Students may only change seats at the direction of the bus driver.
- Be respectful of others.
- Carry off what you carry on and leave things as you found them. If a student notices a problem, please notify the driver. Parents will be held financially responsible for any damage done by their child to the bus.
- For safety reasons, please wait to eat or drink until you arrive at school or home.

Please see bus expectations: **BUS TRANSPORTATION BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

## **COMMUNICATION**

- Communication plays a major role in education. We will do our best to keep you informed about your child's school progress and accomplishments.
- Teachers may communicate through homework folders and notebooks, progress reports, phone calls, and email. If you have a question or concern, please contact us as soon as possible.
- The first contact should always be your child's classroom teacher or the staff member with whom you have a question or concern.
- You may send a note directly to the teacher or you may call the office at 802-786-3940. Office staff will direct your call and have the teacher contact you by phone as soon as possible.
- We encourage you to make an appointment in advance with a teacher rather than showing up in the classroom.
- If you feel that your question or concern has not been resolved or additional assistance is needed, the principal should be contacted. Every effort will be made to work collaboratively to resolve the issue. If the issue is still not resolved, contact the Superintendent of Schools at 802-786-3988.
- Please be sure to communicate any changes in your child's before or after school routines.

## **CURRICULUM**

Excellence in education requires constant improvement with new approaches to learning. We have established a curriculum based on best practices for helping children learn. Our program encourages many different learning styles because we know that all children can learn if they are supported in different, appropriate ways. Our curriculum is based on the Vermont Grade Expectations and the Common Core State Standards, which provides a guideline that helps schools in Vermont meet goals with improvements in these areas:

- **What students learn**
- **How students learn**
- **How we measure student learning**

The Common Core links the "skills" and "subjects" with the practices that we know are most likely to lead to success for each student and prepares each student to be college and career ready.

Preschool and PreK use the Creative Curriculum. The program provides children with play-based and hands-on explorations through emergent investigations and works to foster the development of the whole child. We utilize a child-centered approach focusing on the children's interests, needs and experiences.

### **DRESS/APPEARANCE**

- Clothing should allow for easy movement. Please remember that children do spend time on the playground.
- We rely on parents to use good judgment about what students wear to school.
- Students' clothing should be appropriate and cannot contain inappropriate slogans or advertisements.
- We ask that students wear appropriate footwear – including socks and sneakers on PE days.

### **ELEMENTARY GUIDANCE PROGRAM**

Ms. Paula Reynolds, our School Counselor, plays an important role at Clarendon Elementary. Our counseling program consists of helping students become more able learners, assisting parents in their nurturing roles, supporting teachers in providing beneficial instruction for all students, and working with administration to lead the school in creating a positive educational environment. This is achieved by working with students individually, in small groups, and in classroom lessons to build skills in the areas of social and emotional development. A strength-based counseling approach is also utilized.

### **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

The law requires various drills, including fire, evacuation, and lockdown drills. The intent of the drills are to keep students safe in the event of an actual emergency. Students will participate in school-wide drills monthly. The type of drill will be at the discretion of the administration. Teachers will review the expectations of the drills in advance. The school will follow-up with communication home after an evacuation drill or a lockdown drill. No notice will be sent following monthly fire drills.

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

The school must always be kept informed about current numbers (emergency and work) in the event your child becomes ill or is injured and someone needs to be notified. We also need your emergency information on file so that we may reach you in the event of an unplanned early-dismissal. (See **School Messenger**) Please notify the school of any change of address or telephone number.

### **ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS**

When a student enrolls at Clarendon Elementary School, the office will ask for the following information:

- Copy of birth certificate
- Original health records indicating immunization history
- Copy of health and academic records for transfer students.
- 2 Proofs of residency

**Parents who do not want their child's name or other biographical information made public should indicate that desire in a letter to the principal's office.**

### **EDUCATION SUPPORT TEAM (EST)**

Our school maintains an active Educational Support Team that meets on a monthly basis with the purpose of seeking new ways to address specific challenges that individual students may be facing in school. The process involves drawing upon the experience and expertise of a variety of professionals in our school. Together we look at a child's strengths, discuss concerns, explore strategies, consider available resources and develop a plan to better meet the student's educational needs. In addition to a child's classroom teacher, the team is generally composed of a teacher, intervention team leader, special education staff, the school counselor, principal, and parents.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Mill River Unified Union School District offers a variety of extracurricular activities, including soccer, basketball, and cheerleading. These activities and others are available to all students.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are an important and integral part of a teacher's classroom program. Therefore, throughout the school year, trips will be planned that will expand the classroom program. Students cannot participate in these out-of-school activities unless we have obtained your written consent. We seek your permission, in advance, to have your child attend field trips planned by the teacher. Prior to each trip, you will be notified and receive pertinent information. Mrs. Gibbs will include a Blanket Field Trip Permission form with the initial packet of forms you receive at the beginning of the school year. Once you have signed this letter, your signature for permission will not be necessary. However, if you have objections to a particular field trip, you can write a note revoking your consent for that trip.

We hope this approach will save paperwork, parent/teacher time, and also ensure that every student will be able to participate in a planned field trip, unless parents have objections. Teachers will notify parents before the day of the field trip. Students are expected to ride the school bus unless there are medical reasons to the contrary. Prior arrangements must be made with the teacher and principal.

### **FOOD SERVICE**

We have renewed our contract with *Aladdin* who will handle bookkeeping, buying, menu/food preparation, and accounting for the Clarendon Elementary School lunch program. **During the 2025-2026 school year, there is no cost for breakfast or lunch, which is allowed by funding from the State of Vermont through the *Universal School Meals Act*.** The cost for morning/extra milk is \$.50. This charge is **not** covered under the Federal School Lunch Reimbursement Program. Morning milk, juice, and extra milk may not be charged. If your child would like a second lunch, there is an option to add funds to their My School Bucks (<http://ces.edudine.com/meal-plans/>).

**All students qualify for school meals and receive both breakfast and lunch at no cost. If you have questions, please call the school for assistance.**

## **HOMEWORK**

At Clarendon Elementary School, we believe that homework is an important part of our students' learning. Not only does homework provide a means of extending the students' classroom experiences, it also helps them develop responsibility, independence, and good work habits. Homework provides students with a chance to practice the skills and concepts they have learned during the school day. It gives them the opportunity to complete work not finished in school or to build upon their learning at home through teacher or parent-directed projects.

Homework provides parents with an opportunity to monitor their child's progress. Parents and teachers are encouraged to communicate with each other about a child's academic growth throughout the course of the school year. Teachers are asked to provide guidelines and expectations. Parents are asked to provide feedback regarding their child's needs. By working together in this manner as a team, students are better able to succeed.

Classroom teachers send out **Homework Guidelines** for their classroom at the beginning of the school year. These guidelines will provide examples and expectations for assignments that may be given during the school year. If parents feel their child has special needs in the area of homework, they should notify the classroom teacher.

## **LIBRARY BOOKS**

Students have library periods and are encouraged to borrow books. It is expected that books will be returned on time. Students not returning books will not be allowed to take out additional books. At the end of the year, students must return or pay for any outstanding books.

## **LOST AND FOUND-**

**Please label all children's clothing and boots, especially outerwear.** The "lost and found" rack is located near the main office. Please check it often. At the halfway point and at the end of the year, all found items that are not claimed will be taken to the local donation center.

## **LUNCHROOM BEHAVIOR**

Students are required to enter the lunchroom quietly, get their lunch, and sit down at a table. They are expected to stay seated at the table until their lunchtime is over. Children are encouraged to eat their lunch and not share food (for health reasons) with their classmates. They are expected to display appropriate table manners and wait to be dismissed. The lunchroom is considered a part of our instructional day where learned social skills are applied. Lunchtime is an opportunity for students to relax, take a break from their schoolwork, and eat lunch. Students are encouraged to talk quietly with their peers during their lunchtime.

## **MONEY, VALUABLES AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Money, other than what is needed for lunch or other school programs, should not be brought to school. We strongly recommend that valuable items such as baseball cards and other collectibles, CD players, toys, etc., be left at home. Some personal items may be permitted in school at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Students should be warned, however, of the potential for something being damaged or taken.

### **MEDICATIONS -**

The district shall have procedures in place to ensure compliance with laws and regulations governing the possession, administration, and storage of prescription and non-prescription medications needed by students at school or during school sponsored activities. Implementation The superintendent or designee will develop procedures governing the possession, administration and storage of medication needed by any student during the regular school day or during school sponsored activities.

The school nurse or a person designated and trained by the school nurse may give medication, under the following guidelines:

1. Prescribed medication must be brought to school in a container labeled by the pharmacy or physician, accompanied by written orders from a physician, and a written request by the student's parent or guardian that the district comply with the physician's order. The physician's orders must detail the name of the drug, dosage, time interval the medication is to be taken, diagnosis, and reason for giving. The medication must be stored by the school nurse or designee in a secure storage place.
2. Non-prescription medication must be accompanied by a written request from the parent or guardian of a student bringing such medication to school. The request must contain assurances that the student has suffered no previous ill effects from the use of medication. Medication must be left in the custody of the school nurse or designee.
3. 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 medication at school, on school grounds, at school sponsored activities, on school-provided transportation, and during school-related programs.

The district shall provide an opportunity for communication with the pupil, parent or guardian, and physician regarding the efficacy of the medication administered during school hours. In the case of medication possessed by students with life-threatening allergies or with asthma, the district shall provide forms for parents to submit authorizing possession of the medication and releasing the school from liability as a result of any injury arising from the student's self administration of the emergency medication.

### **NUTRITION – HEALTHY SNACKS**

A healthy body requires a combination of a well-balanced diet and regular exercise to be ready for learning. Research has shown that good nutrition is directly related to school performance. The Clarendon Elementary School encourages you to send healthy snacks with your child, such as fruit, cheese, crackers, pretzels, raisins, carrots, celery, juices, or water.

### **OUTSIDE PLAY**

All students are encouraged to play outside throughout the school year with their friends. It is

important to keep them warm and safe. The best way to protect children from cold temperatures is to dress them in layers. Children should come to school in the winter with an extra set of shoes, socks, underwear, and pants because they may have to change their clothing. Ordinarily, we will limit their outdoor playtime to 30-minute increments in cold weather and will not allow your children to play outside in extreme conditions. Our basic guideline is to keep children inside if the temperature is below 10 degrees Fahrenheit or if a wind chill advisory has been issued.

You can help your child prevent cold weather health risks by dressing them properly. Children should come to school with a hat and scarf as well as gloves or mittens. They will also need to wear a warm, water-resistant coat or parka, snow pants, and boots. For a child to play on the playground in the snow, snow pants and boots are recommended.

### **PARENT, GUARDIAN, FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

Parent involvement in the school is very important. When schools and families work together to support learning, students benefit through higher grades, higher test scores, better attendance, more positive attitudes, and a sense of pride in themselves as well as their school. The role of parents in their child's education is crucial for success.

Clarendon Elementary School welcomes you to become an active participant in your child's school life. Listed below are ways you, your family, and the community can be involved with the school.

- Attend Open House
- Attend Student Presentations
- Attend Parent Conferences
- Attend School Board Meetings
- Become a PTO member and attend meetings
- Volunteer at fundraising events
- Volunteer to serve on school committees:
- Become a mentor
- Coach a sport
- Accompany the classroom on field trips
- Volunteer to read in a classroom once a month
- Assist in school-wide events

### **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

The CES Parent Teachers Organization is a vital part of the educational program in our community and has contributed much to improving the school through donations of volunteer services, equipment, and much more. All parents are encouraged to become active members of this organization. We are always looking for volunteers for a variety of projects. You can learn more at their website: <https://www.clarendonpto.org/>

## **PARTNERS IN YOUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION**

Children feel a sense of pride when they know their parents are concerned with their educational progress. Teachers feel rewarded and much appreciated when parents support them.

### **Here are some areas of cooperation that are important:**

- Make sure your child attends school regularly
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain proper discipline
- Stay in tune with what your child is learning – ask questions about the day
- Let the school know if any problems outside of school affect your child
- Stay in touch with the classroom teacher and principal
- If the teacher or staff has been helpful, let them know – we all need compliments!

## **PLAYGROUND RULES**

The playground at school provides a valuable play area for our students. All children are expected to follow the school rules, the directions of the supervising staff, and respect the equipment. Children will lose their recess privileges if they fail to follow these rules. Please impress upon your children the need to take care of their school grounds, equipment, and building, and to report to the school any problems.

# **Playground Rules**

## **Be Kind, Be Respectful, Be Safe, Be Your Best.**

- Hands and body parts to yourself - have a safe body.
- I see you, you see me - students need to be visible at all times.
- Be kind and respectful - use appropriate language and kind words.
- Include and teach others. Everybody plays - no exclusions.
- Try new things.
- Take turns, encourage others, and be a good sport.  
\*Follow the rules of the game and use equipment properly.
- Share and take care of the equipment.  
\*Equipment is shared by all students - please use equipment appropriately and put it back when you are done. We want to be sure we have things to play with all year.
- Use trash bins.
- Listen to the teacher on duty - the teacher has the final say.
- Ask for permission to leave the playground area.
- Line up when called.
- Recess is a time for active play and movement - no books, toys from home, or fidget spinners.

## **Twisty Slide/Slide/Long Slide**

- Slide forward/feet first.
- Walk away from the end of the slide quickly.
- The tall twisty slide is currently closed.

- Students may climb up slides provided no one is coming down the slide and they feel they have the skills to do so comfortably. **DO NOT CLIMB THE TWISTY SLIDE!**
- Students **MAY NOT** climb the green pole attached to the twisty slide.

### **Swings**

- Sit on your bottom when swinging.
- Do not kick/throw the wood chips.
- Walk far enough away from the swings when someone else is swinging.
- Swing back and forth, not side to side, and avoid twisting the chains.
- No jumping from your swing.

### **GaGa Pit**

- Be kind and respectful.
- Follow the rules attached to the GaGa Pit.
- Teachers settle disputes that cannot be reasonably resolved by students.

### **Sledding**

- Facing forward and sitting on your bottom.
- One or two people on a sled.
- Walk up the side, away from sledding paths.
- Must use a sled for sledding (no sledding in only snow pants, knees, bottoms, etc.).
- Must wear appropriate outdoor clothing (snow pants, boots, jackets, hats, mittens/gloves).

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

PBIS is a framework that develops a common set of expectations for our school. These expectations help to support a positive learning environment and encourage all members of our learning community to promote positive behaviors. PBIS focuses on supporting each learner where they are at through a tiered system of intervention and supports.

Clarendon Elementary School is committed to reflecting the following two basic beliefs:

- Respect for self and others is the greatest concern in all aspects of living.
- A caring and cooperative environment is conducive to a productive learning process.

**MRUUSD schools believe in using restorative practices whenever possible to help students reflect and grow when an unexpected event happens or an expectation is not met.**

### **RESTORATIVE PRACTICES:**

- Acknowledges that relationships are central to building community.
- Ensures equity of voice among all members of the community. All voices are valued, everyone is heard.
- Establishes a culture of high expectations with high support, emphasizing

- doing things “WITH” not “TO” or “FOR”.
- Builds systems that address misbehavior and harm in a way that strengthens relationships and focuses on the harm done rather than only rule-breaking.
  - Engages in collaborative problem solving.
  - Enhances accountability, responsibility, and empowers change and growth for all members of the community.

**STUDENTS, AS WELL AS THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY, WILL STRIVE TO MAINTAIN A RESPECTFUL ATMOSPHERE AT ALL TIMES.**

<b>CES School-wide Expectations Teaching Matrix</b>						
<b>Expectation</b>	<b>Routine/Setting</b>					
	<b>Classroom</b>	<b>Lunchroom</b>	<b>Hallway</b>	<b>Bus</b>	<b>Playground</b>	<b>Bathroom</b>
<b>Be Kind</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage others</li> <li>● Include others</li> <li>● Use kind and appropriate language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Say, “please” and “thank you”</li> <li>● Have patience</li> <li>● Include others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Smile</li> <li>● Eye contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Help others</li> <li>● Greet the driver</li> <li>● Have patience</li> <li>● Say “Thank you.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include others</li> <li>● Share equipment</li> <li>● Take turns</li> <li>● Encourage others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Take turns</li> <li>● Use quiet voices</li> </ul>

<p><b>Be Respectful</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full body attention to the speaker</li> <li>• Use materials and learning tools appropriately</li> <li>• Raise hand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chew food with mouth closed</li> <li>• Indoor voices</li> <li>• Clean your area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiet</li> <li>• Allow others to pass through</li> <li>• Accept my place in line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to the driver</li> <li>• Listen to peers in conversation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use trash bins</li> <li>• Be a good sport</li> <li>• Line up when called</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep myself and others dry</li> <li>• Flush toilet</li> <li>• Be private and allow others to have privacy</li> <li>• Throw trash in trash can</li> <li>• Toilet paper in toilet</li> </ul>
<p><b>Be Safe</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit in chair safely</li> <li>• Push in chair</li> <li>• Use words of encouragement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk</li> <li>• Stay in personal space</li> <li>• Eat your own food</li> <li>• Remain seated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk</li> <li>• Stay to right</li> <li>• Quiet hands</li> <li>• Stay in personal space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiet voices</li> <li>• Stay seated</li> <li>• Feet on floor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay in personal space</li> <li>• follow rules of games</li> <li>• Use equipment properly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash hands with soap</li> <li>• Keep floors and walls dry and clean</li> </ul>
<p><b>Be Your Best</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be honest</li> <li>• Take risks and persevere</li> <li>• Complete work accurately and on time</li> <li>• Come to class prepared</li> <li>• Keep a positive attitude</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health food choices</li> <li>• Have appropriate conversations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be observant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep track of belongings</li> <li>• Appropriate language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include and teach others</li> <li>• Use appropriate language</li> <li>• Try new things</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to class quickly and quietly</li> </ul>

Students can expect:

- A safe environment in which to learn
- Fair treatment by school personnel
- Respect for personal space and belongings
- To be held accountable for academic performance
- To be held accountable for social behavior

School Staff can expect the students will:

- Respect adults and each other
- Respect the school facility
- Respect the rights of other students to learn without disruptions
- Be prepared for learning
- Be cooperative with fellow students, teachers, and staff

The classroom teachers will be implementing **Responsive Classroom** techniques that create a respectful school climate. The staff has established acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. Each classroom will establish **Classroom Rules** with their students and post the rules in the classroom. As part of PBI, expectations will be taught, and retaught throughout the year.

### **Classification of Behaviors for Documentation**

When behaviors are observed and documented, they will be classified as either a “major” or “minor” behavior. A “minor” behavior requires teacher intervention, restorative practices, and may require out-of-class time. A “major” behavior requires immediate intervention and will result in a time out of class, restorative practice, and may require other consequences such as lunch detention or suspension.

#### **Major:**

Abusive language

Fighting/Physical aggression

Defiance/Insubordination

Harassment/Bullying

Elopement

Theft

Property Damage

Cheating

#### **Minor:**

Inappropriate language

Physical contact

Disrespect/ non-compliance

Disruption

Technology violation

Property misuse

Lying

When the student has demonstrated by his/her behavior that additional supports or strategies are needed, the principal will require a conference with the parents to address the concerns. The student may also be referred to the school’s PBIS Team or Educational Support Team, and his/her parents will be expected to be a part of the team to create a plan to improve behavior in

the class/classroom, possibly through the Restorative Practices process. The principal also has the authority, given the severity of the offense, to skip steps toward a more severe consequence. This will be especially true in regard to behavior that is unsafe, which could result in a student being suspended.

### **Suspensions**

If a student's behavior results in a suspension, the principal will make the determination as to whether it will be considered an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension.

**In-School Suspension** will be served in a designated area of the building where a student will be able to complete school work. Students assigned to ISS are not eligible to participate in extracurricular activities until the day following the end of their In-School Suspension.

**Out-of-School Suspension** is served at the student's residence. Students assigned to OSS are not eligible to participate in extracurricular activities until the day following the end of their Out-of-School Suspension.

### **PRE-KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE**

The CES Pre-Kindergarten offers two separate sessions for 3 and 4 year olds.

- Preschool for children turning 3 years old by August 31 meets M-F 8:00-12:30 pm.
- Pre K for children turning 4 years old by August 31 meets M-F 8:00-2:50 pm.

Both will have the same school calendar schedule as K-6. If there are any exceptions, you will be notified. We are unable to provide bus transportation for preschool/Pre K students.

### **SCHOOL BOARD**

The 11 member Mill River Union Unified School District is made up of representatives from the community. These elected officials make decisions about the educational program and personnel at the school. They welcome parents and community members at their meetings. Currently, the Board meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The first meeting of the month is held at Mill River, and the second meeting of the month is rotating between the elementary schools.

### **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS & DELAYS**

Keeping parents informed is a priority, so Clarendon Elementary School offers the School Messenger Notification Service. This system allows the district and individual schools to contact

parents via phone with important announcements about emergencies. We anticipate using this service for:

- Emergency Notification
- Inclement weather cancellations or delays
- Early dismissals due to inclement weather
- Early release reminders
- Transportation messages, such as late bus routes or field trips
- Event reminders

The ability to deliver a message is only as successful as the contact information we have for our families, so **please make certain we have the most up-to-date direct dial numbers and email addresses**. If this information changes please let us know immediately.

#### What you need to know about receiving calls sent through *School Messenger*

1. Your caller ID will display 411 anytime an emergency call is being sent. Examples of an emergency include evacuation from our site or if we've needed to lockdown our facility.
2. Your caller ID will display our main number (802-786-3940 or 802-775-3264) anytime a non-emergency call is generated.
3. ***School Messenger*** is voice activated and will leave a message on your voicemail or answering machine.
4. If you have a direct dial number at work, you should provide us with that number rather than the main number plus the extension.

Please be sure that the school has your correct phone number(s). Announcements will also be made on the local TV and radio stations as early as possible.

**In the event of a DELAY, please add the number of hours of the delay to the 7:40 early arrival time, and that is the earliest students can arrive. For example: If we have a 2-hour Delay, school would begin at 9:40 a.m.**

#### **SCHOOL ENTRY AGE POLICY**

It shall be the policy of Mill River Unified Union School District that students entering elementary school must comply with the following age requirements:

1. For admission into Kindergarten, a youngster must have attained the age of five (5) on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> of the year of entrance.
2. For admission into Grade 1, a youngster must have attained the age of six (6) years on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> of the year of entrance. Children who have not attained the age of six (6) by August 31<sup>st</sup> may be admitted to Grade 1 if they have successfully completed a state-recognized kindergarten program. The youngster **MUST** also meet the kindergarten exit standards.

Title 16, Sec. 1121 of the General Laws of Vermont requires school attendance for students between the ages of six and sixteen.

## **SCHOOL HEALTH**

School nursing is a specialized service, which contributes to the process of education. The school nurse, as a member of the professional team, provides needed health services and acts as an advocate for the health rights of all children in school.

Various health services are provided as part of the school nurse's duties. Periodic vision and hearing testing are done across grade levels. If you would like to opt out of a hearing test for your child, please contact the school nurse. Height and weight are done at least yearly. School districts and primary care providers will attempt to avoid duplicating services provided by the other and will share information as practicable and allowable by law.

The school nurse is a resource person. Please feel free to contact her at school.

### **\*Perfumes, lotions and other personal hygiene products:**

Chemicals and fragrances, particularly when used in spray or aerosol form, have the potential to cause symptoms in people with reactive airway disorders such as asthma. Therefore, due to the risk of adverse reactions among our students and staff, MRUUSD asks that no spray or aerosol hygiene products be used inside our buildings or buses (such as perfume, deodorant, hairspray, body spray, air freshener, or sunscreen.)

## **Health Issues**

### **Concussions and other Head Injuries**

Under 16 V.S.A. § 1431 the principal or headmaster of each public and approved independent school shall ensure that statewide concussion and other head injury guidelines are provided annually to each youth athlete and the athlete's parents or guardians;

- Each youth athlete and a parent or guardian shall annually sign a form acknowledging receipt of the concussion and other head injury guidelines
- There are training requirements for all coaches and referees of a contest on how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or other head injury.

### **Life-Threatening Allergies and Life-Threatening Chronic Illnesses**

16 V.S.A. §563(29) requires school boards to assign an employee to annually inform the parents of students with life-threatening allergies and life-threatening chronic illnesses of the applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable federal and/or state statutes and federal and /or state regulations. This would include notice of the provisions of 16 V.S.A. §1387 that permits students with life-threatening allergies or asthma to possess and self-administer emergency medication at school in accordance with a plan of action authorized and developed under the requirements of this statute.

### Exclusion From Physical Activity

If a child is well enough to come to school, he or she is expected to participate in physical education and recess unless there is a special problem. Any such problems must be discussed with the teacher, the school nurse or the principal. A note from a doctor should accompany any request for alteration of activity.

### Illness

#### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS TO KEEP OR SEND A CHILD HOME

- Fever – 100 degrees F or above
- Diarrhea or vomiting within past **24 hours**
- Persistent sore throat with fever or enlarged tonsils/glands
- Undetermined rash
- Reddened, painful eyes with drainage
- In regards to Covid Symptoms, please follow the latest state guidelines.

If your child has been ill the night before school or in the morning of school, s/he needs to stay at home. If your child should become ill in school, s/he may go to the nurse's office. You will be notified and s/he will be sent home as necessary. The reason for staying home or being sent home is twofold. A child who is ill finds it difficult to concentrate and s/he may infect classmates, teachers or others in the building. When a child has a fever at home or is sent home with a fever, s/he must have a temperature of 98.6, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.

All contagious diseases need to be reported to school (strep throat, scarlet fever, chicken pox, pink eye, etc.) This also includes nuisance diseases (head lice, scabies, impetigo, etc.). This information is confidential but we need to be able to identify outbreaks and notify parents.

Any time you as a parent or guardian have a question or concern, please do not hesitate to call.

### SCHOOL POLICIES

The following policies are a sampling of the rules, regulations, or procedures that govern

Clarendon Elementary School. The policies are available on our website.

Admission of Resident Students

Animal Policy

Electronic Communication and Data Management

Student Assessment

### **SMOKING, VAPING, ALCOHOL, AND OTHER DRUGS**

It is the policy of the district to prohibit the use of tobacco, tobacco substitutes, and tobacco paraphernalia on school grounds in accordance with state law. This ban extends to any student, employee or visitor to the school, and applies at all times, whether or not school is in session. Students and staff are prohibited from possessing tobacco-related products at all times while at school sponsored activities, or representing the school district. The superintendent or designee shall develop procedures, rules and regulations that are necessary to implement this policy and, at a minimum, will include provisions ensuring that tobacco products are confiscated when found in the possession of students and that referrals to law enforcement agencies are made when appropriate. For purposes of this policy, “school grounds” means any property and facilities owned, leased, or utilized by the district and used at any time for school related activities, including but not limited to school buildings, school buses, areas adjacent to school buildings, personal vehicles, athletic fields and parking lots.

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

- The school provides different services to support student learning. These services include Targeted Tutoring/Tiered Instructions and Special Education. In order to provide some Targeted Tutoring/Tiered Instructions, the school has scheduled a specific time each day to provide some of these services so a student will not miss instructional time.
- Our school has developed a schedule that includes a FIT (focused instructional time) block each day. During this time students will be working in either 1:1 or in a small group setting.
- Special Education provides Individual Education Plans for students with a specific learning disability or learning impairment. Students must be tested and meet specific state criteria to be eligible for these services.

### **SUMMER PROGRAMS**

The Mill River Unified Union School District offers a summer program for students who are on IEP or 504 plans. This is organized and staffed by the Special Education Director and information is sent out in the spring.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

### **Student Acceptable Use: General Procedures**

Students at Clarendon Elementary School have access to the school's electronic resources for the purpose of enhancing learning. During school hours, students may access the school's electronic resources for educational purposes only. Acceptable use includes classroom activities, career development, curriculum driven research and may involve electronic communication, as designated by the school. The school's electronic resources shall not be used for commercial purposes, as a public access service or a public forum, unless the school allows permission. Students are expected to follow the rules of personal conduct outlined in the student handbook, as well as abide by state and federal laws in the use of the school's electronic resources. Parents/guardians are warned that some material accessible via the Internet, through the school's electronic resources, may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive to some people. While it is the school's intent to provide appropriate electronic resources to enhance the curriculum, students may find ways to access other materials as well. The District believes the benefits to students from access to electronic resources and the Internet for information gathering, research and to provide opportunities for collaboration, exceeds the potential disadvantages. Ultimately, parents/guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using electronic resources.

### **Individual User Responsibilities**

1. Understand that electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communication systems are not confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use;
2. Comply with authorized requests from the Technology Department to discontinue activities that threaten the operation or integrity of computers, systems or networks;
3. Not distribute personally identifiable information about themselves or others by means of the school's electronic communication system;
4. Be responsible at all times for the proper use of their account by taking all reasonable precautions to prevent others from gaining access to their system account and password;
5. Not use another person's system account or password, or present themselves another person, without written permission from the system administrator or school coordinator;
6. Not purposefully access or send materials, which include pictures, video or audio files, that are rude, disrespectful, abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal;
7. Not interfere or disrupt computer systems and networks and related services, including, but not limited to, the propagation of computer "worms", "viruses" and "Trojan Horses";
8. Not use the school's electronic resources and Internet connection for commercial or illegal purposes, or for any other activity prohibited by school policy; not redistribute copyrighted programs or data except with the written permission of the copyright holder or designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or must be obtained directly from the copyright holder or designee in accordance with applicable copyright laws, school policy, and administrative regulations;
9. Not plagiarize work using the school's electronic resources (plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as one's own);

10. Not use the school's electronic mail, or other personal email accounts, in any way that causes recipients or other readers to assume the email message represents the opinion of educators or other school officials, or anyone else without their explicit permission;
11. Not waste school resources related to the electronic communication system, or damage or attempt to damage computers, computer systems, computer networks or software;
12. Not intentionally or carelessly perform acts which place an excessive load on a computer or the network to the extent that other users may be denied service or the use of electronic networks or information systems may be disrupted;
13. Not abuse the school's electronic communication system by downloading large files or sending annoying or unnecessary messages to a large number of people;
14. Not gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school's electronic resources, network or restricted information (including scanning ports, computer and/or networks and attempting to circumvent data protection schemes or uncover security vulnerabilities);
15. Not alter or attempt to alter files or systems without authorization;
16. Not connect unauthorized equipment to the MRUUSD network or computers;
17. Not upload, download or redistribute public domain programs.

### **Disciplinary Actions**

The school's electronic resources system is a limited forum, and therefore the school may restrict individual user's speech for valid educational reasons. The school will not restrict speech on the basis of disagreement with the opinions expressed. Users should not expect privacy in the contents of their personal files or record of web research activities. Routine maintenance and monitoring of system resources may lead to discovery of violations of District policy, disciplinary code, or state and federal law. An individual search may also be conducted by the system administrator if there is reasonable suspicion that a user has violated this Acceptable Use Procedures agreement. If there is evidence that a violation has occurred the school Principal shall be notified and will determine appropriate consequences.

### **Due Process**

If any of the conditions of this Acceptable Use Procedures agreement are breached, parents/guardians will be notified and may be given an opportunity to review the contents of their child's electronic files. The school will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the school's electronic system or the Internet. In the event there is a claim that an individual user has violated school policy, procedures or disciplinary code, the user will be disciplined in accordance with the school handbook. In disciplinary situations, the Technology Department reserves the right to limit an individual's access to MRUUSD networks and resources as well as to remove or limit access to MRUUSD computers and/or materials posted on MRUUSD computers.

### **Limitation of Liability**

The school makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the school's electronic system will be error-free or without defect. The school will not be responsible for any damage individual users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. Other than for student records, the school is not responsible for the

accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized student use of the system. Parents/guardians of the individual user may be held financially responsible for any harm to the system as a result of carelessness or intentional misuse.

### **TELEPHONE**

**The Clarendon Elementary School telephone number is 802-786-3940.** The school fax number is **802-747-9888**. We discourage telephone calls to staff members during the school day. Contact with teachers prior to or after school hours is encouraged. Additionally, your child's teacher will be contacting you on a regular basis regarding your child's program. Students are requested to use the phones only in emergency situations. A student must receive permission from the classroom teacher before being permitted to use the phone. If a parent needs to talk with a child during the school day, office staff will assist parents in reaching or delivering a message to the student. Students are not allowed to use cell phones or pagers in school.

### **TOYS, ELECTRONICS, and CELL PHONES**

- Students should leave all toys and electronics at home.
- If your child does have a cell phone, the phone should be kept in your child's backpack. Please see the Boards new cell phone policy:  
 [F16 Phone and Personal Electronic Device-free School.pdf](#)
- If students should bring a toy, electronic games/devices, or other items, the item must remain in their backpacks during the school day.
- Items, including cell phones taken out of a student's backpack during the school day will be held in the office until the end of the day.

#### **Helpful Hints:**

- Establish guidelines in your home for how much screen time your child has and about games and/or apps they may play or use.
- Review the TV Guide together and find shows that are appropriate for your child.
- Turn off the television and computers during meals and talk about the day.
- Turn off the television during homework time.
- Find some educational shows your child can watch.
- Find TV shows you can watch together!
- Monitor your child's use of the computer.
- Review and evaluate your child's video games.

### **VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS**

Guests, visitors, and volunteers are always welcome and are encouraged to visit the school frequently. To protect our children and our school, we ask **all visitors** to report to the office and sign in. Please do not go directly to the classroom. If you are planning on volunteering in any capacity during the school year, you will need to pass a criminal background check and complete

fingerprinting.

Our staff values a strong partnership between home, school, and community. For the protection of all students, we ask that all visitors and volunteers report to the office and sign-in. Please do not go directly to the classroom without checking in.

Visitors and volunteers are required to read the information at the top of the sign-in sheet. If you need to give your child a message, lunch money, homework, etc. please go to the office and the secretary will make sure your child gets any messages and whatever you brought for them.

Volunteers and chaperones need to complete a basic criminal background check and be fingerprinted. If you are interested in volunteering or chaperoning and the cost is prohibitive, the school will help with the cost.

Visits by news media: Visits to the school by representatives of the news media or other persons seeking to interview, photograph, record, videotape or film students, staff members or school activities must be arranged after consultation with the principal or designee. Administration maintains the right and discretion to deny access in accordance with 16 V.S.A 563. Affected teachers will be consulted before permission for such activities in classrooms is granted. At the discretion of the administration, parents may be asked to sign general or specific permission slips to authorize interviewing, photographing, filming or videotaping of their children while at school or while participating in school activities.

Please review the following: [☰ Volunteer Handbook](#)

## **STATE AND FEDERAL HANDBOOK REQUIREMENTS**

### **Annual Notice of Child Find:**

- Mill River Unified Union School District is required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to locate, identify and evaluate all children with disabilities ages 3-21 who reside in a town located within the school district. The process of locating, identifying and evaluating children with disabilities is known as Child Find.
- Mill River Unified Union School District schools conduct annual PreKindergarten screenings each spring, but parents/guardians may contact the district at any time to discuss their concerns.. As the school district of residence, MRUUSD has the obligation to identify and provide special education and related services to any child with a disability who may require these services in order to access and benefit from public education.

- If you have, or know of any MRUUSD resident located in the towns of Clarendon, Wallingford, Shrewsbury, or Tinmouth who has a child/ren ages 3-21 with a disability who is not in school, who is homeless or unaccompanied, who is attending an independent school, who is enrolled in home study, or who is not otherwise being educated at public expense, we would like to hear from you so that we can undertake appropriate efforts consistent with the location, identification, and evaluation of children with disabilities.
- **Please contact the MRUUSD Director of Student Services, Coral Stone, at one of the following contact methods:**
- Via phone: (802)-786-3998
- Via in-person by appointment: MRUUSD Central Office located at Mill River Union High School.
- Via email: [estone@millriverschools.org](mailto:estone@millriverschools.org)
- Via US Mail:
  - Mill River Unified Union S.D.,

2321 Middle Road, Suite #1

North Clarendon, VT. 05759

### **Civil Rights Act Provisions**

Civil Rights Act Provisions requires “recipients” of federal funding to provide information to “beneficiaries” regarding the nondiscrimination requirements of the Civil Rights Act as applied to the recipient’s operations.

### **Concussions and Other Head Injuries**

The principal or headmaster of each public and approved independent school must ensure that statewide concussion and other head injury guidelines are provided annually to each youth athlete and the athlete’s parents or guardians and that each youth athlete and a parent or guardian annually signs a form acknowledging receipt of the concussion and other head injury guidelines. There are training requirements for all coaches and referees of a contest on how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or other head injury.

### **FERPA Policies**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act requires an annual notification to parents of their rights under the Act. Such notice must include that parents have the right to:

- Inspect and review their children’s records;
- Seek amendment of the record if it is inaccurate or misleading;
- Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable student information except as provided in 34 C.F.R. §99.31; and
- If they believe the Act has been violated, file a complaint with the Family Policy

Compliance Office of the United States Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington D.C., 20202.

In addition, the annual notice must include:

- The procedure for exercising the right to inspect and review education records,
- The procedure for requesting amendment of the records, and
- The criteria the school uses for disclosing student records to persons within the school who have legitimate educational interests in reviewing the records.

Finally, if the school does disclose “directory information” (e.g. names and addresses of students, date of birth, field of study, academic or other honors attained, participation on sports teams, etc.), and most schools do in some form or another, the school must notify parents of:

- The types of directory information that will be released;
- The right to refuse to let the school release particular or all directory information on their own children; and

The period of time within which the parent has to notify the school that he or she does not wish to have the school designate some or all of the information about the parent’s child designated as directory information.

## **Hazing, harassment and bullying**

### **District Equity Coordinator:**

Jodie Stewart-Ruck, Assistant Superintendent

### **School-based designees for receiving complaints of bullying or harassment:**

Summer Stoutes, Principal

Paula Reynolds, Guidance Counselor

**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 and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

**Bullying** means any overt act or combination of acts directed against a student by another student or group of students and which: is repeated over time; is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity.

## **Procedures on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students**

### **I. Reporting Complaints of Hazing, Harassment and/or Bullying**

A. Student Reporting: Any student who believes that s/he has been hazed, harassed and/or bullied under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any other school employee.

B. School employee reporting: Any school employee who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and immediately report it to a designated employee and immediately complete a Student Conduct Form.

Any school employee who overhears or directly receives information about conduct that might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying shall immediately report the information to a designated employee and immediately complete a Student Conduct Form. If one of the designated employees is a person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the incident shall be immediately reported to the other designated employee or the school administrator.

C. Other reporting: Any other person who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying under this policy should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee.

D. Documentation of the report: If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing in a Student Conduct Form, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses. Both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will have the right to present witnesses and other evidence in support of their position.

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

F. Rights to Alternative Complaint Process: 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 at the addresses noted below:

Vermont Human Rights Commission  
14-16 Baldwin Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301  
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)  
(877) 294-9200 (TTY)  
(802) 828-2481 (fax)  
Email: [human.rights@state.vt.us](mailto:human.rights@state.vt.us)

U.S. Department of Education  
8th Floor  
5 Post Office Square  
Boston, MA 02109-3921  
617-289-0111 (voice)  
877-521-2172 (tdd)  
617-289-0150 (fax)  
Email: [OCR.Boston@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Boston@ed.gov)

## II. Responding to Notice of Possible Policy Violation(s)

A. Upon notice of information that hazing, harassment and/or bullying may have occurred the designated employee shall:

- i. Promptly reduce any oral information to writing, including the time, place, and nature of the conduct, and the identity of the participants and complainant.
- ii. Promptly inform the school administrator(s) of the information;
- iii. If in the judgment of the school administrator, the information alleges conduct which may constitute harassment, hazing or bullying, the school administrator shall, as soon as reasonably possible, provide a copy of the policy on hazing, harassment and bullying and these procedures to the complainant and accused individual, or if either is a minor, cause a copy to be provided or delivered to their respective parent or guardian.

B. Upon initiation of an investigation, the designated employee shall:

- i. Notify in writing both the complainant and accused individual (or if either is a minor inform their respective parent or guardian) that:
  1. an investigation has been initiated;
  2. retaliation is prohibited;
  3. all parties have certain confidentiality rights; and
  4. they will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation.

C. All notifications shall be subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information. Pursuant to 34 CFR Part 99.30, a school administrator may seek the consent of the parent/guardian of the accused student, or the accused eligible student (if 18 or older, the accused student has the ability to consent), in order to inform the complainant of any disciplinary action taken in cases where the school determined that an act(s) of harassment, hazing, and/or bullying, or other misconduct occurred. The parent/guardian or eligible student shall provide a signed and dated written consent before an educational agency or institution discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records.

## III. Investigating Hazing, Harassment and/or Bullying Complaints

A. Initiation of Investigation - Timing. Unless special circumstances are present and documented, such as reports to the Department for Children and Families (“DCF”) or the police, the school administrator shall, no later than one school day after Notice to a designated employee, initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations, which the school administrator reasonably believes may constitute harassment, hazing or bullying.

B. Investigator Assignment. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning him/herself or a designated employee as the investigator. No person who is the subject of a complaint shall conduct such an investigation.

C. Interim Measures. It may be appropriate for the school to take interim measures during the investigation of a complaint. For instance, if a student alleges that he or she has been sexually assaulted by another student, the school may decide to place the students immediately in separate classes and/or transportation pending the results of the school’s investigation. Similarly, if the alleged harasser is a teacher, allowing the student to transfer to a different class may be appropriate. In all cases, the school will make every effort to prevent disclosure of the names of all parties involved – the complainant, the witnesses, and the accused -- except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation. In all cases where physical harm has resulted and/or where the targeted student is known to be expressing suicidal ideation, or experiencing serious emotional harm, a safety plan will be put in place. Safety plans must also be considered in cases where the targeted student is known to have difficulty accessing the educational programs at the school as a result of the inappropriate behavior. No contact orders, or their enforcement, may also be appropriate interim measures.

D. Due Process. The United States Constitution guarantees due process to students and District employees who are accused of certain types of infractions, including but not limited to sexual harassment under Federal Title IX. The rights established under Title IX must be interpreted consistent with any federally guaranteed due process rights involved in a complaint proceeding, including but not limited to the ability of the complainant and the accused to present witnesses and other evidence during an investigation. The District will ensure that steps to accord due process rights do not restrict or unnecessarily delay the protections provided by Title IX to the complainant.

E. Standard Used to Assess Conduct. In determining whether the conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the investigator shall consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. The complainant and accused will be provided the opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence during an investigation. The school will also consider the impact of relevant off-campus conduct on the school environment where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated or the conduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student’s equal access to educational programs. Whether a particular action constitutes a violation of this policy requires determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

F. Completion of Investigation – Timing. No later than five school days from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator shall submit a written initial determination to the school administrator.

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

H. Notice to Students/Parents/Guardians. Within five school days of the conclusion of the investigation, the designated employee shall:

i. Notify in writing both the complainant and accused individual (or if either is a minor inform their respective parent or guardian) that:

1. the investigation has been completed;
2. whether or not the investigation concluded that a policy violation occurred (and which policy term was violated, i.e. harassment, hazing and/or bullying);
3. that federal privacy law prevents disclosure of any discipline imposed as a result of the investigation unless the parent/guardian of the accused student and/or the accused eligible student consents to such disclosure, pursuant to 34 CFR Part 99.30, as set forth in Section II, Part C, above.

ii. Notify the Complainant Student - or if a minor, their parent(s) or guardian - in writing of their rights to:

1. an internal review by the school of its initial determination as a result of its investigation as to whether harassment occurred;
2. request an Independent Review of the school's "final" determination as to whether harassment occurred within thirty (30) days of the final determination or although a "final" determination was made that harassment indeed occurred the school's response to that harassment was inadequate to correct the problem; and that the review will be conducted by an investigator to be selected by the superintendent from a list developed by the Agency of Education;
3. file complaints of harassment with either the Vermont Human Rights Commission and/or the federal Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

iii. Notify the Accused Student – or if a minor, their parent(s) or guardian - in writing of their right to appeal as set forth in Section V of these procedures.

I. Violations of Other Policies. In cases where the investigation has identified other conduct that may constitute a violation of other school disciplinary policies or codes of conduct, the designated employee shall report such conduct to the school administrator for action in accordance with relevant school policies or codes of conduct.

#### IV. Responding to Substantiated Claims

A. Scope of Response. After a final determination that an act(s) of hazing, harassment and/or bullying has been committed, the school shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment and/or bullying and prevent any recurrence of harassment, hazing and/or bullying, and remedy its effects on the victim(s). In so doing, the following should be considered:

(i) Potential Remedial Actions. Remedial action may include but not be limited to an age appropriate warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension, and/or expulsion of a student, and warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension and/or termination of an employee. A series of escalating consequences may be necessary if the initial steps are ineffective in stopping the hazing, harassment and/or bullying. To prevent recurrences counseling for the offender may be appropriate to ensure that he or she understands what constitutes hazing/harassment and/or bullying and the effects it can have. Depending on how widespread the hazing/harassment/bullying was and whether there have been any prior incidents, the school may need to provide training for the larger school community to ensure that students, parents and teachers can recognize hazing/harassment/bullying if it recurs and know how to respond.

(ii) School Access/Environment Considerations. The District will also take efforts to support victims' access to the District's programs, services and activities and consider and implement school-wide remedies, where appropriate. Accordingly, steps will be taken to eliminate any hostile and/or threatening environment that has been created. For example, if a female student has been subjected to harassment/bullying by a group of other students in a class, the school may need to deliver special training or other interventions for that class to repair the educational environment. If the school offers the student the option of withdrawing from a class in which a hostile environment/bullying occurred, the District will assist the student in making program or schedule changes and ensure that none of the changes adversely affect the student's academic record. Other measures may include, if appropriate, directing a bully/harasser to apologize to the affected student. If a hostile environment has affected the entire school or campus, an effective response may need to include dissemination of information, the issuance of new policy statements or other steps that are designed to clearly communicate the message that the school does not tolerate harassment and/or bullying and will be responsive to any student who reports that conduct.

(iii) Hazing Case Considerations. Appropriate penalties or sanctions or both for organizations that or individuals who engage in hazing and revocation or suspension of an organization's permission to operate or exist within the institution's purview if that organization knowingly permits, authorizes, or condones hazing.

(iv) Other Remedies: Other remedies may include providing counseling to the victim(s) and/or the perpetrator(s), and additional safety planning measures for the victim(s).

B. Retaliation Prevention. It is unlawful for any person to retaliate against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. A person may violate this anti-retaliation provision regardless of whether the underlying complaint of harassment is substantiated.

The District will take reasonable steps to prevent any retaliation against the student who made the complaint (or was the subject of the harassment), against the person who filed a complaint on behalf of a student, or against those who provided information as witnesses. At a minimum, this includes making sure that the students and their parents, and those witnesses involved in the school's investigation, know how to report any subsequent problems and making follow-up inquiries to see if there are have been any new incidents or any retaliation.

C. Alternative Dispute Resolution. At all stages of the investigation and determination process, school officials are encouraged to make available to complainants alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, for resolving complaints. Certain considerations should be made before pursuing alternative dispute resolution methods, including, but not limited to:

(1) the nature of the accusations (for example, face-to-face mediation is not appropriate for sexual violence cases), (2) the age of the complainant and the accused individual, (3) the agreement of the complainant, and (4) other relevant factors such as any disability of the target or accused individual, safety issues, the relationship and relative power differential between the target and accused individual, or any history of repeated misconduct/harassment by the accused individual.

V. Post Investigative Reviews

### **Rights of Complainants**

A. Internal Review of Initial Harassment Determinations By Complainant.

A complainant or parent of a complainant may request internal review by the District of a designee's initial determination (following investigation) that harassment has not occurred via written request submitted to the District superintendent. All levels of internal review of the investigator's initial determination, and the issuance of a final decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the District, be completed within 30 calendar days after review is requested.

B. Independent Reviews of Final Harassment Determinations By Complainant.

A complainant may request an independent review within thirty (30) days of a final determination if s/he: (1) is dissatisfied with the final determination as to whether harassment occurred, or (2) believes that although a final determination was made that harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem. The complainant shall make such a request in writing to the superintendent of schools within thirty (30) days of a final determination. Upon such request, the superintendent shall promptly initiate an independent review by a neutral person as described under 16 V.S.A. § 570a.(b)(1) and shall cooperate with the independent reviewer so that s/he may proceed expeditiously. The review shall consist of an interview of the complainant and relevant school officials and a review of the written materials from the school's investigation.

Upon completion of the independent review, the reviewer shall advise the complainant and school officials in writing: (1) as to the sufficiency of the school's

investigation, its determination, and/or the steps taken by the school to correct any harassment found to have occurred, and (2) of recommendations of any steps the school might take to prevent further harassment from occurring. A copy of the independent review report shall be sent to the Secretary of Education.

The reviewer shall advise the student of other remedies that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the school for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records. The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the District. The District may request an independent review at any stage of the process.

C. Rights to Alternative Harassment Complaint Process. 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 at the addresses noted below:

Vermont Human Rights Commission  
14-16 Baldwin Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301  
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)  
(877) 294-9200 (tty)  
(802) 828-2481 (fax)  
Email: [human.rights@state.vt.us](mailto:human.rights@state.vt.us)  
Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office

U.S. Department of Education  
8th Floor  
5 Post Office Square  
Boston, MA 02109-3921  
617-289-0111 (voice)  
877-521-2172 (tdd)  
617-289-0150 (fax)  
Email: [OCR.Boston@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Boston@ed.gov)

### **Rights of Accused Students**

A. Appeal. Any person determined to have engaged in an act(s) of hazing, harassment and/or bullying may appeal the determination and/or any related disciplinary action(s) taken, directly to the school board of the school district. The school board shall conduct a review on the record. The standard of review by the school board shall be whether the finding that an act(s) of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying has been committed constitutes an abuse of

discretion by the school level fact finder. Appeals should be made to the school board within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the determination that an act(s) of hazing, harassment and/or bullying has occurred and/or any announced discipline. The school board shall set the matter for a review hearing at the next scheduled school board meeting to the extent practicable, but not later than 30 days from receipt of the appeal filing.

B. Accused Student/Appellant Access to Investigative Reports/Findings. The school district shall make available upon request of the Accused Student/Appellant, any relevant information, documents, materials, etc. related to the investigation and related finding on appeal that can be redacted and de-identified in compliance with the requirements set forth at 34 CFR Part 99. For those documents that cannot be provided due to the requirements set forth at 34 CFR Part 99, when an Accused Student/Appellant seeks a review on the record before the school board of the school district, a school administrator may seek the consent of the parent/guardian of the targeted student, or the accused eligible targeted student (if 18 or older, the targeted student has the ability to consent), in order to inform the accused student of the findings which gave rise to the school's determination that an act(s) of harassment, hazing, and/or bullying occurred. The parent/guardian or eligible student shall provide a signed and dated written consent before an educational agency or institution discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records.

#### VI. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

A. Privacy Concerns. The privacy of the complainant, the accused individual, and the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the District's obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.

i. Concerns Related to Harassment Complaints. The scope of appropriate response to a harassment complaint may depend upon whether a student or parent of a minor student reporting the harassment asks that the student's name not be disclosed to the harasser or that nothing be done about the alleged harassment. In all cases, school officials will discuss confidentiality standards and concerns with the complainant initially. The school will inform the student that a confidentiality request may limit the school's ability to respond. The school will remind the student that both federal Title IX and Vermont Title 9 prevent retaliation and that if he or she is afraid of reprisals from the alleged harasser, the school will take steps to prevent retaliation and will take strong action if retaliation occurs. If the student continues to ask that his or her name not be revealed, the school should take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the student's request as long as doing so does not prevent the school from responding effectively to the harassment and preventing harassment of other students.

The school will evaluate the confidentiality request in the context of its responsibility to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students. The factors the school might consider in this regard include the seriousness of the alleged harassment, the age of the student harassed, whether there have been other complaints or reports of harassment against the alleged harasser, and the rights of the accused individual to receive information about the accuser and the allegations if a formal proceeding with sanctions may result. If information about the incident is contained in an "education record" of the student alleging the harassment, as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, the school will consider whether FERPA prohibits it from disclosing information without the student's consent.

B. Document Maintenance. The Superintendent or school administrator shall assure that a record of any complaint, its investigation and disposition, as well as any disciplinary or remedial action taken following the completion of the investigation, is maintained by the District in a confidential file accessible only to authorized persons. All investigation records created in conformance with this model policy and model procedures, including but not limited to, the complaint form, interview notes, additional evidence, and the investigative report, shall be kept by the Equity Coordinator, Designated Employees and District/Supervisory Union Central Office for at least six years after the investigation is completed.

#### VII. Reporting to Other Agencies

A. Reports to Department of Children and Families. When a complaint made pursuant to this policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. § 4911, et seq. must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 6901 et seq.

B. Reports to Vermont Agency of Education. If a harassment complaint is made in a public school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds under Vermont law for licensing action, the principal shall report the alleged conduct to the Superintendent and the Superintendent shall report the alleged conduct to the Commissioner. If a harassment complaint is made in an independent school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be

grounds under Vermont law for licensing action, the head of school is encouraged to report the alleged conduct to the Secretary of Education.

C. Reporting Incidents to Police

a. FERPA Rights. Information obtained and documented by school administration regarding the school's response to notice of student

conduct that may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying may constitute an "educational record" regarding the student or student(s) involved as defined by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Accordingly, such information may not be disclosed without prior parent approval to local law enforcement except in response to a lawfully issued subpoena, or in connection with an emergency if disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

b. First Hand Reports. Nothing in this policy shall preclude persons from reporting incidents and/or conduct witnessed first-hand that may be considered to be a criminal act to law enforcement officials.

c. Hazing Incidents. It is unlawful to (1) engage in hazing; (2) solicit direct, aid, or attempt to aid, or abet another person engaged in hazing; or (3) knowingly fail to take reasonable measures within the scope of the person's authority to prevent hazing. It is not a defense in an action under this section that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity. Hazing incidents will be reported to the police in a manner consistent with the confidentiality rights set forth above in this section.

D. Continuing Obligation to Investigate. Reports made to either DCF or law enforcement shall not be considered to absolve the school administrators of their obligations under this policy to pursue and complete an investigation upon receipt of notice of conduct, which may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying.

VIII. Disseminating Information, Training, and Data Reporting

A. Disseminating Information. Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, the District shall provide notice of this policy and procedures to students, custodial parents or guardians of students, and staff members, including references to the consequences of misbehavior contained in the plan required by 16 V.S.A. 1161a. Notice to students shall be in age-appropriate language and include examples of hazing, harassment and bullying. At a minimum, this notice shall appear in any publication of the District that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for the District.

B. Student Training. The school administrator shall use his/her discretion in developing age-appropriate methods of discussing the meaning and substance of this policy with students to help prevent hazing, harassment and bullying.

C. Staff Training. The board or its designee shall ensure that teachers and other staff receive training in preventing, recognizing and responding to hazing, harassment and bullying.

D. Data Gathering. Public school districts shall provide the Vermont Agency of Education with data requested by the Secretary of Education.

Legal References: available upon request

## **Homeless Students & Unaccompanied Minors**

**Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Act defines "homeless children and youths" as:**

**individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes—**

- Children and youths who are:
  - sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled-up”);
  - living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
  - abandoned in hospitals;
- Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

MRUUSD has a designated Homeless Liaison who is responsible for identifying and working to meet the educational needs of homeless students and unaccompanied minors. Examples of the responsibilities of the Homeless Liaison are:

1. The identification of homeless students;
2. The enrollment of homeless students in school;
3. That homeless students have full access to educational services for which students are eligible;
4. That referrals to other appropriate services are made (including but not limited to health care, dental, mental health and substance abuse, housing, etc.);
5. That parents/guardians are informed of the rights, services and offered opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
6. That public notice of educational rights is distributed (schools, shelters, public libraries, food shelves, etc.);
7. That any enrollment disputes are mediated per the dispute resolution process;
8. That parent/guardians or unaccompanied youth are informed of all transportation services and that they are assisted in accessing transportation to the selected school;
9. That school personnel receive professional development and support to recognize homelessness and support students facing homelessness;
10. That unaccompanied youths are enrolled in school, have opportunities to meet the same academic standards as other children and youth, and are informed of their status as an independent student and obtain assistance from the liaison to receive verification of such status for the FAFSA.

If you suspect or know that a student meets the definition of a homeless or unaccompanied student, you should reach out to the MRUUSD Homeless Liaison at one or more of the contact methods included below. You may also opt to complete and submit the [Homeless Liaison Referral](#), available on the MRUUSD website. Once the Homeless Liaison receives a referral, it will immediately trigger appropriate and necessary follow-up as described in MRUUSD’s Internal Procedures Governing the Education of Homeless Students, which can be provided upon request.

The MRUUSD Homeless Liaison is: [Coral Stone, Director of Student Services](#)

**Contact Information:**

**Office Phone:** (802)-786-3998  
**Email:** [cstone@millriverschools.org](mailto:cstone@millriverschools.org)  
**Mailing Address:** 2321 Middle Road, Suite #1, N. Clarendon, VT 05759  
**Office Location:** Mill River Union High School in the Central Office

### **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

The Federal Special Education Law requires notice to parents in a variety of ways.

- “Child Find” activities - as interpreted in Vermont regulations, child find includes, among other activities, notifying the public of the availability of special education services for children with disabilities aged 3-21 . Similar provisions address child find for students aged birth-3.
- Requires written notice to a parent of a student with a disability within a reasonable period of time before the school district proposes to initiate or change the identification (eligibility), evaluation or educational placement of the student or the provision of a free, appropriate, public education to the student, or whenever it refuses to do the same.

Requires notice of “procedural safeguards” whenever a child is initially referred for a special education evaluation, whenever an Individual Education Plan meeting is called, whenever a reevaluation is sought, and whenever a due process complaint has been filed.

### **Mandated Reporting**

All school employees are mandated reporters, and it is our duty to help protect students from abuse and neglect. Act 60 of 2015 provides that any mandated reporter who reasonably suspects abuse or neglect of a child shall report in accordance with the law within 24 hours of the time information regarding the suspected abuse or neglect was first received or observed.

### **New Americans**

We have a responsibility to ensure that all of our students feel safe and supported. This occurs when we create school cultures that are responsive to the needs of the children in our care, and our families. 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. Meeting this obligation means going beyond telling families to enroll their student(s). It includes working proactively to ensure they feel safe,

supported and welcomed.

Public schools may not:

- Deny or terminate a student's enrollment on the basis of actual or perceived immigration status.
- Treat a student differently to verify legal residency in the United States.
- Engage in any practices that have the effect of discouraging students from enrolling
- or attending school based on their immigration status.
- Require students or their parents to disclose their immigration status or inquire of students or parents in ways that may expose their undocumented status.
- Deny or terminate a student's enrollment due to the student's or parent's failure to provide a social security number.

## **Notices to Parents Under Elementary and Secondary Education Act**

Local education agencies are required to communicate with parents in a variety of circumstances. Here are a few of the more significant ones:

1. 20 U.S.C. §6311(h)(2)(A)(i) requires local education agencies receiving Title I assistance to prepare and disseminate to all parents an annual "report card." At minimum, it must contain information reported to the LEA by the state, disaggregated by student group, as well as how the student achieved on state assessments compared to students in the state as a whole, and to students in other schools in the same LEA. With the passage of ESSA and the retraction of regulations, LEAs should continue to provide parents with information about school performance. New accountability measures will go into effect under the new Vermont ESSA State Plan.
2. 20 U.S.C. §6311(h)(6) requires notice by a school district receiving Title I funds at the beginning of the school year to the parents of each student regarding the qualifications of the school's teachers. The notice is to include the rights of parents, upon request, to obtain information as to whether the child's teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria, whether the teacher is teaching under a waiver or provisional license, and what the major of the teacher was in his or her baccalaureate degree. If the child receives services from a paraprofessional, the paraprofessional's qualifications must also be furnished. The notice must also contain a statement as to whether the student will be taught by a teacher for four or more consecutive weeks who is not licensed, as that term is defined under state and federal law. Finally, this notice must also alert parents to their right to obtain information as to the level of achievement of their child in each of the state's academic assessments.

3. 20 U.S.C. §6312(g)(1) provides that parents of students who are of limited English proficiency are to be notified not later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year that their child has been identified as in need of services. The statute contemplates very specific and detailed information to be provided in an understandable manner to the parents of the child.
4. 20 U.S.C. §6318(a)(2) requires each local education agency with Title I schools to “develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parental involvement policy.” The required content of the policy is spelled out in great detail in the statute.

A [memo about parental notification regarding teacher qualifications](#) is available online.

### **Periodic Hearing and Vision Screening**

Vermont State law requires schools to test the hearing and vision of students pursuant to research-based guidelines.

### **Protection of Pupil Rights Act**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Act, requires parental notification in a number of respects:

- Requires local education agencies to notify parents annually, at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable time after any amendment thereof, of the adoption or continued use of PPRA policies. These local policies must include the following:
  - The rights of parents to inspect surveys created by a “third party”(meaning not federally funded) before it is administered,
  - Procedures for such inspection of surveys,
  - Arrangements to protect student privacy with respect to surveys on sensitive matters,
  - The right to inspect any instructional materials used as part of the educational curriculum,
  - Procedures for inspecting the instructional materials,
  - The administration of any physical examinations or screenings,
  - The collection or disclosure of student information for marketing purposes,
  - The right of a parent to inspect any instrument used in the collection of personal information for marketing purposes before such information is collected or disclosed, and
  - Procedures for obtaining access to such instruments in a timely fashion.
- Requires an annual notice to parents of the right to opt out of certain activities including collection of personal student information for marketing purposes, administration of certain surveys, and non-emergency invasive physical examinations or screenings.
- Provides that schools notify parents, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates when any of the following will occur: collection of

information for marketing purposes, administration of surveys containing sensitive questions, and any non-emergency, invasive physical examinations or screenings.

- Provides that schools must “give parents and students effective notice of their rights under this section [PPRA]”.

### **Seclusion and Restraint**

State Board Rule 4500 defines the appropriate use of seclusion and restraint. Rule 4500 also sets forth the reporting requirements relative to any use of seclusion or restraint in school (e.g. – teacher to administrator, administrator to superintendent, and school to parent/guardian of affected student). Frequently asked questions about Rule 4500 are available online on the Vermont Agency of Education Website.

### **Section 504**

Section 504 require schools to notify parents and others that the school does not discriminate on the basis of handicap; the school’s notice shall identify the responsible employee designated to coordinate compliance with Section 504 and of the availability of a grievance procedure to address complaints regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

## **A Parents’ Guide to Title I Programs in Mill River Unified Union District**

### **Part 1: Background**

What is Title I?

Title I is a federally funded program that gives financial assistance to states and school districts to meet the needs of educationally at risk students. At MRUUSD, some Title I funds are used for schoolwide programs and some funds are used for targeted assistance. Both program types provide extra educational assistance beyond the regular classroom. Title 1 funds are distributed to schools based on free and reduced lunch funding. Please submit your free and reduced lunch application if you have not already done so.

What is the purpose of Title I funding?

According to the US Department of Education, the purpose of Title I funding “*is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education and reach, at minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.*”

What do Title I programs offer?

Supports offered through Title I include:

- small group instruction in or outside the classroom
- Intervention staff to work with students
- additional teaching materials which supplement a student's regular instruction
- instructional materials targeted to your student's needs
- opportunities for professional development for school staff

How can I get involved?

You can support your child's education by becoming an active participant in your child's school.

Communicate: Stay informed with school newsletters and reach out to school staff anytime.

Volunteer: Volunteer at your child's school. Consider helping with extracurricular activities, field trips and our PTO.

Provide Support: Help your child with class work, homework, and future education plans.

Celebrate your student's progress: Praise your child's progress when new skills are learned and goals are met.

## **Part 2. Parental Rights**

Teacher Qualifications: The Every Student Succeeds Act requires schools that receive Title 1 money to notify parents that they can ask for and receive specific information about a teacher's qualifications. As a parent, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- If the teacher has met state licensing requirements for the grade level and subjects in which the teacher is providing instruction;
- If the teacher is teaching under an emergency status for which state licensing requirements have been waived;
- The type of college degree major the teacher has and the field of discipline for any graduate degree or certificate; and
- If your child is receiving Title I services from paraprofessionals and, if so, his/her qualifications.

If you would like any of this information concerning your child's teacher, please contact your principal.

Assessment: Parents of students in Title I schools have the right to request information about any State or local education policy regarding student participation in Federal, State, or locally required assessments, including information about policy, procedure, or parental rights to opt children out of assessments, where applicable. Data reported to the state about each MRUUSD school can be located at:  
<https://education.vermont.gov/data-and-reporting/vermont-education-dashboard>

### **Part 3. School and Home Compact**

The MRUUSD School and Home Compact is an agreement between home and school regarding the components to successful learning. This is necessary to fulfill our educational purpose and mission to provide each student with the knowledge and skills necessary to become an independent learner, a contributing member of the community, and a responsible citizen. Sharing responsibilities and becoming a Home-School Team can make the winning difference in student success.

MRUUSD Title I Schools have a common School and Home Compact which highlights shared responsibilities among students, home, and school to enhance academic achievement.

Please share your thoughts, suggestions, questions, and/or ideas regarding this compact. It is hoped that this compact will be helpful for discussions between teachers and parents/guardians about how better student performance can be encouraged and achieved.

### **Student Commitment**

*MRUUSD students will:*

- Do their best in class and complete assignments in a timely manner.
- Respect themselves, their teachers, and others, and be a collaborative learner.
- Reflect and grow when mistakes are made
- Keep parents and guardians informed about their progress in school.
- Be responsible in bringing all school communications home and back to school as needed.

### **Home Commitment**

*MRUUSD parents/guardians will:*

- Bring children to school ready to learn and have fun.
- Attend parent/teacher conferences in order to discuss the academic progress of their children and visit the school or call in order to keep lines of communication open.
- Follow the “chain of command” in expressing concerns (begin with the teacher)
- Provide a regular place, time, and support for their children in order for them to complete their homework responsibilities
- Help support the school in ways that work with the family's culture and schedule.

## **School Commitment**

*MRUUSD staff will:*

- Convene an annual meeting to inform parents/guardians of school's participation under Title 1.
- Interact with students in a supportive, engaged and professional manner
- Demonstrate knowledge of content and methods of teaching.
- Monitor and evaluate student progress/achievement and communicate that information with families on an ongoing basis.
- Exhibit reflection and dedication to goals for school improvement.
- Demonstrate continued professional development and commitment.
- Provide opportunities for parents/guardians to meet periodically with school staff to promote positive communication between school and community.

## **Part 4: MRUUSD Title I Parent and Family Engagement Procedure**

MRUUSD

School Year: 2023-2024

Date of last revision: July 11, 2024

In order to provide all children with significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational gaps, MRUUSD] receives Title I, Part A funds. Therefore, in accordance with Section 1116(a)(2) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the MRUUSD must develop, with the parents and family members of participating students, a written parent and family engagement policy. This policy will outline the Local Education Agencies (LEA) expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and the ways in which the LEA will implement and support opportunities for parent and family involvement in order to improve student academic achievement.

Part I: General Requirements and Expectations

In order to support increased parent and family engagement to improve student academic achievement, the MRUUSD has the following objectives:

- The dissemination of a professional survey to all stakeholders including students and parents during the 222-2023 school year to gather information about community wants and goals
- Frequent publishing of newsletters, social media posts and other products to inform the community about MRUUSD schools
- 1 open house and 2 conference days for families annually to visit school and engage with educators
- Clear and welcoming volunteer policies to encourage family participation

2. The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to involve parents and family members in the joint development of its Continuous Improvement Plan under Section 1112 of ESSA:

- Representative parents, board members and students will be invited to participate in stakeholder meetings in the development of our Continuous Improvement Plan

3. The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to involve parents and family members in the joint development of any Support and Improvement Plans under Section 1111(d)(1) and (2):

- Representative parents, board members and students will be invited to participate in stakeholder meetings in the development of any needed support or improvement plans.

4. The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary in order to build capacity for parent and family engagement activities to improve student achievement and school performance:

- The district will provide technical assistance to any community member who finds technology to be a barrier to gaining access to school information. For support, please email [bbehrendt@millriversschools.org](mailto:bbehrendt@millriversschools.org)

5. The MRUUSD will conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Parent & Family Title I, Part A Parent & Family Engagement Policy in improving the academic quality of all its Title I schools. The evaluation must include identifying the following:

- Barriers to greater family participation in Title I parent and family engagement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background)
- The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers
- Strategies to

support successful school and family interactions The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to conduct this annual evaluation:

-MRUUSD will solicit feedback from community members on all of the above at each school's annual Title I meeting. Notes will be taken to share with the larger administrative team.

6. The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to use the findings of the annual evaluation to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parent and family engagement, and to revise the LEA Parent & Family Engagement Policy, if necessary:

-Family and community feedback is used to directly inform our Continuous Improvement Plan, Strategic Plan and edit the home/school compact.

7. The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to involve parents in the activities of the schools:

-Invite parent participation and feedback at school events, school board meetings, informal conversation, PTO meetings, and in community surveys

## Part II: Building Capacity for Involvement

To ensure effective involvement of parents and support a partnership among the schools, parents, and the community in order to improve student achievement, the MRUUSD will use the following strategies:

8. The MRUUSD will provide assistance to parents of children served by the LEA in understanding the following topics:

- The challenging State academic
- State and local academic assessments
- Title I, Part A requirements
- How to monitor their child's progress
- How to work with educators to improve their children's achievement

The MRUUSD agrees to take the followings actions in order provide this assistance:

- School board presentations
- Title I annual meeting
- Parent/teacher conferences and/or student-led conferences
- Curricular information nights
- On request assistance reading and understanding assessments
- Educational Support Teams

9. The MRUUSD agrees to provide materials and training, as appropriate, to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement:

-7-12 Syllabi

-Google classroom access

-Access to tier 2 activities that can be completed in the home

-Home practice activities provided by specialists including reading interventionists

10. The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the following areas:

- The value of contributions of parents
- How to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners
- How to implement and coordinate parent programs
- How to build ties between parents and school

Supports provided include:

-Faculty meeting professional development on home contact

-Templates for home contact

-Supervision and evaluation standards that support positive family engagement .

11. The MRUUSD will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate Title I parent involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs and conduct other activities that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children. Such programs may include:

- Head Start
- Bright Futures
- Public Preschool
- Creation of Parent Resource Centers

The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs:

-Avenues for family feedback including surveys, conferences and events

-Education and awareness for families about intersecting and complimentary federal programs shared in newsletters and communications

12. The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the parents of participating children in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

-Personalized meetings with ELL families to target assistance and support as needed

13. The MRUUSD agrees to take the following actions to provide other reasonable support:

-Consultation with families who request personalized support

This School Parent & Family Engagement procedure has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs.

Feedback was solicited at our annual Title I meeting on:

This procedure was approved by Clarendon Elementary School on Date 09/22/23 and will be in effect for the 2024-2025 school year. The Title I School will distribute this procedure to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children through our school handbook.

Citation:

Language Adapted from the follow sources

Shoreham Elementary School Title 1 Policy, <https://www.acsdvt.org/domain/841>

Mill River Unified Union School Board Policies G12.1 and H7:

<http://millriverschools.org/mruusd-board-documents/mruusd-board-policy/>

Vermont AOE Parent and Family Engagement Template:

<https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-cfp-title-i-pfe-templates.pdf>

## **Requests by Parents/Guardians for a Special Education Evaluation:**

In accordance with federal and state law, Parents/Guardians who suspect that their child has a disability have the right to request a special education evaluation of their child at any time. You are encouraged to put your request for evaluation in writing, though this is not required and any verbal request is also considered sufficient. It is recommended that requests for a special education evaluation be made directly to the MRUUSD Director or Assistant Director of Student Services using one of the contact methods provided below, but requests made to any school staff must also be responded to in accordance with state and federal law.

As per State of Vermont Special Education Regulation 2362.2.1 Initial Evaluations (34 C.F.R. § 300.301):

- (a) Each LEA shall conduct a comprehensive and individual initial evaluation before the initial provision of special education and related services to a student with a disability under these rules.

- (b) Upon receipt of a request for an evaluation, the school district shall, within 15 calendar days, either:
- (1) Request parent consent to initiate the evaluation;
  - (2) Convene an Evaluation and Planning Team (EPT) meeting; or
  - (3) Provide written reasons for denial of the request.

To make written or verbal requests for a special education evaluation, please contact the MRUUSD Director or Assistant Director of Student Services via the following methods:

**Coral Stone, MRUUSD Director of Student Services**

Email: [cstone@millriverschools.org](mailto:cstone@millriverschools.org)

Phone: (802)-786-3998

US Mail: Mill River Unified Union S.D., 2321 Middle Rd. Suite #1, North Clarendon, VT. 05759

In-Person Office Location: Central Office located at Mill River Union High School

**Maggie Aines, MRUUSD Asst. Director of Student Services**

Email: [maines@millriverschools.org](mailto:maines@millriverschools.org)

Phone: 802-786-3993

US Mail: Mill River Unified Union S.D., 2321 Middle Rd. Suite #1, North Clarendon, VT. 05759

In-Person Office Location: Mill River Union High School

**Title IX Grievance Procedures and Dissemination of Policy**

Title IX requires that recipients of federal funding publish their grievance procedures with respect to discrimination on the basis of sex and that each recipient “implement specific and continuing steps to notify.... students and parents of elementary and secondary school students....that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the educational program or activity which it operates, and that it is required by Title IX....not to discriminate in such a manner.” The latter section requires publication of this notice in a variety of ways, including in bulletins, catalogs, or application forms.

**Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students**

All students need a safe and supportive school environment to progress academically and developmentally. If needed, the school will use *The [Continuing Best Practices for Schools Regarding Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students](#)* to provide direction for our school to address issues that may arise concerning the needs of transgender and gender nonconforming students.

**Wellness Programs**

A list of school and community programs which have the potential to improve childhood wellness is made available to all school districts and community organizations that request it. Current information about Vermont wellness programs is available online

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**Handbook Revisions as of 8/1/24:**

- Dismissal change edited 9/16/2022
- Guide for Title I added 9/16/2022
- Dress Code updated 1/11/23