NARRAGANSETT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Student Handbook

2026-2027 School Year

Respect
Honesty
Courage
Compassion
Responsibility

284 Main Street, Gorham, Maine 04038
(207) 222-1250
narragansett.gorhamschools.org

Narragansett Elementary School Administration reserves the right to make changes to this handbook as deemed appropriate.

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SCHOOL OVERVIEW

K-5 Elementary School Vision

The Gorham K-5 school community stands united in the pursuit of physical, intellectual, and emotional wellness and safety. Positive attitudes, humor, trust, and a love of children are at the heart of our culture.

Success for all learners, adults and students alike, is by design. Hard work and engaging activity result in achievement and pride. Effective leadership encourages high expectations that are clear and attainable. A shared language and explicit standards of behavioral and academic excellence are cornerstones of our school. In an environment that is collaborative and respectful, staff members skillfully advance the academic, social, and emotional growth of our students.

Our students are served best as we join forces with our families and the community at large. Our work with families assists us in knowing each child as best we can. Partnerships with the larger community offer rich resources and present opportunities for our students to be engaged citizens. Together, we celebrate and honor diversity, and ensure that our students have access to experiences that promote inquiry and authentic learning activities.

Without compromise, we live by our Code of Conduct — honesty, courage, compassion, responsibility, and respect.

Purpose and Policy Governance Statement

The purpose of this Student/Family Handbook is to acquaint you with our school community, its goals, expectations, and procedural matters that are of importance to you.

It is always our intent to operate in a manner consistent with the policies and procedures established by the Gorham School Committee. In the event that a conflict arises between information presented in this handbook and established policies, the policies govern.

Gorham School District website

NARRAGANSETT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF

Role	Name
Principal	Erin Eppler
Assistant Principal	Sean Hanson
School Secretary	Sarah Palmer
Admin. Assistant	Theresa Connolly
Admin. Assistant	Lisa Dearborn
Nurse	Collette Andreasen, Cara Ryan
School Resource Officer	Todd Gagnon
School Counselor	Rachel Dunbar
Social Worker	Courtney Forbes

CALENDARS AND SCHEDULES

Gorham Schools Calendar

View the Gorham Schools District Calendar

View the Gorham Schools District Events Calendar

View Narragansett Important Dates & Family Events

School Hours

School starts at 8:50 a.m. Please have your child arrive at school no later than 8:45 a.m. Children who do not take the bus should not arrive at school before 8:30 a.m.

Dismissal begins at 3:00 p.m. for parent/guardian pick-ups. The bus loop at the front of the building is closed to all traffic at 2:30. During that time please park in the lot next to the building. If your child is out for the day or you need to make changes to dismissal, please send a note or call (207) 222-1250 before noon. Please do not send emails to the office with this information in case there is an absence and we cannot retrieve the message in time.

Lunch/Recess Schedule

Students in Grade K through Grade 5 will have a 45-minute lunch/recess period.

Period	Time	Grades
1st Lunch/Recess	11:10 a.m. - 11:55 a.m.	Kindergarten and Grade 2
2nd Lunch/Recess	11:50 a.m. - 12:35 p.m.	Grades 1 and 3
3rd Lunch/Recess	12:15 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Grades 4 and 5

Early Release Day Schedule

Monthly early release days are scheduled to provide professional development opportunities for staff. School is dismissed at 12:00 p.m. on early release days. Please refer to the Gorham Schools Calendar to determine the early release days for the school year.

*Please note: there is no Narragansett public Prek on early release days.

CODE OF CONDUCT

With rights come responsibilities. Members of the school community are expected to demonstrate ethical and responsible behavior consistent with its core values. Such conduct is fundamental to a supportive, safe, and orderly school environment and a civil society.

The Gorham School Committee has established five core values:

R	**Respect** Valuing others, the environment, and oneself
H	**Honesty** Exemplifying truth in intentions and actions
C	**Courage** Facing challenges with integrity
C	**Compassion** Empathizing with others and showing sensitivity to the perspectives, needs, and feelings of others
R	**Responsibility** Being mindful of and accountable for one's conduct and obligations and choosing for oneself between right and wrong

We publicly recognize PreK-5 students who demonstrate these core values over the course of the year.

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Family involvement is integral to student success. Teachers keep families aware of students' behavior in the classroom, both positive and negative, and maintain ongoing communication with families throughout the year.

Our Common Expectations

OUR COMMON EXPECTATIONS

	Hallway	Cafeteria	Bus	Playground	Bathroom	Assembly
Be Safe	Walking feet Keep hands by side Eyes and bodies forward Go to your location	Walking feet Keep hands and feet to self Sit at table Stay seated Talk with friemds at your table	Walking feet Keep hands and feet to self Stay seated while the bus is moving	Be in control of your body Play safely Use equipment the way it is meant to be used Stay within the boundaries	Wait your turn to go in the bathroom Use the toilet the right way Close and lock the door Keep hands and feet to yourself	Give others space Stay in your space
Be Respectful	Smile and/or wave Noise level: 0 Right is polite 3rd tile & single file Respect the murals/walls	level 0 when adults are talking level 1-2 while eating Leave table clean Let people sit with you Respect ALL people/ their food choices	Say hello to the bus driver level 0 when adults are talking level 1-2 during ride Keep talk kind, necessary, and true	Be aware of others Play nice Include others Problem solve Respect ALL people	Knock on stall door before entering Respect privacy Noise level: 0-1	Level 0 when adults are talking good manners show appreciation by clapping
Be Responsible	Walk one behind the other Go to your location Arrive on time Leave no trace	Eat your food Listen for directions Keep track of your lunch box and water bottle Leave no trace	Listen to directions Leave no trace	Line up quickly Leave nature in nature Keep track of your things Follow playground procedures Leave no trace	Go quickly Flush, wash hands, throw trash in trash cans “Go, flush, wash, leave” Leave no trace	Give your attention to presenter

update: 7.23.26

Common Expectations matrix, updated for the 2026-2027 school year

GENERAL PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

Student Bus Procedures

The bus driver may assign seats. Students are expected to follow the school bus safety and awareness rules outlined by the Transportation Department. Families and students should review the following bus guidelines together:

- Take a seat and stay seated until the bus reaches your destination.
- Talk in a normal tone so that you do not distract the driver.
- Keep the aisle and the emergency exits clear of all belongings.
- Drinking and eating are not permitted on the bus.
- Be courteous, and use appropriate language.
- Respect others' personal space and property.
- Students are highly encouraged to leave toys and valuables at home.

Pets on School Property

For the safety and comfort of all students, families, and staff, dogs and other pets are not allowed on school property. This includes all fields, spectator areas, parking lots, walkways, and playgrounds. We love animals, but keeping our school grounds pet-free helps ensure a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

Community Use of School Facilities and Grounds

Attendance/Truancy

Regular attendance is essential for student success. We expect students to attend school every day unless they are ill, have a family emergency, or have an approved planned vacation. Families should notify the school as soon as possible if a student will be absent.

- Reporting Absences: Call the office at (207) 222-1250 by 8:45 a.m. to report a tardy or absence.
- Excused Absences: Illness, family emergencies, medical appointments, religious observances, or other reasons approved by the principal.
- Chronic Absenteeism: Students who miss 10% or more of the school year, excused or unexcused, will be considered chronically absent, and early intervention steps will be taken.

Dress Code

We strive to create a positive, safe, and respectful learning environment. Students should wear comfortable clothing that allows full participation in school activities, including physical education and outdoor recess, and that is appropriate for the day's weather.

- General Guidelines:
  - Clothing should not be distracting to others or disruptive to the learning environment.
- Inappropriate Clothing Examples:
  - Clothing with references to tobacco, drugs, or alcohol.

- Clothing with suggestive or inappropriate language or graphics.
- Clothing that exposes the waist, midriff, or undergarments.
- Open-toe “flip flop” sandals, platform high-heeled shoes, or any footwear that may pose a safety risk during recess or physical activities. Sneakers are encouraged as they are the safest and most versatile option for school.

By following these guidelines, we can ensure that all students are prepared for a successful day at school. Thank you for your cooperation in helping maintain a safe and respectful school environment.

Electronic Devices and Cell Phones

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing personal electronic devices to school. All personal electronic devices must be turned off and put away during the school day unless determined to be essential for a student's health or safety by administrators. Narragansett Elementary School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged devices.

Gorham School District Policy on Cell Phones and Other Personal Electronic Devices

Toys from home

Although we understand that children want to share their toys and new possessions with their friends, we ask that toys from home not be brought to school. Staff will not accept responsibility for any personal toys that are broken, lost or damaged in any way.

Student Celebration Invitations

To ensure that all students feel included and valued: invitations distributed during class time must include the entire class; invitations for a partial guest list should be distributed outside of school hours and off school property.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE MAIN OFFICE

Thursday Folder (Electronic)

Families receive one notification each week from the main office, sent on Thursdays via email, including upcoming events, school-wide notifications, and approved community flyers as PDF attachments. Families without an email on file will receive paper copies home in their child's backpack.

Thrillshare

Thrillshare manages online interactions between Narragansett and families. Communications of timely importance are sent through this electronic notification system from both the school and Central Office as needed.

ReachMyTeach

ReachMyTeach is a two-way communication platform connecting families and educators through the languages and devices families use every day, via email and text message.

Media/Social Media

With family permission, we celebrate student accomplishments in local media and on social media, including Facebook (@narragansettgorham) and Instagram (Narragansett_School).

NARRAGANSETT ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Drop Off in the Morning

Students should be dropped off in the parking lot drive-thru area only, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Students dropped off after 8:50 a.m. will need to be accompanied into the main office and signed in.

Parent/Guardian Pick Up

Families who pick up their student every day or on certain days of every week (“Dailies”) should send in a note to let the office know. Families picking up occasionally (“Just for Today”) should call the office at (207) 222-1250 by noon.

Pick Up Procedure

All parent/guardian pick-ups begin at 3:05 p.m. Students are dismissed from their classroom and walk to Door 8, where staff direct them to their pick-up vehicle.

View the full Pick Up/Drop Off Procedure

Walkers and Bikers

Students in Grades 4-5 are able to walk or bike home with a completed family authorization form on file. Bikers under age 16 are required by Maine State Law to wear a helmet. The arrival window for all students — walkers, bikers, bus riders, and car riders — is 8:30 a.m. to 8:50 a.m.

Students independently by bike:

Arrival: Park bike at bike rack, walk directly to main entrance.
Dismissal: Dismissed from school, walk to the bike rack, proceed home, always walking on sidewalks.

Students arriving with guardian:

Arrival: Park bike at bike rack, wait with guardian until 8:30, enter building.
Dismissal: Dismissed from school, walk on side walk, meet approved adult, retrieve bike, proceed home.

RECESS, FIELD TRIPS, AND ACTIVITIES

Recess and Movement Breaks

Temperature is checked using the National Weather Service “feels like” reading for the Gorham zip code. If the feels-like temperature is 10 degrees or above, students go outside for recess. The decision is made by 11:10 a.m. for lunch recesses.

Research supports regular movement breaks throughout the day; as well as a specific physical break that allows students to get some fresh air and to have unstructured play. Staff will incorporate opportunities for students to engage in physical movement throughout the day. Staff will schedule a formal movement break each day. This may be done on an individual basis or scheduled by a whole grade level.

Field Trips

Each K-5 class in Gorham participates in two field trips or extra-curricular activities a year. Chaperones must be registered and complete training through the Gorham School Volunteer Program.

Learn more about Gorham School Volunteer Program training

After School Activities

- Band: typically open to 5th graders
- Chorus: open to 4th-5th graders
- Spring Talent Show: open to 3rd-5th graders
- Girls on the Run: open to 3rd-5th graders, Fall/Spring

Before School Activities — Kids Connect Clubs

Open to K-5th graders in 4-week sessions (fall, winter, spring). Students are dropped off in the gym at 7:35 a.m.; activities run 7:45-8:30 a.m., after which students transition to their classroom.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Gorham School Department — Dining Services

Gorham Dining Services information

Free and Reduced Lunch Application

Menus, Value Meals, and Pricing information

Breakfast is served daily from 8:30 a.m. to 8:50 a.m.

K-5 Wellness Procedures

The Gorham School District is committed to providing a healthy eating environment for all students. We ask that families do not send in food for classroom celebrations such as birthdays and holidays; non-food tokens like stickers or pencils can be used instead. This helps minimize disruption, support healthier nutrition choices, and protect students with food allergies.

Gorham School Department — Health Services

Gorham Health Services Handbook

The School Health Department is staffed by professional nurses covering Gorham High School, Gorham Middle School, Narragansett, Great Falls, and Village Schools. Please contact the school nurse for any health concerns or questions.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Family Involvement in School

Families have the most direct and lasting impact on children's learning and development of social competence. We recognize that families frequently balance busy lives and competing priorities, so involvement will look different for every family.

- Attending and volunteering at school events (Open House, Back-to-School Picnic, Bingo Night)
- Sharing a personal expertise or skill within the classroom
- Volunteering in the classroom or chaperoning a field trip
- Serving as a Room Parent
- Communicating regularly with the teacher or school

Volunteer Requirements

The Gorham School Volunteer Program increases student achievement through meaningful family and community involvement. An online form must be completed each year in order to volunteer.

Online Volunteer Form to sign up and training information

Narragansett Volunteer Expectations Sheet fact sheet

Partners In Education (PIE)

Partners In Education is a group of interested families, teachers, building leaders, and the principal who work for the benefit of the school, meeting monthly in the school library.

SAFETY

Emergency Preparedness

Parent Information Guide

The guide is a summary of the Gorham School Department's Comprehensive Health and Safety and Emergency Management Plan. Explaining the district's general approach to preparedness, emergency response, communication, reunification, and recovery.
Gorham School District Parent Emergency Information Guide

Fire drills are conducted 8-10 times over the course of the school year, with the first few announced to students and staff ahead of time.

Standard Response Protocol (SRP) and ALICE Drills and Lessons

The safety of our students and staff is our top priority. SRP provides shared Lockdown announcements and immediate protective actions. A.L.I.C.E. stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. ALICE gives trained staff options based on their location, available information and changing conditions during a violent critical incident. The training at Narragansett is age-appropriate and takes place in the classroom with the teacher leading the discussion; for younger students, lessons are simple and reassuring, focused on listening carefully and following directions quickly.

School Cancellation Announcement

The Gorham School District uses an automated program to call families when there is no school. Information is also posted on the district website, and local radio and television stations make announcements.

School Hours for Early Release Due to Weather

School	Start	Stop	Early Release	Weather
Narragansett	8:50 a.m.	3:10 p.m.	12:00 p.m.	12:00 p.m.
Great Falls	8:50 a.m.	3:10 p.m.	12:00 p.m.	12:00 p.m.
Village	8:50 a.m.	3:10 p.m.	12:00 p.m.	12:00 p.m.
Gorham Middle School	8:00 a.m.	2:20 p.m.	11:10 a.m.	11:10 a.m.
Gorham High School	7:50 a.m.	2:10 p.m.	11:00 a.m.	11:00 a.m.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ALL GORHAM SCHOOLS

Narragansett Elementary School does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity it operates, as required by Title IX. Narragansett's Title IX Coordinator is Quinton Donahue, 75 South Street, Suite 2, Gorham, ME 04038, (207) 222-1025.

Gorham School District nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures

Gorham School District Affirmative Action Plan

Chapter 33: Physical Restraint and Seclusion

Physical restraint and seclusion may only be used as an emergency intervention when a student's behavior presents a risk of injury or harm to the student or others. Questions or concerns should be directed to the School Principal or the Director of Special Services.

Gorham School District Physical Restraint and Seclusion Policy

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Guardians, or adult students, may request to review education records in writing using this form below or an email explaining which records are being requested and send to their school administration or Office of Special Services by mail to 75 South Street, Suite 2, Gorham, Maine 04038 or may email directly to Administrative Assistant of Special Services, Suzanne Berthiaume, at suzanne.berthiaume@gorhamschools.org. The district has 45 calendar days to make records available for review.

Once the school district receives the request, they will be in touch to set up an appointment for the guardians to complete the review or with any clarifying questions. The school district has 45 calendar days to make the records available for review. If copies are being requested, there may be a charge of $0.15 per page (fee may be waived if family can show it would be undue hardship)
Please feel free to contact the Office of Special Services with any questions regarding FERPA at (207) 222-1022
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (F.E.R.P.A)

Rights of Parents and Students with Disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Special education is governed by the IDEA and is defined as “specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.

Federal Government IDEA Site

Gorham School District Policy on Procedural Safeguards 8-15

Special Education and Section 504 Child Find Notice

Gorham School Department has a duty to locate, evaluate, and identify any student residing in the District who qualifies for Special Education services or Section 504 accommodations. If you suspect your child may need services, contact your child's teacher, school counselor, or the District's Special Education Director/504 Coordinator. at (207) 222-1022.

Special Education and Section 504 Child Find Notice

Hazing, Tobacco Use, Bomb Threats, and Related Policies

Full district policy language for hazing, tobacco use and possession, bomb threats, staff conduct with students, classroom discussion of controversial issues, and student drug and alcohol use is maintained in the district policy manual and is incorporated into this handbook by reference.

Gorham School District Policy on Drug and Alcohol Use Policy

Gorham School District Policy on Hazing

Gorham School District Policy on Bomb Threats

*View the full Gorham School District Policy Manual

Bullying

“Bullying” includes a written, oral, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture directed at a student that physically harms a student or damages property, places a student in reasonable fear of harm, or interferes with a student's rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.

Gorham School District Bullying Policy (JICK)

Classroom Discussion of Controversial Issues

The Gorham School Department believes it is the responsibility of the schools to make provisions for the study of controversial issues under competent instruction in a respectful atmosphere where bias and prejudice are acknowledged and inform the discussion.

Gorham School District Policy on Classroom Discussion of Controversial Issues

Staff Conduct with Students

The school committee expects all staff members, including teachers, coaches, substitutes, counselors, administrators and others, to maintain the highest professional, moral and ethical standards in their conduct with students.

Gorham School District Policy on Staff Conduct with Students

INSTRUCTIONAL INFORMATION

Gorham's Learning System

Parent resources for Gorham's learning system, including guidance on how to support your child's academic progress, are available on the district website.

Gorham Learning System Parent Resources