

**Pittsfield Elementary School
Family Handbook**

Table of Contents

Acceptable Use Policy	5
Accidents and Emergencies	5
Animals	5
Arrival at School	5
Assignment of Children to Classes	5
Attendance, Absence, and Truancy	6
Behavior Expectations	7
Bicycles, Scooters, Skateboards, Etc.	15
Breakfast	15
Bullying	15
Bus Safety and Responsibilities	15
Calendar	17
Cancellation of School, Delayed Openings, Etc.	18
Cell Phones	18
Character and Citizenship Development	19
Class Parties and Celebrations	19
Concerts and Other Programs	19
Curriculum	20
Deliveries	21
Differing Instructional Needs	21
Discipline	21
Disclosure of Directory Information	25
Dismissal	26
Dress	26
Drop-Offs and Pick-Ups	27

Early Dismissal from School	27
Electronic Devices	28
Emergency Procedure Practice and Fire Drills	28
Emergency Information	28
Exclusion from Activities	28
Exclusion from School Due to Illness or Disease	29
Facility Use	30
Field Trips	30
Guidance Services	31
Handbook Amendments and Updates	31
Handbook Approval	31
Handbook Receipt	31
Head Lice	31
Health Services	32
Homework	33
Immunizations	33
KYDstop Out-of-School Program	34
Learning Commons	34
Lost and Found	35
Lunch	35
MAP Testing	35
Medications	35
Morning Meetings	37
Newsletter	37
Non-Discrimination	37
Notification of Rights Under FERPA	39
Notification of Rights Under... (PPRA)	39
Notification of Rights Under... (NCLBA)	41
Office Hours	42
Parent Involvement in Literacy Development	42
Parking	43

Personal Safety	43
Physical Examinations	44
Physical Education	44
Pledge of Allegiance	44
Professional Qualifications	44
P.T.O.	45
Public Solicitations	45
Questions and Concerns	45
Recess	46
Registration for School - New Kindergartners	46
Registration for School - Transferring...	46
Report Cards and Parent-Teacher Conferences	47
Requests for Student Work	47
Residence Requirement	47
Retention in Grade	48
School/Family Learning Compact	48
School Hours	50
Searches and Inspections	50
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	50
Smoking	50
Snacks	50
Special Educations Notice of Rights	50
Special Education Services	53
Special Events	53
State Testing Program	53
Student Records	54
Study Habits	54
Superintendent of Schools	54
Supplies	55
Tardiness	55

Telephone Use	55
Time Schedule	55
Title I Program	56
Transferring to Another School	56
Universal Screenings	56
Video/Audio Surveillance	56
Visitors to School	57
Volunteers	57
Walking and Biking to and from School	58
Weapons and Dangerous Implements	58
Wellness	58

[Acceptable Use Policy \(EGA\)](#). The Pittsfield School District supports the use of technology, such as one to one devices (for example - iPads) as a way to offer support to students who may in turn access global resources via digital connectivity to enhance the opportunities for success of all our students. Please see the Acceptable Internet Use Policy (EGA) for further information.

Accidents and Emergencies. Despite our best efforts to provide a safe, healthy environment for children and adults, accidents occasionally occur. When accidents take place, the supervising adult and our school nurse provide immediate and appropriate emergency attention. For this reason, please make sure that contact information is correct with the office.

In the event of serious injury, every effort is made to contact parents to inform and advise regarding the accident and to allow parents to make plans for further medical treatment or transportation, if indicated.

Animals. Due to potential health and safety concerns, animals are not permitted in our school building. With permission from one of the deans, an animal will be permitted in the building.

Arrival at School. To allow for adequate supervision and to ensure safety, children who do not ride a school bus to school or who are scheduled for an early morning academic program are requested to arrive no earlier than 7:45 a.m. but are expected to arrive on time to enter our school building with their classes at 7:55 a.m. Our "official" school day begins at 8:00 a.m. with morning meetings in each of our classrooms.

Upon arrival, children are expected to report to their designated morning arrival area. All bus students will be dropped off in front of the school building. All other students (walkers and car riders) will enter at the back door by the apple trees.

Children who arrive after 8:00 a.m. cause an interruption to the learning of others and are considered "tardy." Tardy children who arrive at school after classmates have entered the school building for the day must report to the school office to check in and obtain a "late pass" prior to reporting to their classrooms.

Assignment of Children to Classes. The assignment of a child to a class represents an important decision in the child's school life. Placement decisions are

made on an individual basis and are the responsibility of the Dean of Instruction. This process may also include consultation with parents and staff. Of course, the needs of class groups are also considered; our classes are intended to be heterogeneous (diverse) in nature and of approximately equal numbers of children across a grade level.

Parents of children new to our school – both kindergarteners and transfers – are asked to complete all application materials and to schedule an interview with our Director of College and Career Readiness (CCR) prior to class placement. Following verification that the child is qualified to attend our school and following the interview, the child is assigned to a class. Typically, a twenty-four hour notice period following the interview is required prior to the start of school to allow the receiving teacher adequate time to prepare for the integration of the new entry into his/her class.

In reconfiguring our classes for subsequent school years, classroom teachers make placement recommendations to the Dean of Instruction. Parents are encouraged to share their perspectives on school placement but are requested not to make specific teacher placement requests as such requests cannot be honored. A questionnaire is distributed to all parents each spring to provide a common format for the sharing of parent observations.

We recognize that parents and teachers may not always agree on the best class placement for each child; however, we assure parents that each child's best interests are considered when making class assignments.

Attendance, Absence and Truancy (JH). Regular school attendance is essential for continuous learning and academic success. New Hampshire law (RSA 193:1) requires that parents ensure regular school attendance of all children between the ages of six and eighteen years.

A new state law (RSA 189:34) adopted in July of 2010 defines truancy as ten half days (five full days) of unexcused absences during a school year. The Pittsfield School District revised Policy JH in accordance with the law and determined the following excused absences:

1. Illness;
2. Recovery from an accident;
3. Required court attendance;
4. Medical and dental appointments;

5. Death in the immediate family;
6. Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
7. Such other good cause as may be acceptable to the Dean or permitted by law;

Any absence that has not been excused for any of the above reasons will be considered an unexcused absence which includes:

1. Work
2. Car or transportation problems (excluding a late bus)
3. Non-medical appointments
4. Providing child care
5. Family vacations - unless the vacation has educational value and has been pre-approved by the Dean of Operations

When a student is identified as habitually truant or is in danger of becoming habitually truant (five unexcused absences), the Dean of Operations will commence an intervention plan with the student, parents/guardians, and other staff members as deemed necessary.

In the event that a child will be absent from school due to illness or other legal reason, parents or caregivers are requested to call the school office (435-8432) by 8:30 a.m. on the day of absence or as early as possible when such an absence is known about in advance. The purpose of this call is to ensure student safety as well as communicate the reason for absence. Notice may be provided outside of regular school hours by leaving a voicemail message.

In the event that notice is not provided, our office staff will make every effort to reach the parent or caregiver - either at work or at home - to ensure that the absent child is safe. When a student is absent and no parent calls or returns a call from the school, the absence will be considered unexcused.

Behavior Expectations. PES takes a proactive approach to school-wide discipline, based on the Responsive Classroom approach and Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (P.B.I.S). Both hold, as a central tenet, the use of respectful, nonpunitive strategies for teaching students positive behaviors. We seek to develop and utilize a school-wide approach to discipline that creates a school environment where:

- Learning and teaching are valued

- Individual differences are celebrated
- Cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, self-control, and other highly valued character traits are taught and encouraged

At a most fundamental level, in the interest of supporting a safe and productive academic environment, children are expected to:

- Use only language and a speaking tone that is proper, respectful, and courteous to others;
 - Use common courtesies, such as "May I please," "Please," "Thank you;"
 - Refrain from walking between people who are engaged in a conversation;
 - Refrain from interrupting people who are engaged in a conversation; in an emergency if an interruption is necessary, interrupt in a courteous manner;
- Respect and refrain from interfering with the teaching and learning of others;
- Respect, cooperate with, and follow the directions of adults in supervisory roles;
- Bring only safe, school-appropriate articles to school;
- Refrain from approaching or touching others in an aggressive or threatening manner;
- Refrain from chewing gum unless it is a team approved accommodation;
- Respect school property and the property of others;
 - Refrain from writing in school and library books, unless the book is a workbook or journal for which specific directions have been given;
 - Keep assigned equipment (desks, chairs, other classroom equipment, storage areas, etc.) neat and clean;
 - Provide restitution for lost, damaged, or destroyed property.

Through a collaborative effort that was initiated in 2005 and continues on an ongoing basis, children, parents, and staff have identified the three universal values of respect, responsibility, and safety as guiding principles in developing behavior expectations. These values being established, we have further developed our *behavior matrix* that specifically defines and operationalized these values in various school settings.

Our behavior matrix, reproduced below, is communicated to our children and adults to clearly communicate and teach our behavioral expectations for all.

After-School Activities

- Respect
 - Be courteous and use kind words
 - Sit quietly and listen or participate
 - Show appreciation
 - Dress appropriately for the occasion
- Responsibility
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - If you make a mess, clean it up
 - Use supplies and equipment properly
 - Observe school rules
 - Arrive and leave at the appropriate time
- Safety
 - Walk
 - Keep hands, feet, and belongings to self
 - Stay in assigned area
 - Keep exits clear
 - Students must be supervised by an adult

Arrival and Dismissal

- Respect
 - Use indoor voices
 - Be courteous and use kind words
 - Wait quietly and patiently
- Responsibility
 - Arrival
 - Line up in a timely and orderly fashion
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - Arrive on time
 - Go directly to assigned area (such as breakfast, assigned play area, etc.)
 - Dismissal
 - Line up in a timely and orderly fashion
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - Leave school grounds promptly unless supervised by an adult
 - Wait to be dismissed before leaving classroom
 - Exit through front door (pre-kindergarten uses back door)
- Safety
 - Keep hands, feet, and belongings to self

- Walk properly on ramp and stairs
- Wheeled devices (bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, etc.) must be walked on blacktop when on school grounds
- Use sidewalks and paths
- Wear appropriate attire

Assemblies

- Respect
 - Be courteous and use kind words
 - Wait patiently and quietly
 - Participate in activity appropriately
 - Ask/make appropriate questions/comments
 - Show appreciation appropriately (clapping)
- Responsibility
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - Keep eyes and ears on presenter(s)
 - Show appreciation appropriately
 - Sit appropriately
 - Take care of lavatory (bathroom) needs before assembly
- Safety
 - Walk
 - Keep hands, feet, and belongings to self
 - Stay in assigned area

Buses

- Respect
 - Be courteous and use kind words
 - Use appropriate language
 - Use quiet voice
- Responsibility
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - Follow rules specific to individual bus drivers
 - Be prepared for your stop
 - Get off at correct stop
 - If you make a mess, clean it up
- Safety
 - Stay in seat
 - Keep hands, feet, and belongings to self and inside the bus
 - Keep aisle clear

- Get on and off the bus in an orderly fashion
- Cross in front of the bus

Cafeteria

- Respect
 - Be courteous - say "please" and "thank you"
 - Use good table manners
 - Socialize in a quiet, respectful way with the people near you
 - Wait quietly and patiently
 - Refrain from touching others' food or trays
- Responsibility
 - If you make a mess, clean it up
 - Come prepared for lunch and recess
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - Take only what you can eat
 - Make everyone feel welcome at your table
 - Use supplies and equipment appropriately
 - Follow the rules for leaving your seat (varies by grade level)
 - Dispose of trash properly
 - Leave schoolwork and playground equipment in designated areas
- Safety
 - Receive permission to leave the cafeteria
 - Walk
 - Exit and enter cafeteria and building in orderly manner
 - Keep hands, feet, and belongings to self
 - All food must be consumed within the cafeteria

Emergency Procedures

- Respect
 - Take situation seriously
- Responsibility
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - Adhere to procedures for the area in which you are located
 - Stay patiently and silently in assigned area
- Safety
 - Keep hands and feet to self
 - Walk in an orderly manner

Field Trips

- Respect
 - Be courteous and use kind words
 - Wait patiently and quietly
 - Be a good listener
 - Respect the environment
 - Use appropriate voice level
- Responsibility
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - If you make a mess, clean it up
 - Follow rules of the field trip location
 - Come prepared (appropriate clothing, lunch, money, etc.)
- Safety
 - Walk
 - Remain with assigned chaperone
 - Keep hands, feet, and belongings to self

Hallway

- Respect
- Walk quietly
 - When entering school in the morning, talk quietly with nearby friends and classmates
 - When moving through hallway with class during the school day, talking is not permitted
 - When leaving school in the afternoon, talk quietly with nearby friends and classmates
- Be courteous and use kind words
- Wait patiently and quietly
- Walk to the right in single file
- Respect others' body space and place in line
- Yield to classes/children already en route
- Respect hallway displays
- Greet others appropriately
- Responsibility
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - Go directly to your destination
 - Use ramp and stairs appropriately
- Safety
 - Walk

- Keep hands, feet, and belongings to self
- Stay in assigned area
- Move safely

Instructional Areas

- Respect
 - Be courteous and use kind words
 - Wait patiently and quietly
 - Use appropriate voice
 - Respect personal space
 - Listen while others are speaking
 - Use positive language
 - Respect others' comments and opinions
- Responsibility
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - Follow rules specific to individual instructional areas
 - Use supplies and equipment appropriately
 - Use time wisely
 - Be focused, listen, and learn new things
 - Keep belongings neat and organized
 - Sign out/in before leaving designated area (grades 4-6)
- Safety
 - Walk
 - Keep hands, feet, and belongings to self

Lavatories (Bathrooms)

- Respect
 - Wait quietly and patiently
 - Respect privacy of others
 - Knock before entering (primary grades)
- Responsibility
 - Use equipment and supplies properly
 - If you make a mess, clean it up
 - Keep trip short - use time wisely
 - Flush
 - Report any problems (vandalism, harassment, etc.) to a responsible adult as soon as possible
- Safety
 - Leave the light on unless room is empty

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water
- Keep hands and feet to self

Recess

- Respect
 - Share equipment; take turns
 - Respect others' belongings
 - Demonstrate good sportsmanship
 - Wait your turn patiently
- Responsibility
 - Listen to and follow directions the first time
 - Line up quickly and quietly
 - Play by the rules agreed upon beforehand
 - Include others who want to participate in activities
- Safety
 - Stay in assigned area
 - Use equipment appropriately
 - Do
 - Go down slides in seated position with feet first
 - Have no more than one person on slide at a time
 - Have no more than two people on cargo net at a time
 - Have no more than three people on tire swing at a time
 - Ride tire swing with feet in center hole
 - Stay on flat area of playground
 - Don't
 - Stand up or walk on slides
 - Jump off structures
 - Walk or climb on top of tunnel
 - Walk, sit, or crawl on monkey bars
 - Hang off tire swing
- Keep hands, feet, and belongings to self
- Keep wood chips, rocks, etc. on the ground
- Be aware of personal space

To ensure a safe, productive, academic classroom and school environment with a clear focus on learning, children and teachers will establish classroom expectations and rules appropriate to the age of the children. These expectations and rules are posted in each classroom and are clearly communicated to each child and adult. (See also "Discipline" below.)

Bicycles, Scooters, Skateboards, Etc. Children may ride their bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc. to school with written permission from a parent and/or guardian. Children are encouraged to wear safety helmets in compliance with state law and are reminded to obey the rules of the road, be alert, ride in a safe manner, and refrain from carrying another person. Upon arriving at the turnaround area adjacent to our kindergarten addition, children are required to dismount and walk.

Our bicycle rack is provided in the area between our kindergarten addition and main building. Bicycles are to be stored at our bicycle rack immediately upon arrival at school; for safety reasons, bicycles, scooters, skateboards, etc. are not permitted to be used on our playground or other areas on our school grounds before, during, or immediately after school hours. Children are expected to report to designated areas after storing equipment. Bicycle locks are not required but are permitted to be used during the school day.

Should a child ride in an unsafe manner or violate the guidelines described above, the privilege of riding to school may be rescinded.

Breakfast. Breakfast is provided daily in our school cafeteria before school hours. Breakfast is not served after 7:55 a.m.; late-arriving children are not served. Cost of hot breakfast is \$1.50; a la cart items are also available.

Cafe Services also offers the Breakfast After the Bell, which provides students with breakfast at a time when they are readiest for food. Students have the option to get breakfast before school starts, but for those that would prefer to eat later, we offer a grab and go breakfast consisting of items such as muffins, yogurt, and fresh fruit during regular snack time. Please contact Cafe Services or the main office for more information or to enroll in this program.

Bullying (JICK). Bullying is prohibited by law (RSA 193-F) and School board policy (Policy JICK). Children and parents/caregivers who become aware of situation of possible bullying - as victims, witnesses, or through conversation - are encouraged to make a timely report to a teacher or Dean of Operations.

Bus Safety and Responsibilities. In the interest of student safety and security, the following guidelines and rules have been established by our school board to govern school bus operations:

- When waiting for the bus, children are expected to:
- Stand in a safe location, out of and away from the roadway;
- Behave in a safe, respectful, courteous, and appropriate manner while waiting for the bus;
- Make eye contact with the bus driver and wait for the driver's signal before moving toward the bus for boarding;
- Stay away from a moving bus;
- Cross the road in front of the stopped bus after the driver has signaled, if it is necessary to cross the road to board.
- When riding the bus, children are expected to:
- Cooperate and extend courtesy to the driver; follow the driver's directions; comply with bus rules and expectations;
- Sit toward the front of the bus when sharing the bus with middle high school students;
- Refrain from the following behaviors:
 - Using profane language, obscene gestures, and excessive noise;
 - Fighting, wrestling, or acting in a physically or verbally aggressive manner toward another person;
 - Play fighting, play wrestling; or play acts of physical or verbal aggression;
 - Placing any body part - head, hands, feet, etc. - or any object out a bus window or door (except for appropriate boarding and departing);
 - Littering on or out of a bus; throwing objects out of a bus;
 - Marking, defacing, or damaging a bus or its contents in any manner;
 - Behaving in a manner that creates a disturbance.
- When leaving the bus, children are expected to:
- Stand clear of the bus, never stand or walk close enough to the bus to be able to reach out and touch it;
- If it is necessary to cross the road, walk away from the bus along the right side of the road until you can see the driver's eyes; stop and wait for a signal before crossing the road; look both ways before stepping out onto the roadway.

Should a misbehavior occur in violation of these rules, the following sequence of 4JTn4*NDconsequences will be followed:

- First offense: warning (for minor offenses);
- Second offense: two-day bus suspension;
- Third offense: ten-day bus suspension;

- Fourth offense: twenty-day bus suspension;
- Additional offenses: twenty or more days bus suspension, including indefinite suspension of the bus privilege.

Children are provided with an opportunity to discuss the reported offense prior to suspension. Typically, the bus suspension begins on the day following such a hearing. Parents will receive a call from the Dean or his/her designee notifying the parent of the suspension and the reason for it. In accordance with state law (RSA 189.9-a), it remains the parent/caregiver's responsibility to arrange for transportation of students to and from school during a bus suspension; Children suspended from the bus are not excused from attending school.

Consequences may be assigned out of this sequence for serious offenses at the discretion of the school administration. Consequences for a child who may repeat misbehavior beyond a fourth offense are provided at the discretion of the school administration and/or school board. Bus misconduct that involves violation of the law is reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

- Parents and caregivers are respectfully requested to support a safe transportation system by:
- Making sure that children arrive at their designated bus stops on time;
- Submitting requests to alter the routine - a bus change from the assigned bus, for example - to the school office in advance (Bus passes are issued from the office only; children gain admission to non-assigned buses by presenting passes to the driver.);
- Directing concerns or complaints about bus operations to our transportation contractor (Marston Transportation at 435-8865) or to the Dean of Operations (435-8432);
- Expecting students to comply with bus safety rules;
- Supporting disciplinary actions taken to ensure safety and good order on our buses.

[Calendar \(ICA\)](#). The Pittsfield School Board establishes our school calendar, typically during the spring preceding the school year. In addition to the required number of days that school is in session, the school calendar also includes teacher workshop days and early-dismissal dates; there is no pre-kindergarten on early release dates.

We recognize that teacher workshop days and early release days may be inconvenient to parents and caregivers. However, our School Board includes these days to provide our school staff with valuable time that is essential for training and for developing school improvement projects. Your understanding of the importance of these days is appreciated.

A regularly updated electronic calendar is posted on the school website. In addition, the school calendar is posted on the district and school websites.

Cancellation of School, Delayed Openings, and Other Schedule Changes.

While every effort is made to maintain our regular school schedule, poor weather or other conditions occasionally require that school be cancelled, the opening of school be delayed, or dismissal may take place earlier than the usual time. If conditions indicate that cancellation or a delayed opening is in the best interests and safety of children and staff, the decision is typically made by 6:00 a.m.

Parents/caregivers are informed of such a decision through the School Messenger system, the school and district websites, and select local television and radio stations. As school may be cancelled or delayed due to conditions other than poor weather, parents/caregivers are strongly encouraged to provide the main office with any changes to contact information. **In the event of a delayed opening, the morning pre-school will be canceled but afternoon preschool will run as scheduled.**

Poor weather conditions and other emergencies may also require that students be dismissed earlier than our usual dismissal time. Parents/caregivers should be assured, again, that every effort is made to maintain our usual schedule and that early dismissal occurs only in very unusual circumstances.

In the event that children must be dismissed earlier than the usual time, every effort is made to contact each child's parent/caregiver through our School Messenger system. As with changes to our morning schedule, parents/caregivers are also informed of early dismissals through the local television and radio stations listed below. In preparation for interruptions to our schedule, parents/caregivers are respectfully requested to make childcare plans to ensure children's safety.

Cell Phones. At the elementary school students may not use cell phones during the school day. We discourage children from bringing phones to school. We understand, however, that some parents want children to have phones for safety

reasons. If the parent feels that a child should bring a phone to school, **the cell phone must remain in the student's bag and be turned off during school hours.** Teachers may confiscate cell phones from students who abuse this privilege. For students who regularly abuse this privilege, a parent may be required to come to school to pick up the child's phone. If a parent needs to reach a student during the day, he/she should call the main office.

Character and Citizenship Development. Character and citizenship encompasses a number of basic elements, but may be briefly described by the core values of *respect* and *responsibility*. Our three guiding principles for child and adult behavior support character and citizenship development as well as the maintenance of a high quality learning environment. These are (1) respect yourself, (2) respect others, and (3) respect our environment.

In practical terms, character and citizenship development are supported through several channels, including:

- The expectation that courtesy and respect be demonstrated in all communications and interactions within the school community;
- Participatory development of classroom and common area rules that reflect respect, responsibility, fairness, and justice;
- Implementation of daily morning meetings that provide a vehicle for social skills learning, including self-discipline, self-control, respect, courtesy, and responsibility;
- Instruction in our social studies curriculum that includes the teaching of citizenship, humanity, justice, human worth, and community service.

Class Parties and Celebrations. To support children's wellness and a healthy school environment, classes are limited to one party or celebration per month. In keeping with the district wellness policy, refreshments should meet established nutritional standards. Teachers are responsible for planning these events and will communicate with parents/ caregivers regarding refreshments at such events. **Parents/caregivers are respectfully requested to honor this practice by refraining from bringing or sending party or celebration treats to school without communicating with your child's teacher.**

Concerts and Other Programs. On several occasions throughout the school year, children will present concerts and other programs for the enjoyment of families and community members. These events are typically held during the early evening

hours. Parents/caregivers, family members, and friends are cordially invited to enjoy these wonderful events and support our children's efforts.

When attending a concert or other program, participants are respectfully requested to remain through the entire program, as it is disruptive to children who are performing to have audience members leave during their presentation. In addition, children who attend the program but who are not performing or presenting are expected to remain with their parents/caregivers and remain under their supervision throughout the event.

Unless specifically invited to do so, audience members - both children and adults - are asked not to walk throughout the building before, during, or after a program. Unless specifically directed to do otherwise, children are expected to remain with their parents/caregivers and remain under their supervision before and after the event.

Curriculum. Our school curriculum, which reflects the *New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks* and *Common Core State Standards*, provides all students with a high quality program of instruction in the areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Supporting high standards, our school curriculum outlines what children should know and should be able to do as they progress through the grades in our school. Teachers provide parents/caregivers with information about the curriculum and expectations for each grade in the fall in the form of a syllabus. In addition, copies of our school curriculum documents are available on our district website.

Completing each child's well-balanced educational program curricula in the areas of art, health and safety, music, physical education, and technology education. Information on these curriculum areas is available on our district website, or by contacting the specialist teacher.

Federal law ensures the right of parents to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for students. Parents may make such a request directly to the appropriate teacher or to the Dean of Instruction.

Deliveries. Deliveries to children and staff members are accepted at the school office. Class and school activities are not interrupted to complete such deliveries; deliveries are made during non-instructional times.

Differing Instructional Needs. Our school curriculum is aligned with the *New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks* and the *Common Core State Standards*. It is intended to reflect currently accepted best practices in elementary school teaching and learning. In addition, our staff embraces and fully supports program modifications mandated to address special student learning needs, such as those specified under special education and other federal laws.

In addition, children's differing talents, interests, and levels of development receive consideration when instructional plans are developed. Examples of such considerations include the multi-level approach of our school literacy program and opportunities for academic choice offered within each classroom.

Discipline. According to Educator Ruth Charney, "The word discipline is derived from the Latin root discipline, meaning learning. It needs to be associated with positive acts and feats of learning, rather than negatively associated with punishment. Teaching discipline requires two fundamental elements: empathy and structure. Empathy helps us know the child, to perceive his/her needs, to hear what he/she is trying to say. Structure helps us set guidelines and provide necessary limits."

PES takes a proactive approach to school-wide discipline, based on the Responsive Classroom approach and Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (P.B.I.S). Both hold, as a central tenet, the use of respectful, non punitive strategies for teaching students positive behaviors. We seek to develop and utilize a school-wide approach to discipline that creates a school environment where:

- Learning and teaching are valued
- Individual differences are celebrated
- Cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, self-control, and other highly valued character traits are taught and encouraged

PREMISES - Our Approach to Discipline

- Goal is to help children develop behaviors most conducive to learning
- Children need to share in responsibility and decision-making that affects their education

- External discipline leads to internal discipline - self-discipline - which becomes a foundation for self-approval and self-acceptance
- Discipline is encouraged by an orderly classroom
- Discipline is a form of instruction (not viewed as punishment); individual needs sometimes dictate individual programs

SCHOOL VALUES - Guiding principles for behavior expectations

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Safety

PROACTIVE STRATEGIES - Recognizing Positive Behaviors and Addressing Negative Behaviors (including but not limited to):

- Teacher Language
 - Reinforcing - noticing and encouraging
 - Reminding - helping to remember
 - Redirecting - focus on rules and expectations
- Body Breaks & Exercise
- Guided practice
- Academic choice
- Interactive Modeling
- Problem-solving conferences
- Communication with parents

RESPONSE TO BEHAVIOR - Means to respond to inappropriate behaviors; the following are a guideline rather than sequential process for managing student behavior

- **LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES** - examples of logical consequences include but are not limited to:
 - You break it, you fix it
 - Abuse a privilege, lose a privilege
- **VISUAL AND VERBAL CUES**
- **INCREASE PROXIMITY**
- **TAKE A BREAK** - Time Away
 - Student choice or teacher directed

- Minor disturbance before a situation escalates
- Brief break from activity
- Opportunity to calm down, gain control, and/or reflect on behavior
- TAKE A BUDDY BREAK - Time Away from Classroom
 - Teacher directed
 - Repeated disturbance or offense; refuses to go to take a break, continues to act out while on a break, resumes disruptive behavior upon returning, and/or failure to take a break in a orderly, respectful manner
 - Brief break from classroom (in adjoining or alternative room)
 - Must demonstrate readiness to rejoin activity (typically 5-10 minutes)
 - Student is welcomed back
 - Discussion of behavior, reflection, and alternatives (may happen upon return or later in the school day)
- BACK ON TRACK - Pitt Stop
 - Teacher directed
 - Major non-compliance or offense
 - Student is referred to the Pitt Stop with a referral form
 - Must demonstrate readiness to rejoin activity, make apology of action, and meet behavioral expectations
 - Family contact is made by the referring teacher (Pitt Stop or other school staff member will make family contact on behalf of a paraprofessional or guest teacher)

SCHOOL SUSPENSION - Exclusion from School

- Gross misconduct (see examples of offenses below)
- Refusal to conform to the reasonable rules of the school
- Suspension decision made by school administration
- Re-entry meeting required
- Re-entry meeting includes parent and adult involved

Maintaining high standards of student discipline in school that allow for optimal teaching and learning represents a significant challenge for us all. The understanding and support of our community have been important in this work and is greatly appreciated by our P.E.S. staff.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS - Minor and Major Offenses

- **CLASSROOM MANAGED BEHAVIOR** - Minor offenses are managed by the classroom teacher and staff. After teacher redirects, repeated and/or a combination of behaviors in the same day constitute a referral. Minor offenses may include, but are not limited to:
 - Classroom disruption
 - Defiance, noncompliance, and/or insubordination
 - Disrespectful behavior
 - Negative peer to peer interactions
 - Physical contact (non-aggressive contact)
 - Safety violations (i.e. misuse of classroom materials, running in the hallway, etc.)
 - Technology violation

- **BEHAVIOR REFERRAL** - Major offenses are documented as behavior referrals and processed in the Pitt Stop. Repeated, intense, and/or prolonged minor offenses may also constitute a referral. The following offenses are considered major offenses and must be referred to the Pitt Stop for appropriate action to be taken.
 - Inappropriate language (i.e. profanity, or racial, ethnic, or gender slurs)
 - Lying or cheating
 - Multiple or repeat minor behaviors (see above)
 - Out of area
 - Physical aggression (i.e. intent to harm)
 - Property damage
 - Safety violation (i.e. threatening comment or gesture to student or staff member)
 - Theft
 - Use of drugs, tobacco, or weapons

- **OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION** - Repeated, intense, and/or prolonged major offenses may result in an out-of-school suspension. Other offenses that merit an out-of-school suspension include:
 - Possession of contraband, weapons, or illegal substances
 - Second offense of physical aggression, ongoing physical aggression, or a single act of physical aggression that results in bodily harm or causes emotional distress

- Safety Violations (i.e. threatening comment or gesture to student or staff member that makes someone feel unsafe)
- Two behavior referrals in one day

Disclosure of Directory Information. We recognize our responsibility to protect the privacy of student information records in accordance with federal law (the *Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act* or *FERPA*). This and other laws define what is meant by *educational record* and ensure that the information collected by Pittsfield Elementary School can be released only for specific and legally defined purposes.

Under the provisions of FERPA, the following information is defined as an *educational record*:

- Date and place of birth, parent(s)' and/or guardian(s)' names and addresses, and where parents/guardians may be contacted in emergencies;
- Grades, test scores, courses taken, academic activities, and official letters regarding a child's status in school;
- Special education records;
- Disciplinary records;
- Medical and health records collected or maintained in school;
- Documentation of attendance, schools attended, and awards conferred;
- Proof of residency;
- Personal information, such as birth certificates and photographs, which would make it easy to identify or locate a student.

Part of this information - which is classified as directory information - may be made public to external agencies and institutions upon request. Pittsfield Elementary School classifies only the following parts of our students' educational records as directory information that may be made public: name, grade, class assignment, academic activities, participation in officially-recognized and school-sponsored activities, awards conferred, and photo. All other information identified above as a *student educational record* will not be released without specific parent/guardian consent.

Parents/guardians may direct the school to remove all or part of this information from designation as directory information that they do not wish to be made available to the public without their consent. To remove any of this information identified as directory information, parents/guardians must notify the school principal in writing.

Dismissal. Classes conclude at 2:30 p.m. and dismissal begins following the conclusion of classes. Walkers, bikers, car riders, and students being picked up by parents or caregivers are dismissed first, followed by bus riders.

The main office must be notified of any changes to a child's normal transportation arrangements no later than 1:00 p.m. Notification after 1:00 p.m. to change to a child's normal transportation arrangement should only occur in extenuating or emergency situations.

Parents and caregivers picking up children by passenger vehicle may enter the front loop starting at 2:25, and students will be dismissed from the cafeteria once a staff member has verified that the person picking the child up is authorized to do so. Parents may also park their vehicles, be buzzed in through the front entrance via the security system, sign out their child, and pick up their child in the cafeteria. Parents and caregivers are not permitted to proceed directly to classrooms to pick up children or attempt to speak with teachers during this busy time of the day.

Dress Code (JICA). The following list of prohibited items is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather it is intended to provide some idea of acceptable standards of dress.

- Head coverings in the classroom - hats, skullcaps, ski caps, etc. - in our school building other than for observation of religious requirements or customs;
- Skirts, dresses, or shorts that do not meet at mid-thigh
- Items of clothing which do not cover the entire torso (which is anything but your limbs)
- Items of clothing which reveal undergarments
- Items of clothing which use words or symbols which threaten, intimidate, encourage illegal activity, and/or cause violence
- Footwear (such as flip flops) that may cause safety issues

Ultimately, the decision is up to the discretion of the Student Support Specialist, Dean of Operations, and/or a third party if necessary. Students found in violation of the dress code should be sent to the Student Support Specialist or the Dean of Operations. The student will be asked to change their clothes and a phone call home will be made. If the student is unable to change their clothing or the parent

is unable to bring a change of clothes, the student will spend the day in the Student Support Center. Repeated offenses will be dealt with on a case by case basis which may then include detention and/or in-school suspension.

Drop-Offs and Pick-Ups. To ensure the safety of children, staff, and community members, we respectfully ask the cooperation of parents/caregivers and others when dropping-off and picking-up children at school.

- Car and truck traffic is very heavy at school during drop-off time in the morning and pick-up time in the afternoon. We respectfully request that parents/caregivers and other drivers exercise extreme caution for the safety of our children, staff, and community members.
- When dropping-off and picking-up outside the building:
- Drive at a safe speed. The posted legal speed limit on Bow Street is 15 mph.
- Do not enter the circle between 7:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The front loop is opened at 2:25 for parents or caretakers to pick up children.
- Adhere to the *Drop Off Only* and *15 Minute Parking* in the circle at the end of the building near our kindergarten classrooms;
- Come to a full stop when leaving this circle;
- Do not pull over to drop-off children on Bow Street forward of the *No Parking Beyond this Point* sign; you will be blocking the roadway for buses.

Parents/caregivers dropping off preschool and kindergarten children are asked to walk them to the back door (preschool) and/or cafeteria (kindergarten). Please do not allow these children to walk to school or walk alone from the drop-off area in the circle.

Parents/caregivers picking-up preschool children are asked to pick up at the back door by the apple trees. Parents/caregivers picking up children in grades K-6 at the end of the school day are asked to wait for children in vehicles in the front loop, or park and wait in the front of the school by the cafeteria door.

Early Dismissal from School. Because early dismissal interrupts learning, parents are strongly discouraged from dismissing children prior to the conclusion of class in the afternoon. However, should it be necessary to have a student dismissed from school early, the parent or caregiver is requested to provide a written request to the office on the morning of the day on which early dismissal is being requested. The parent or caregiver should then report to the school office to sign

the child out of school at the requested time. The child will then be called to the office. To ensure each child's safety, children are not dismissed directly from classrooms, the playground, the cafeteria, or other school locations.

Children are dismissed only to an adult; children are not permitted to leave school on their own accord or to another minor when being dismissed early. Children are only dismissed to the authority of the parent or caregiver or to another adult with the authorization of the parent or caregiver.

When a parent or caregiver wishes to grant permission for another adult to pick up the child, such permission may only be provided in writing and signed by the parent or caregiver. Out of consideration for safety, the parent or caregiver may be called to confirm such arrangements and the office staff may request the adult to whom the child is being dismissed to provide verification of identity (for example, a driver's license).

In the event a parent or caregiver is called, he/she will be asked to identify a *code word* to verify his/her identity. As an additional safety measure, each parent/caregiver is requested to provide children with such a code word to be used for purposes of identification. The code word should be identified on each student's emergency sheet.

Electronic Devices. To ensure that an academic atmosphere is maintained in our school and to ensure the security of valuables, electronic devices such as MP3 players, hand-held computer games, and remote-control toys are not permitted except under special circumstances.

Should a child wish to bring an electronic device to school for use in a class activity or for use during a bus ride for a field trip, teacher permission is required.

Emergency Procedure Practice and Fire Drills. To ensure the safety of our children and staff, a variety of emergency procedure practices (including safety alerts and lockdowns) and fire drills are scheduled at regular intervals throughout the school year. Children are expected to adhere to the very specific expectations for these important activities. Disciplinary action can be expected for procedural violations during emergency procedure practices and fire drills.

Emergency Information. In the interest of student safety and wellbeing, it may be necessary to make immediate contact with a parent, caregiver, or other

responsible adult. For this reason, it is essential that information requested on the school information forms be accurately provided and **updated** when necessary. For example, it is important that changes in address, telephone number, place of employment, child's physician, responsible adults to contact in the event that the parent/caregiver cannot be reached, etc., be communicated to the school office as soon as possible.

Exclusion from Activities. Children are excluded from regularly scheduled activities, such as recess and physical education class, only upon written request from the child's physician. Children may return to such activities, again, only upon written request from the child's physician.

Exclusion from School Due to Illness or Disease. In the interest of individual children's comfort and wellbeing, as well as the prevention of contagious diseases, parents and caregivers are requested to have a child who is not feeling well remain at home rather than send him/her to school. For example, it is the parent/caregiver's responsibility to keep a child at home who is exhibiting symptoms of an illness, such as severe cold, vomiting, nausea, sore throat, headache, or red and watery eyes.

If a student begins to exhibit such symptoms while in school, the student's parent/caregiver will be contacted with the request that the child be transported home for rest and recuperation. Of course, the child should remain at home until he/she has recovered.

The cooperation of parents/caregivers is essential in helping us meet the health needs of students. We ask that parents/caregivers be asked to report communicable diseases to our school nurse, whether the disease occurs during school days, weekends, or school vacations.

Students are not permitted to attend school if experiencing one or more of the following health conditions.

- Chicken pox: for one week after the first skin lesions appear;
- Purulent conjunctivitis: until examined by a healthcare provider and approved for readmission, with or without treatment;
- Fever: 24 hours fever free without medication
- Impetigo: twenty-four hours from the time treatment is started;
- Infectious hepatitis: for at least seven days after the onset of jaundice; the child's physician must advise on the safe date of return to school;

- Mononucleosis: physician's recommendation regarding safe return is accepted;
- Respiratory diseases: until nasal discharges and severe coughing spasm have ceased;
- Streptococcal disease: twenty-four hours from the time treatment is started.

Lesions caused by poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac are caused by a fixed nonvolatile oil. Contrary to general belief, these conditions are not contagious and students with these conditions are permitted to attend school.

Facility Use. The facilities of the Pittsfield School District are available for use by community groups when not utilized for school activities. Applications for requests to use a school facility are available in our school office or from the district web site. The Pittsfield School Board strongly discourages Sunday activities.

Field Trips (IJOA). Field trips extend opportunities for learning beyond the walls of the school; field trips are an important part of each child's educational program. Written parent/caregiver is required for participation in any field trip; it is essential that field trip permission forms be completed and returned to school in advance of the planned trip.

Full participation on field trips by all students is our aim. To this end, classroom teachers consider the needs of each individual student when making field trip plans. For most students, participation without accommodations will be the norm. For some students, accommodations may be required to ensure safety and enjoyment of the trip; parents/caregivers and teachers meet to review individual needs and identify specific accommodations when necessary. Students who are suspended from school at the time of a field trip are excluded.

All participants are expected to ride the school bus with their classmates and teachers when taking a field trip. Parent/caregiver chaperones may, however, with prior notification to the school office and teacher, sign their child out at the conclusion of the field trip should they wish to transport home via a private vehicle. Such a sign-out is considered an early dismissal from school. Parents chaperoning field trips are asked not to bring younger siblings along on trips so that they may devote their attention to the students on the trip.

Guidance Services (JLD). Our school guidance counselor provides a range of guidance services. Our counselor visits classrooms regularly to present lessons on a variety of topics and provides individual and small group counseling services to children to address issues that may arise that prevent children from gaining the full benefit of the school experience. Such counseling may be initiated at the request of individual students, parents or caregivers, or teachers. Long-term therapy, however, lies outside the responsibilities of our school counselor.

In addition, the services of our district school psychologist are available. Our psychologist conducts individual assessments, provides support and assistance for teachers, and assists our Pupil Personnel Placement Team in making program decisions for special needs students.

Handbook Amendments and Updates. In consideration of the best interests of children and of our school programs, amendments may be made to the policies and procedures contained within this handbook if and when appropriate. The policies within the handbook are reviewed and revised annually by the Dean of Operations and/or the PES Team Leaders. Final approval of the handbook lies with the Pittsfield School Board.

Handbook Approval (CHCA). In accordance with Pittsfield School Board policy (Policy CHCA), this handbook has been approved by the Pittsfield School Board.

Handbook Receipt. Schools have a legal obligation to provide much of the information contained in this handbook. To verify that we have met this obligation, parents/caregivers are respectfully requested to review the contents of this handbook, then sign and return the handbook receipt provided. Parents/caregivers are requested to call the school office if you have not received a handbook receipt.

Head Lice (Pediculosis). Head lice are an ongoing nuisance in schools. If a teacher, or staff member suspects a child has head lice we ask that the child be referred to our school nurse for evaluation. If a student is found to have live lice at school the parents/guardians will be contacted and given oral and written directions to treat their child prior to the student returning to school. The nurse will recheck the child's head upon return and monitor in the days following. It is recommended that a second treatment take place 7-10 days after the initial treatment to assure all nits have been killed. A student found to have lice will be allowed to finish the school day, because other students will have already been

exposed to the lice for up to two weeks (due to the fact that nits take that long to hatch). It is not in the best interest of the student to miss time at school.

You can expect to receive reminders home regarding general guidance on prevention, detection, and treatment. The best way to prevent the spread of head lice is for parents to regularly monitor a child's scalp, catching the problem before the infestation spreads and to contact the school nurse if lice or nits are found. The latest research from several prominent health organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Center for Disease Control, finds that performing general classroom head checks does not help effectively control lice and results in loss of learning time. Schools are not the most common places where head lice are spread. Sleep-overs among friends and relatives are thought to be the most common way they are passed from home to home. No national and state health agencies recommend universal screenings.

When a child has been treated for lice, the family should clean any surface the child may have contacted (sheets, carpets, car seats, clothing, stuffed animals, etc.) by washing/drying clothing with heat, by freezing or bagging for 10 days, and by vacuuming carpets in order to kill all nits and decrease chances of re-infestation.

If a child or family has a chronic problem with head lice, the nurse may refer the case to a family physician.

Teachers are asked to help prevent transmission in classrooms by discouraging head-to-head contact and the sharing of hats, combs, hair ties, ribbons, and brushes.

Health Services (JLC). Our district school nurse meets the health needs of children and staff resulting from disease, accident, congenital defects, or adjustment. Importantly, the nurse also supports children's learning about health issues and developing attitudes conducive to healthful living. In addition, the nurse counsels children and parents/caregivers regarding health issues and provides screenings of hearing, vision, height, and weight.

Impaired vision or hearing in children can seriously impede learning and contribute the development of emotional and behavioral problems. Screening is a practical approach to identifying children needing professional services. It is an efficient, economical, and efficient manner of detecting possible problems in the school age

population. By definition, screening is the process by which a large number of persons are tested using a fast, efficient method to separate them into two different groups. The purpose of the screening test is to identify those children who probably have no problems from those who should be examined by a doctor for potential problems and possible treatment.

School screenings are a very basic, first level tool only. They are general in nature. Therefore, if parents/caregivers have questions about a child's vision or hearing, you are advised to communicate with our school nurse to arrange for a screening.

Homework (IKB). Homework is assigned to all children on a regular basis to "encourage individual student growth, independence, and responsibility" (Pittsfield School Board Policy IKB). Homework is considered "complete" if it is presented at time and day required by child's teacher or a reasonable effort has been made to complete (with parent note).

Teachers may provide students with options that will help children to practice and refine skills outside of school. Options may include reading, worksheets, projects, and online practice.

To support the goals of homework, parents/caregivers are requested to:

- Provide your child with a suitable environment for home study that includes a regular time for homework and independent reading every day;
- Check the grade level website if there are questions regarding homework;
- Encourage your child to do his/her best work in completing homework assignments, but avoid undue pressure that can lead to frustration;
- Demonstrate interest in homework assignments and support the development of productive work habits;
- Discuss concerns or questions with your child's teacher as soon as possible; this includes concerns about the amount of homework assigned and difficulty of homework assignments;
- Provide resource material as may be needed to complete assignments.

Immunizations. Students must have proof of all required immunizations in order to attend the first day of school. All vaccines must meet the minimum age and interval table in order to meet the requirements. A child may be enrolled in school under conditional enrollment if documentation of at least one dose for each required vaccine and the appointment date for the next dose of vaccine is presented.

According to NH law, a child may be exempt from immunization requirements if he/she presents evidence from his/her physician that the immunization will be detrimental to his/her health. A child may be exempt for religious reasons in accordance with the law when a notarized exemption form is provided. This form will remain part of a student's medical file.

If a child is not immunized, does not have a religious or medical exemption, or is unable to provide evidence of acceptable immunizations for enrollment, he/she shall not be allowed to attend school. A child who is exempt from immunizations shall not attend school during an outbreak of a communicable disease for which immunization is required under RSA 141-C:20-a.

Regulatory and Statutory References: Ed 311.03, Ed 311.01, NH He-P301.14, RSA 141-C: 20-c, RSA 141-C: 20-a

KYDstop Out-of-School-Time Program. Pittsfield Elementary School, in collaboration with the Concord Y.M.C.A., offers an out-of-school-time program, located at our school. KYDstop runs after school hours and during school vacations. This program offers a healthy snack, academic support, and a variety of activity options for all children after school hours and during school vacations. Parents and caregivers who would like more information about this program are encouraged to call our school or visit our website.

Learning Commons. Students in grades pre K-6 visit the Learning Commons with their classmates weekly for a 45-minute lesson and to check out books from the library. Children are encouraged to use library resources for pleasure reading as well as a source of information to support inquiry on a wide range of topics. The following rules have been established for book check out:

- Children in pre-kindergarten through grade two may borrow two books at a time;
- Children in grades three through six may borrow three books at a time;
- Books may be borrowed for up to one week; children can renew the books each week
- Children are expected to provide proper care for borrowed books and to return borrowed books on time and in good condition;
- Children are provided with an *overdue* notice in their classrooms in the event that a borrowed book is not returned on time;

- Children who have not returned, replaced, or provided the replacement cost of a borrowed book are not permitted to take borrowed books home; this restriction is carried forward to the following school year until the obligation is met.

Lost and Found. Our lost and found bins are located on the main level of our school, under the stairway at the gym at the end of the building. We regularly donate large amounts of unclaimed clothing to the Pittsfield Clothes Closet; students and parents/caregivers are encouraged to check our bins in a timely manner for any lost clothing, backpacks, etc.

Lunch. Since the fall of 2011 Café Services has provided student meals in the Pittsfield Schools. Nutritious hot lunches are available, along with sandwiches and salads, for purchase daily in our cafeteria. Lunch menus are distributed monthly to children and are available on the school website. Lunch (including milk) costs \$2.85. Families can manage student accounts in one of three ways:

- Option 1: Cash
- Option 2: MySchoolBucks - you can register for a free online account using a credit or debit card. This service allows you to make payments, view recent purchases, check balances, and set-up low balance alerts.
- Option 3: You may send a check with your child made payable to the Pittsfield Schools Lunch Program. Please make sure to include the child's name in the memo line.

MAP Testing. PES students in grades K-6 will take computerized MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) tests developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). K-6 students take these tests twice a year. MAP tests are designed accurately to reflect the instructional level of each student and measure growth over time. The tests are engaging for students and provide useful information to teachers. Teachers will use the test results to measure the skills and concepts individual students have learned; diagnose instructional needs; monitor academic growth over time; make data-driven decisions at the classroom and school levels; and place new students into appropriate instructional programs.

Medications (JLCD). Students are not allowed to carry prescription and/or non-prescription medications and over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen (generic for Tylenol) or ibuprofen (generic for Advil or Motrin), with them during the school day or during school-sponsored activities with the

exception of an inhaler and Epipen. Students needing to take prescription and/or non-prescription medications during these times are to do so under the supervision of the school nurse or a designated member of the school staff.

Prescribed medications should not be taken during school hours if possible to achieve the medical regimen at home during other than school hours. It is NOT recommended that narcotic pain medications be taken during the school day. If a student is in such severe pain to require a narcotic for pain management, he/she should stay home. Prescription medications that need to be taken during the school day or during school-sponsored activities the following guidelines apply:

- A written order with the student's name, date, medication name and route, dosage, frequency and time of medication must be signed by the prescribing health care provider.
- Written permission for administration must be given by the parent/guardian.
- Medications must be in the original labeled containers and brought directly to the school nurse by the parent or guardian. The medication may be delivered by other adult(s), provided that the school nurse is notified in advance by the parent of the delivery and the quantity of prescription medication being delivered is specified.
- No more than one month's supply of medication will be stored at school.
- Unused medication shall be picked up by the parent or guardian within the days or it will be disposed of by the school nurse and recorded as such.
- All medication and treatment orders expire with the close of the school year. New documentation is necessary with the start of a new school year.

Inhalers and Epipens: Students with severe, potentially life-threatening allergies can carry their emergency medication such as inhalers and Epipens (NH Ed. 200:42-47). Written authorization from the parent and physician must be provided annually with the request that the student be permitted to carry their medication.

Over-the-counter non-prescription medications that need to be taken during the school day or during school-sponsored activities will only be given with the written permission of the parent/guardian. Medication that is over the counter must be dosed only as indicated on the package. The medication must be appropriate to the age and weight of the student.

A record of all medicines administered to students is maintained in our health office. Consent forms must be renewed for each school year. Parents/caregivers

are requested to update their child's school health record by speaking with our school nurse whenever new conditions develop (such as illnesses, allergies, routine daily medications, surgeries, chronic illnesses, etc.).

Morning Meetings. Morning meetings are held in our classrooms each day to support academic achievement through:

- Creating community in our classrooms - providing children with a sense of belonging, significance, fun, and investment;
- Fostering responsive interactions - sharing, listening, inclusion, and participation;
- Teaching the skills needed to be an active, responsive member of the classroom and school.

Morning meetings start shortly after children arrive in their classrooms at 8:00 a.m. Scheduled to be held for 20 to 30 minutes daily, morning meetings are typically conducted with students arranged in a circle to allow for a strong sense of group and attention. Components of morning meetings include greetings, sharing, a group activity, and news and announcements. To take full advantage of this important school program component, regular attendance and on-time arrival is essential.

Newsletter. The district newsletter is distributed monthly. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to keep informed about school programs and events by reading each edition of the district newsletters. The information in these publications is also published and archived on our school's website.

Non-Discrimination (AC). The Pittsfield School Board "prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on grounds of race, creed, color, national origin, disability, sex, marital status, and/or sexual orientation by employees, administrators, and other staff (including athletic coaches) and students, against employees, administrators, students ... on school grounds, school buses or at school sponsored activities" (Policy AC).

"Any person having inquiries or complaints concerning the school district's compliance with the district's non-discrimination policy or written regulations implementing Title VI (discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin), Title IX (sex discrimination), or Section 504 (nondiscrimination on the basis of

disability), and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act is directed to contact the Dean."

Notification of Rights Under FERPA. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over eighteen years of age (*eligible students*) certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within forty-five days of the day the school receives a request for access.

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

- The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records that the parent of the eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the Dean, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official

committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

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

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

Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA).

PPRA affords parents and students who are eighteen years of age or older or *emancipated minors (eligible students)* certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purpose, and certain physical examinations.

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (*protected information survey*) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education.

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

For surveys that contain questions about one or more of these eight protected areas but are not funded in whole or part by the U.S. Department of Education

funds, the school district will notify parents of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when it will administer the survey(s) and provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participating.

Additionally, parents are hereby notified of the right to review, upon request, any survey that concerns one or more of the eight protected areas, any instructional materials used in connection with any survey that concerns one or more of the eight protected areas, and any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for the student.

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

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

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

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

As a matter of practice, the school forwards educational records to other schools that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Typically, this process includes a formal request signed by the child's parents/guardians.

The school district will/has developed and adopted policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The school district will notify parents and eligible students of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The school district will also directly notify parents and eligible students, such as

through U.S. mail or email, at least annually at the start of each school year, of the specific or approximate dates of the following activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution;
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED;
- Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents/eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

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

Notification of Parents' Rights Under the "No Child Left Behind Act."

According to The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110), you have the right to know certain information concerning schools that receive grant funding from Title I, Part A - Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged.

Pittsfield Elementary School is a Title I school. At the beginning of each school year, a school that receives Title I funds must notify parents that they may request, and that the school will provide, information regarding the professional qualification of a student's classroom teacher(s), including at minimum the following:

- Whether the teachers have met State qualifications for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Whether a teacher is teaching under emergency or other professional status that the State has waived;
- The degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and if so their qualifications.

As a school receiving Title I funds we must also provide to you the following:

- Information on the level of achievement the child has made on all state assessments; and
- Timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned or taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

We at Pittsfield Elementary School fully comply with the provisions of this law. Please contact the Dean if you would like any of the above-mentioned information about your child's teacher(s).

Office Hours. Our school office is open from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on days when school is in session and from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. during school vacations and on weekdays when school is not in session.

Parent Involvement in Literacy Development. Parents are strongly encouraged to play a central role in the development of your child's literacy. The following activities have been found to support literacy development.

- Read to your child. Try to find a quiet time each day to read to your child. Become a reading role model. There should be good lighting, minimal noise distractions, and comfortable seating in your reading space. Choose books that relate to your child's experiences as well as those that introduce new people, places, and experiences.
- Encourage prediction when reading with your child. Start reading a book to your child. (Do this with older children too; they love stories.) Stop the story at an exciting place and have your child guess how the story ends. Then, finish reading the books and see if the guess was correct. Discuss what helped your child make the guess.
- Retell. Have your child retell the story to you after reading. This helps your child to organize thoughts and develop story sequence.
- Draw from an assortment of books. Provide a variety of reading material, including poetry, fiction, and nonfiction books. Find out what your child is interested in reading about and aid him/her in making a selection. Our public library will offer assistance too.

- **Write.** Writing is an essential part of the reading process. Provide an assortment of paper and writing materials for your child. Promote letter writing, journal writing, story writing, and making books. Encourage your child to write regularly and often.
- **Visit our library.** Habits are formed early. Help your child develop the library habit by taking him/her to the library regularly. Our library provides rich experiences for all children.
- **Listen.** Most importantly, take the time to listen to your child read a story to you or something that he/she wrote. When you give your child your undivided attention, it lets your child know that he/she is important; this can motivate him/her to continue to read and write even more.

Remember: you play a crucial role in your child's learning. Have fun with it!

Parking. The following guidelines have been established for safety and convenience.

- The circle in front of the main entrance of the school building is a fire lane; to ensure the safety of children and adults; do not park in the circle at any time.
- Disabled drivers may park in specially marked parking spaces in front of the school building on the gym end of the building; disabled passengers may be dropped off directly in front of the main entrance.
- A drop off area has been established in the circle at the kindergarten end of the building; please do not leave cars unattended in this area.
- A 15 minute parking area has also been established in the circle at the kindergarten end of the building; please do not leave cars in this area for an extended length of time.
- Parking is permitted in the parking lot at the kindergarten end of the building and along Bow Street below the "do not park beyond this sign" sign.

Personal Safety. In the interest of the personal safety of our children, school employees are legally required to report all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to state authorities.

In addition, parents/caregivers are respectfully reminded to speak with your child about personal safety. Remind your child:

- Not to accept gifts (including food) or rides from strangers;
- To report suspicious behavior to you and/or school authorities;
- To practice safety while walking or biking to and from school;
 - Walk on the left side of the road; ride on the right side of the road;
 - Wear clothing that permits children to see clearly;
 - Wear clothing that permits drivers to see him/her clearly;
- Specifically whose homes or cars they are permitted to enter;
- What to do if school is dismissed early or when plans for after school care are unexpectedly changed;
- To know his/her full address and telephone number;
- To use common sense in new or uncomfortable situations.

Physical Examinations. A physical examination, provided by the child's physician, is required by law before attendance may begin for children entering kindergarten and for children entering from a private school or a homeschool program. A physical examination is not required for students transferring from another public school, provided that the child's health records are available and provided upon the transfer.

Physical Education. Students participate in physical education one day each week in accordance with their classroom schedules. In order to be able to participate fully in physical education activities each student is required to wear sneakers that lace up and fit properly. Socks and loose fitting clothing are also strongly recommended.

Pledge of Allegiance. The *Pledge of Allegiance* is recited daily in all classrooms. Children and adults are expected to demonstrate respect for our flag and our nation during this daily exercise.

Professional Qualifications. Federal legislation known as the *No Child Left Behind Act* provides that each parent/guardian may request and be provided with information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher. Such information includes:

- The degrees and state certifications held by the teacher;
- Whether or not the teacher has met state qualifications for the grade level and subject area in which he/she provides instruction;
- Whether or not the teacher is teaching under a state-issued waiver or emergency certification; and

- Whether or not your child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

To obtain such information, parents/guardians should submit the request in writing to the Dean.

P.T.O. Our Pittsfield Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) is an active group of parents and educators who have organized to enhance and support the children of Pittsfield Elementary School and to support and enhance our school's educational programs. Our P.T.O. organizes a variety of events and projects throughout the year. Interested community members are invited and encouraged to participate. P.T.O. meetings are held monthly in our school library; event announcements are also made through our school newsletter and other mailings or flyers.

Public Solicitations (KH). In accordance with school board policy (Policy KH), "no solicitation of or by students will be allowed on school property, except those activities which are carried on for the benefit of the school or student body (i.e., food sales, car washes, etc.) and approved in advance by the Dean and school board. No soliciting from door to door by students will be allowed for school sponsored functions or activities."

Questions and Concerns (KEB). Open and honest communication between home and school can support learning. Parents and caregivers are strongly encouraged to ask questions and address concerns in a timely manner regarding any aspect of our class and school operation directly with the person involved. Conversely, parents and caregivers should expect such open and timely communications from school personnel.

In the interest of effective communications and efficient resolution of classroom and school concerns, the following process has been established:

- *Step 1 - Individual.* Make an appointment to discuss the concern with the teacher or other individual involved. Depending on the situation, it may be helpful to have the child participate in a conference.
- *Step 2 - School Administration.* If the situation has not been resolved to your satisfaction at the individual level, make an appointment to discuss the concern with a school administrator.

- *Step 3 - Superintendent of Schools.* If the situation has not been resolved to your satisfaction at the school administrator level, make an appointment to discuss the concern with the superintendent of schools.
- *Step 4 - School Board.* If the situation has not been resolved to your satisfaction at the superintendent of schools level, make arrangements to discuss the concern with the school board. Such arrangements may be made by contacting the superintendent of schools.

Recess. Children are provided with daily outdoor recess time prior to lunch. During recess, children have the choice of participating in supervised free play or in an activity organized by staff. When it is 15 degrees or colder, including the windchill, we will have indoor recess. The weather center in the main office will be utilized to make the decision on whether recess is outdoors or indoors.

Parents/caregivers are reminded to send children to school prepared for recess with proper clothing and footwear. Children are excused from recess only through his/her physician's written request.

During rainy, snowy, and muddy seasons, children are encouraged to keep an extra pair of shoes in school as they are not permitted to wear boots or other weather footwear in school during the school day. For safety reasons, children are not permitted to go barefoot or wear slippers or socks only while in school.

Registration for School - New Kindergarteners (JEB). Our annual kindergarten registration is held in the spring. To register for kindergarten, a child must be five years of age on or before September 30 of the year he/she plans to begin kindergarten (School Board Policy JEB). Parents/caregivers should check our school newsletter, *The Suncook Valley Sun*, or call our school office in April to find out about the registration dates and documentation required.

Registration for School - Transferring from Another School (JFAA). New Hampshire law requires school attendance; parents of school age children who are new residents of Pittsfield are expected to register at the earliest possible date to allow for the continuation of regular school attendance. To register, visit the school office during regular hours to pick up a registration packet and to schedule an interview with the Director of College and Career.

Report Cards and Parent-Teacher Conferences. Report cards, issued four times each year and are intended to communicate a summary of learning about each child's growth and school achievement. Parents/caregivers are requested to pick up report cards at parent-teacher conferences, which are held at the conclusion of the first and third quarters; report cards are issued to students at the conclusion of the second and fourth quarters.

As noted above, regular parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first and third quarters by classroom teachers. Parents are also encouraged to call the school office to schedule a conference with your child's teacher at any time during the school year in support of student learning and academic success.

Requests for Student Work. Parents/caregivers frequently request classwork for children who miss school due to illness or family emergency. We greatly appreciate your interest in and support of your child's school achievement.

Many of us remember our parents making similar requests and receiving the assignment of textbook readings, workbook pages, or worksheets of math examples to complete so we didn't *get behind* our classmates during an absence.

Our teachers, however, utilize methods and materials very different from those that we remember from our own school days. So much of what we do is interactive, taking advantage of small and large group synergy in designing learning experiences. As a result, it is quite impossible to duplicate today's learning experiences at home.

Of course, we do not discourage parents/caregivers from making such requests. But we do ask that parents/caregivers be aware that the amount and type of assignments and tasks provided will not mirror our memories of the kinds of things that we received as children. This all underscores the importance of regular school attendance for all children in today's world.

Residence Requirement. In accordance with state law (RSA 193.12), no child may attend Pittsfield Elementary School who is not a legal resident of the Pittsfield School District without permission of the district. With the exception of those who may be homeless, children who move out of town are expected to be enrolled in the schools of the district into which they have moved.

Retention in Grade (IKE). Children are typically expected to progress from grade to grade each year having developed the skills and understandings outlined in our school's curriculum (School Board Policy IKE). However, under certain circumstances, retention in grade may be considered as an individualized alternative for children who have not developed the expected skills and understandings at a particular grade. Such children are evaluated on an individual basis to determine whether or not retention is in his/her best interests.

If retention is being considered by the child's teacher, notification is provided to the child's parent/caregiver by March 1. The process for consideration includes a discussion involving both the child's parents/caregivers and teacher on the benefits and penalties of retention for the individual child.

When considering retention, the following guidelines are followed:

- Retention is considered only under unusual extenuating circumstances, such as:
 - A child is unavailable for instruction due to prolonged illness;
 - A child has moved frequently and has not acquired needed skills for promotion;
 - A child may benefit socially, emotionally, and/or academically; especially appropriate to children in the primary grades.
- Retention recommendations are made by a team consisting of the child's parents/caregivers, classroom teacher, other invited members of the faculty, and the Dean of Instruction; the school administrations retains the legal responsibility to assign children to classes within the school.
- When retention is recommended, the child's teacher identifies goals to be achieved through the retention; the child's subsequent teacher monitors the effectiveness of the retention in terms of the identified goals.
- Retention is not used in place of the provision of appropriate educational services, such as special education services or available remedial instruction.
- Retention is never used as a punishment.

School/Family Learning Compact. Our School/Family Learning Compact is a voluntary agreement between family and school that is intended to identify specific means by which families and our school can work together to support our children's education. The compact includes three components:

Student's Role

- Come to school ready to learn;
- Maintain a positive attitude;
- Respect myself and others;
- Work hard on school assignments and projects;
- Ask for help when needed;
- Talk with my family about school;
- Complete homework and long-term projects to the best of my ability.

Family Role

- Provide a supportive learning environment at home;
- Send my/our child(ren) to school regularly;
- Send my/our child(ren) to school clean, properly dressed, well fed, and well rested;
- Send my/our child(ren) to school prepared to learn with necessary learning materials;
- Read and respond to communications from school;
- Communicate with school staff in a timely manner regarding my concerns;
- Read to or with my/our child(ren) at least four times per week.

School Role

- Provide ways for families to participate in decisions affecting their children's education;
- Provide flexible times for family activities;
- Support all efforts made to help students learn;
- Support teachers in adapting curriculum to meet the needs of all students;
- Provide the school staff with ongoing professional development around family involvement;
- Assist families in meeting their needs;
- Communicate clearly with students and families;
- Encourage active family participation in all aspects of children's education;
- Help students be prepared to learn.

The compact is sent home at the beginning of each school year with the request that it be signed by each child and parent/caregiver. The compact is then returned to school to be signed by each child's teacher and our Dean of Instruction. A copy of the compact remains in school while the original is returned to the child's home to document the voluntary partnership for school success to which each party has agreed.

School Hours. Children are expected to be on time for school and arrive at school for orderly entry into our school with their classes at 7:55 a.m. Our school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and children who arrive later than 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy; tardy children must report to the school office for an admission pass before proceeding to their classrooms. Tardiness is to be avoided as a late entry into the classroom interferes with learning. Our school day concludes at 2:30 p.m.

Searches and Inspections (JIH-R). In accordance with School Board policy (Policy JIH-R), "school officials may conduct a search when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal a violation of school rules or produce evidence of unlawful activity." Our school board provides specific guidelines for searches to ensure that all individuals involved are permitted to maintain their dignity during a search or inspection.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. "It is the policy of the district to provide all eligible students a program appropriate to his/her individual needs," according to School Board Policy IGB. A child who is "handicapped within the meaning of 504" shall be provided with an appropriate program, in accordance with this policy. Questions or referrals may be addressed to our Director of Student Services.

Smoking. New Hampshire law (RSA 155) prohibits smoking in schools and on school grounds at all times. Smoking is also prohibited during school-sponsored events.

Snacks. Children are provided with a daily snack time; children are encouraged to bring a healthy snack to school every day. Milk, juice, and a selection of healthy snacks are available for purchase in our cafeteria before school.

Special Education Notice of Rights. Federal special education laws (United States Code, Sections 1400-1415) and state special education laws (RSA 186-C) require that school districts provide a "free and appropriate public education" to all educationally disabled children.

These laws define educationally disabled children as children suffering from certain specified disabilities who are between the ages of three and twenty-one years and who have not yet obtained a high school diploma.

A "free and appropriate education" consists of specially designed instruction and educationally related services in accordance with an "individualized education

program" developed by the school district in consultation with the student's parents/guardians.

If a parent or caregiver suspects that your child is educationally disabled and qualifies for such special services, you may make a written referral requesting that the school district determine whether your child is educationally disabled and qualifies for such special services and request that the school district determine your child's eligibility. Such referrals should be addressed to Pittsfield Elementary School.

The special education laws confer many rights and obligations upon parents/caregivers and school districts regarding educationally disabled children. These include, but are not limited to, the following (which are listed in the United States Code, Title 20, Section 1415b):

- Parents/guardians may examine all relevant records with respect to the identification, evaluation, and educational placement of the appropriate public education.
- Parents/guardians may obtain an independent educational evaluation.
- The school district must adopt procedures to protect the rights of the child whenever the parents/guardians of the child are unknown or unavailable or whenever the child is a ward of the state. Such procedures may include the assignment of an individual who is not an employee of the school district or the state department of education to act as a surrogate for the child's parents/guardians.
- The school district must give the child's parent/guardian prior written notice whenever the district proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of a free and appropriate public education. The school district must adopt procedures designed to assure that this notice fully informs the parents/guardians, in their native language, of all procedures available under Section 1415, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.
- The school district must adopt procedures that include the opportunity to present complaints with respect to any matter relating to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child, or the provision of a free and appropriate public education to such child.
- Whenever a school district receives such a complaint, the child's parents/guardians shall have the opportunity for an impartial due process hearing officer appointed by the state department of education. The

hearing officer shall not be an employee of any agency involved with the education or care of the child. The administrative hearing officer's decision may be appealed to the United States District Court of the New Hampshire Superior Court.

State law establishes short deadlines for requesting an administrative hearing and for appealing the hearing officer's decision to the courts. According to state law (RSA 186-C; 16-b), which took effect on May 1, 1992:

- Any action seeking to enforce special education rights under state or federal law shall be commenced by requesting an administrative hearing from the state department of education within two years of the date on which the alleged violation was or reasonably should have been discovered. However, any action against a school district to recover the costs of a unilateral special education placement shall be commenced by requesting an administrative hearing from the state department of education within ninety days of the unilateral placement.
- Where the parent/guardian, legal guardian, or surrogate parent/guardian has not been given proper notice of special education rights pursuant to Title 20, United States Code, Section 1415(b), including notice of the time limitations in the New Hampshire RSA 186C: 16-b, such limitations shall run from the time notice of those rights is properly given. The state department of education shall make available a model notice of rights that school districts may use as one means of complying with this notice requirement.
- An appeal of the state department of education administrative hearing officer's decision to a court of competent jurisdiction shall be commenced within one hundred twenty days from the receipt of the decision. All such decisions shall be sent certified mail, return receipt requested.
- Any action under Title 20, United States Code, Section 1415(e), seeking reimbursement from the school district for attorney fees related to a request for an administrative hearing, shall be commenced with one hundred twenty days from receipt of the state department of education administrative hearing officer's decision.
- Where a unilateral placement has been made without the school district of residence being offered a reasonable opportunity to evaluate the child and to develop an individualized educational plan, reimbursement may not be sought from the school district for any costs incurred until the school

district is given an opportunity to evaluate the child and to develop an individualized educational plan.

Special Education Services. All educationally disabled children are entitled to participate in "a free and appropriate public school program." All children who appear to be educationally disabled are eligible for due process with regard to identification, evaluation, and placement. A written individual education plan is developed for each student who is educationally disabled. Placement is made in the least restrictive environment appropriate to the child's special learning needs.

Most students receiving special education services at PES are included in the regular school program with appropriate support services. In addition, available placement opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- **Speech and Language Therapy.** Our speech and language therapists identify and support students who have difficulty communicating. The development of listening skills and the ability to express ideas and needs in support of optimal academic achievement are important goals of our therapists. Services include individual therapy, group therapy, and teacher consultation.
- **Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy.** Our occupational and physical therapists evaluate individual children's needs in the areas of gross and fine sensory motor skills, visual perception skills, and in the activities of daily living. Services include individual therapy, group therapy, and teacher consultation.

Special Events. A number of special events are held for children and parents throughout the year. Our annual open house, curriculum fair, book fairs, concerts, and other events provide parents/caregivers and families with opportunities to be involved with their children's school experiences. Look for information about special events in our district newsletter.

State Testing Program. Pittsfield is proud to be a tier one school for the PACE assessment program. PACE stands for Performance Assessment of Competency Education. It is an alternative to NECAP and Smarter Balanced assessments. PACE allows us to use assessments that are tied to our competencies. The assessments are more complex tasks. PACE has structured the annual determination so that we look at local competency assessments, PACE common tasks which are done in all PACE schools and end of course achievement levels. Students in grades 3-HS will

participate in PACE assessments. Since it is a pilot, students in grades 3 and 4 will still take one Smarter Balanced assessment. Students in 8th grade will take Smarter Balanced ELA and math. 11th grade students will take the SAT.

You can support the same way you do every day, adequate rest, good nutrition, and a positive attitude during the testing period will help our children best demonstrate their knowledge and abilities.

Student Records (JRA). Eligible children, parents, and legal guardians have access to and enjoy the right to inspect and review official records of students attending school in the Pittsfield School District (Policy JRA). Upon request, school officials make records available to eligible students, parents, and legal guardians in a timely manner. The records may be inspected and copied; material may not be removed from student records without a formal request and hearing.

Children's records are not released to third party individuals, agencies, or organizations without the written consent of parents or legal guardians.

Study Habits. The development of productive study habits supports school success and forms the basis for the development of productive lifelong work habits. Parents/caregivers can support this important development in each child by establishing regular, daily study time. During this time, children can:

- Complete homework assignments;
- Read; this includes independent, silent reading; reading aloud to another person; and being read to by another person;
- Share something learned in class with another person;
- Conduct research for a special project or presentation;
- Write (a letter to a family member, a to-do list, a diary entry, a poem, etc.);
- Prepare for a presentation or test;
- Explore a topic of special interest.

Regardless of homework assignments or other responsibilities, daily reading time is a must for all children.

Superintendent of Schools. The office of the superintendent of schools for the Pittsfield School District is located at:

S.A.U. #51
23 Oneida Street, Unit 1

Pittsfield, New Hampshire 03263
(603) 435-5526

Supplies. In general, needed classroom supplies are provided to our children through our school district funds. Individual classrooms, however, may require additional specific items to support a learning activity or special project. Requirements for classroom supplies are intended not to impose a financial burden on families. If this occurs, parents/caregivers are asked to speak with the child's teacher to make arrangements to have your child's needs supported.

In addition, children are required to wear sneakers during physical education classes. In the interest of safety and comfort, these sneakers should be the variety that ties. It is also recommended that children wear a smock (large, oversized shirt) to protect clothing during art classes when paints, inks, and clay are used.

Tardiness. When children are late to class in the morning, they miss the important beginning of the school day and cause a disruption to their teacher and classmates. Children are expected to arrive to enter with their classmates at 7:55 a.m. Classes start at 8:00 a.m. If a child is tardy, he/she is required to check in at the school office before proceeding to class.

Telephone Use. Children are not available to take telephone calls during the school day. Parents/caregivers may leave emergency (and only emergency) messages for students at the school office.

Except for emergencies, children are not permitted to make telephone calls to parents/ caregivers during the school day. Children are not permitted to call parents/caregivers for forgotten homework, permission slips, or other items; children are not permitted to make telephone calls to make social plans.

Time Schedule. We recognize the importance of adequate time allocations to allow for the achievement of instructional objectives. At the same time, the integration of subject matter, especially of literacy skills and subject area content, is encouraged and incorporated into teaching plans. Teachers plan to maximize the use of instructional time to ensure that the school's curriculum is adequately addressed.

Title I Program. Title I is a federally funded program intended to support the basic skill development of eligible children. Children qualify for services through teacher recommendation and formal evaluation of achievement. Questions about our program or about eligibility may be addressed to our Title I project manager.

Transferring to Another School. To ensure a successful transition to another school, parents/caregivers are respectfully requested to notify your child's teacher and the school office well in advance of the actual transfer. This will allow us to provide your child's records to the new school at the earliest possible opportunity.

Universal Screenings. It is the goal of the Pittsfield School District to help each child be successful academically and socially. In order to meet this goal, we strive to understand your child as an individual learner. To fully understand the individual needs of each student, personnel conduct screenings of all students in areas such as, but not limited to, academic, vision, hearing, and social-emotional development. After any universal screening, your child's teacher / advisor will notify you if there are any recommendations for next steps. No important decisions will be made without collaborating with the parent / guardian.

Video/Audio Surveillance (ECAA). Teachers and/or staff may use video and/or audio devices on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all students, staff, and visitors to District property and to safeguard District buildings, grounds, and equipment in accordance with District Policy ECAA.

Video and/or audio devices may be used to document student behavior that constitutes a violation of school rules. Videos containing evidence of a violation of student conduct rules and/or state or federal law will be retained until the issue of the misconduct is no longer subject to review or appeal as determined by Board policy or applicable law. Any release or viewing of the video will be in accordance with the law.

Video tapes may be reviewed by District personnel for discipline and evaluation purposes. If disciplinary action is taken as a result of the videotape, the parent/guardian of the student may request to view the tape with the Dean. Video recordings may become a part of a student's educational record or a staff member's personnel record. The District will comply with all applicable laws related to record maintenance and retention

Visitors to School (KI). Our school board (Policy KI) states "citizens are encouraged to visit the schools and to observe the school program. The Board believes that parents of school children have special rights and responsibilities to keep themselves informed about the schools in order to benefit their children."

"Persons wishing to meet with a teacher for the purpose of discussing a particular problem shall do so only at a time when it does not interrupt the normal school program. Persons wishing to make such arrangements may do so by securing an appointment with the teacher through the office of the Dean or by direct contact with the teacher."

"No person shall visit a school or school grounds during the school day (7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.) without first reporting to the office of the Dean as to the purpose and place of the visit. In addition, all visitors must recognize that unplanned direct contact with children must be restricted to serious emergency situations; visitors will be permitted to communicate directly with child(ren) only with the permission of the Dean."

Visitors to classrooms are expected to make prior arrangements with the teacher involved. After being buzzed in to our school building, all visitors (including parents/caregivers) are expected to report first to the main office. Visitors are required to sign our visitor's log and receive a visitor's badge, which must be worn while the visitor remains in the school building. The office staff will announce the arrival of visitors to appropriate personnel. Under no circumstances may a visitor enter our school and proceed directly to a classroom or other location or engage in contact with a child without reporting first to our school office.

Volunteers (IJO). A large number of community members provide important services to our children and school program by generously volunteering their time and abilities. Any community member who wishes to volunteer is invited to call our school office. A wide variety of areas of service are available.

While recognizing the potential benefits of school volunteers, our School Board also asserts its responsibility to ensure that our school is safe and secure and its intent to remain in control of school programs and activities. "In the interest of maintaining a safe, secure environment (according to Policy IJO), the School Board requires that volunteers:

- Submit a photocopy of their driver license or other photo identification prior to the start of service;

- Submit to a criminal history record check and fingerprinting if volunteer service includes:
- Working with students on a regular basis for an extended time (for example, on a weekly basis for one or more school terms),
- Working with students in a location that lacks immediate presence of a supervising district employee;
- Circumstances as determined by the Dean."

Walking and Biking to School. We encourage children to walk and bicycle safely to school. Please note, we do not recommend that kindergarten children walk to school unless accompanied by an adult or older teenager.

Weapons and Dangerous Implements (JICI). Weapons and dangerous implements are strictly prohibited from the school and school property (School Board Policy JICI). This prohibition includes knives of all types; guns of all types; sharp instruments, such as ice picks, screwdrivers, and pieces of metal sharpened to a point; inflammable fluids; mace; pepper gas; explosives; and items made for hitting or throwing, such as brass knuckles, chains, black jacks, and martial arts weapons.

In addition, toys and novelty items that represent or resemble weapons or dangerous implements, such as rubber knives or toy guns (including water guns), are also prohibited from the school and school property. (Although such items usually do not pose a physical threat, their presence represents a potential disruption to the education process and, in certain circumstances, could be used to threaten others.)

The penalty for violation of this prohibition could include suspension or expulsion. For additional information on the issue of weapons and dangerous implements, refer to School Board Policy JICI, which is available at our school office.

Wellness (JJIFA). Our school board has adopted a *Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition* in compliance with federal law. Components of this policy include goals relative to physical activity and nutrition as well as guidelines for our school district wellness committee, the nutritional quality of foods and beverages sold and served at school, promotion and marketing within the schools, and physical activity opportunities.