

Spruce Mountain School District

Student/Parent Handbook

Spruce Mountain Primary School

2026 - 2027



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[Rsu73.com/smps](https://rsu73.com/smps)
Last Update: 6/18/25

Spruce Mountain Primary School 2026-2027

Principal's Welcome

Dear Spruce Mountain Primary School Families,

Welcome to a new school year at Spruce Mountain Primary School! We are so excited to welcome our students and families back and begin another year of learning, growth, and connection.

The primary years are such an important time in a child's life. Our goal is to create a school where every child feels safe, known, valued, and excited to learn. We believe children learn best when they have strong relationships with caring adults, clear expectations, opportunities to explore and make mistakes, and a family and school working together as a team.

Our staff has been working hard to prepare for the year ahead. We are looking forward to building relationships with your children, celebrating their successes, supporting them through challenges, and helping them become confident, capable learners. We also value the partnership we have with our families. Please know that communication and collaboration are important to us, and we encourage you to reach out whenever you have questions, concerns, or celebrations to share.

As we begin the school year, we ask our students to come ready to learn, be kind, be responsible, and do their best each day. Together, we can create a positive school community where everyone belongs.

Thank you for trusting us with your children. We are honored to be part of their educational journey and cannot wait to see the excitement, growth, and wonderful memories this school year will bring.

Here's to an amazing year at Spruce Mountain Primary School!

Warmly,

Darcy Shink
Principal
Spruce Mountain Primary School

The material covered within this student handbook is intended to convey general information, rules and procedures to students, parents and staff. It is not intended to either enlarge or diminish School Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Any information contained in this student handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time to time without notice and may also be superseded by Federal/State law Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement.

Student/Parent Handbook

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RSU 73 VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

Spruce Mountain School District Vision: To ensure success through personalized learning.

Mission: Spruce Mountain School District is committed to providing all individuals with quality educational experiences in an academically, physically, socially and emotionally safe setting.

To help ensure success:

- We will foster independent thinkers who take ownership and accountability of their learning.
- We will cultivate effective communicators.
- We will build a partnership with families and the community to carry out our shared responsibility for education.
- We will promote responsibility, respect, empathy and compassion throughout our schools and greater community.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES

Buses will be dropping students off at SMPS at 7:40 am.

Parents transporting their children must drop them off by the main entrance between 7:40 am and 8:00 am. Students will be marked tardy after 8:00am.

Students being picked up will be dismissed at 1:57 pm, directly after announcements.

Wave one students will be dismissed to load buses at approximately 2:00 pm, and the second wave of students will be dismissed as soon as the second wave of buses arrive (generally 2:28 pm).

Pre-K arrival is 8:10 am and dismissal at 1:10 pm.

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

The RSU #73 School Board requires a safe and healthy learning environment for district students, free of the detrimental effects of drugs and alcohol. Accomplishing this requires a cooperative effort among district staff, students, parents, law enforcement and organizations concerned with the use of drugs and alcohol by school-aged youth.

In order to promote the safety, health and well being of students, the Board endorses a three-pronged approach to address drug and alcohol use, abuse prevention and education, intervention and discipline. The superintendent or his or her designee is responsible for developing appropriate administrative procedures, curricula and programs to implement this policy.

ASSEMBLIES, FILMS, FIELD TRIPS

Students are provided with a variety of assemblies, films, and field trips throughout the year to enrich their learning. It is important to know how to act during these events, and the general rule is courtesy. Parent chaperones are expected to ride the bus on field trips and may not bring pre-school children with them.

ATTENDANCE- THIS IS MAINE STATE LAW

Regular school attendance is the first step in achieving academic success. Parents should help their children take responsibility for regular attendance. Our Truancy Checklist is attached on the next page. Please look it over so you'll be familiar with our process.

Parents must call the school before 8:00 a.m. if their child is going to be absent.

Excused Absences

1. Personal illness – a note or phone call from a parent/guardian is required.
 - a. Provide a doctor's note after 3 excused sick days.
2. Professional health appointments that cannot be made outside of the regular school day – a note must be provided from the health care professional.
3. Observance of recognized religious holidays when the observance is required during the school day.
4. Emergency family situations (severe illness or death in the family).
5. Personal or educational absence which has been **APPROVED IN ADVANCE** by the Principal
6. Educational disruption.

Unexcused absences are all absences that are not included as excused absences.

Students are expected to make up work missed during any absence. Students may not attend extracurricular activities or special school events on any day of an absence from regular classes.

Spruce Mountain Primary School

107 Gibbs Mills Rd. Livermore, Me 04253

Darcy Shink
Principal



Tel. 207-897-3355
Fax 207-945-8074

Truancy Checklist

Student: _____ Phone: _____

Teacher: _____ School Year: _____

- **First Intervention** (After 6th Unexcused Absence or 4th Consecutive Unexcused Absence)

-Parent Phone call by teacher. Date Called: _____
Offer support through the nurse or social worker.
What it takes for student success.
Review district policy and truancy interventions (Review second intervention).

- **Second Intervention** (After 8th Unexcused Absence or 6th Consecutive Unexcused Absence)

-Truancy Letter sent to parents by Administration
Date Sent: _____

-Social Worker calls parents and offers support.
Date called: _____

- **Third Intervention** (After 10th Unexcused Absence or 8th Consecutive Unexcused Absence)

-Notify the Superintendent. Date Notified: _____
-Social Worker Notifies DHHS. Date Notified: _____
-Parent Meeting/Create Intervention Plan.
Date of Meeting _____

- **Fourth Intervention** (Intervention Plan Doesn't Work)

-Superintendent's First letter. Date Sent: _____

- **Fifth Intervention** (After 18th or more Absences/ Truancy)

-Superintendent's 2nd Letter. Date _____
-Retention Meeting. Meeting Date: _____

BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE

An effective school climate is one that is nurturing, safe, and conducive to learning. In establishing a discipline policy, it is important to focus on encouraging students to make good choices and in being responsible for their behavior. In making these decisions, students learn that there are rewards and consequences for their actions. Our job as educators and

parents is to guide students to rewards for appropriate choices and to assist them in learning from their mistakes. Within this framework, the teachers at Spruce Mountain Primary School have established a school-wide behavior management plan that supports the school's philosophy. It is hoped that this consistency provided by the school-wide plan will assist students in realizing their potential, thereby making the learning environment as productive as possible.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is the school wide discipline plan that we use to make our school a great place to learn. PBIS uses proactive measures and school-wide expectations to enable students to achieve social and academic success in school. Such support and expectations are developed, implemented, and monitored by all staff members working in the school. Implementing these expectations school wide can reduce frequency of students who engage in problem behavior.

First, there must be a set of clearly described expectations for student behavior. In the classroom, this includes a set of classroom expectations that set the parameters for student behavior in social and academic areas. In the school, behavioral expectations and limits for student behavior include rules for each common area: cafeteria, halls, bathrooms, playground, and dismissal. All of the behavioral expectations for RSU 73 schools have been placed into specific categories such as be kind, be safe, be respectful and be responsible.

Second, the expectations must be taught to mastery. This is accomplished by explaining the rules, giving and eliciting examples, then engaging students in both guided and independent practice of each rule.

Third, a system of cues and prompts during the time the students are learning the expectations can facilitate student success. All RSU 73 classroom teachers use a behavior chart in their classroom to help facilitate student success in following the expectations of the PBIS school wide system.

Finally, continuous monitoring of the fluency with which students demonstrate those appropriate and desired behaviors gives the staff needed feedback.

What happens when students begin to demonstrate inappropriate behavior again? Review and re-teaching are a critical piece of an effective system of positive behavioral supports. Taking time at periodic intervals based on data to bring students back to mastery on a specific behavioral expectation will enable the classroom and school to function as a safe and orderly learning environment.

Tier 3 Behaviors

Physical Aggression towards students and adults (includes objects being thrown in their direction) will result in the child being sent home for that day. Elopement from the school building will result in the child being sent home for the remainder of the school day.

Click on this [link](#) to a consequence matrix which serves as a guide for staff and the administrator to administer consequences for behaviors.

BOMB THREATS

The Spruce Mountain School Board recognizes that bomb threats are a significant concern to the school unit. Whether real and carried out or intended as a prank or for some other purpose, a bomb threat represents a potential danger to the safety and welfare of students and staff and to the integrity of school property. Bomb threats disrupt the instructional program and learning environment and also place significant demands on school financial resources and public safety services. These effects occur even when such threats prove to be false.

No person shall make, or communicate by any means, whether verbal or non-verbal, a threat that a bomb has been, or will be, placed on school premises. Because of the potential for evacuation of the schools and other disruption of school operations, placement of a bomb or of a "look-alike" bomb on school premises will be considered a threat for the purpose of this policy.

Communicating by any means that any toxic or hazardous substance or material has been placed, or will be placed, on school premises with the intent to endanger the safety and welfare of students or staff and/or to disrupt the operations of the schools is also prohibited. For the purpose of this policy, "toxic or hazardous substance or material" means any material or substance, including biomedical materials or organisms, that, when placed as threatened, could be harmful to humans.

School Bus Safety Code

Expected Bus Behavior

Level I Behaviors

- Be seated ***properly facing forward*** when the bus is moving
- Quiet voices when approaching and stopped at railroad crossings
- Do not exit the bus you have boarded
- Always share seats with others
- Speak quietly at all times
- Use only appropriate language
- Do not speak in a way that teases, hurts or harasses others
- Keep the bus clean
- No eating on the bus
- Drinking on the bus with a closed container with a tight cover and driver's permission.
- Do not use cell phones ***inappropriately this includes no videos or photos of self or others, no loud music from any electronic device*** on the school bus during regular bus trips. Cell phones may be used with driver permission on all co-curricular trips.

Consequences of Level I Misbehavior

Parental notification and one or more of the following:

- Warning
- Possibly moved to the front of the bus or moved to another seat placement
- Behavior contract

Level II Behaviors

- Keep hands, head and feet inside the bus
- Do not throw any object on the bus or out of the bus
- Do nothing to threaten the safety of others on or off the bus
- Do not vandalize the bus or anyone's personal property
- Do not hit, punch, kick, or physically assault another student
- Do not act in a disrespectful or defiant manner toward the bus driver
- Do not use sexually explicit, inappropriate, or derogatory language or obscene gestures

Consequences of Level II Misbehavior or Continued Level I Misbehaviors

Parental notification and one or more of the following:

- One to five day bus suspension

Level III Behaviors

Possession or use of the following:

- Weapons
- Matches or lighter
- Controlled substance including drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Threaten or strike the bus driver

Consequences of Level III Misbehavior or Continued Level II Misbehaviors

Parental notification and one or more of the following:

- Five day or longer bus suspension
- Up to ten day school suspension
- Expulsion hearing
- Contact with police

Adopted by RSU 73 Board: December 13, 2012

Bus stop changes will be made only when there is a change in legal residence.

School bus fire and evacuation drills will be conducted periodically on each bus. If you do not wish for your child to be a leader and assist in bus evacuations please send a letter to the Transportation Director.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Children who have been home ill with a communicable disease may be required to provide a physician's statement before returning to school.

Strep Throat: Children diagnosed as having strep throat are excluded from school until 24 hours after the treatment started. Please contact our school nurse with any questions.

COMMUNICATION

Education is most effective when it is a partnership between parents and teachers. Teachers are encouraged to contact parents regularly. Formal Parent/Teacher Conferences are held each November. Parents are encouraged to call if there are questions concerning their child's progress

Report cards will be sent home once a trimester. A comment sheet that explains what your child has demonstrated over the trimester will accompany the reports. The teacher your child will have the following year will be written on the 3rd trimester report card. Parents are not to make teacher requests as this is a difficult process and cannot be accommodated for all.

Each year, the staff invites all parents to an evening program in their classroom. An Open House allows teachers to know their student's parents, inform parents of curriculum and student behavior goals, establish the means for communicating student progress, and share thoughts about their programs. We encourage parents to communicate anytime that they have a question, concern or suggestion about their child's education.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Students are allowed to share confidential information with administration, social worker, faculty, and support staff personnel employed by the school. Any information that is shared is expected to be kept confidential. Only in the case of an issue related to personal safety would a school department employee be exempt from the requested status of confidentiality on information shared with them by a student.

CONTACTING STUDENTS AT SCHOOL

To minimize the interruptions of classes in session and the school day in general, we ask your cooperation in requesting messages be forwarded to students only in cases of extreme emergencies.

CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS

Spruce Mountain School District recognizes that the consideration of controversial issues has a legitimate place in the public school curriculum. Therefore, the Board has developed a policy which addresses the role of the school, the teachers, the students, and the parents in those matters where opposing viewpoints exist. The policy includes procedures for modifying any student's participation in any activity, which may be deemed controversial.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

In the event that there is a crisis affecting the Spruce Mountain community, the RSU 73 Safety Committee will meet. The purpose of the team is to gather information about the event, design a plan to assist members of the school community in dealing with the event/incident, and implement/monitor the plan.

DISMISSALS

Dismissal arrangements must be made through the office. Please call or send a note in advance. You will need to sign your child out when you arrive. Children will only be released to their parent/guardian unless the parent/guardian has authorized the school in writing to release the child to some other responsible adult. Students will not be called to the office until the adult arrives. Therefore if the child has an appointment, please plan accordingly. Once students have been signed out in the office – parents will wait in the foyer of the main entrance. This will help maintain a secure environment for our students and to minimize interruptions as teachers are completing instruction, processing the day's events with their classes, and getting all students prepared for the end of the day. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

DRESS CODE

Students should be properly dressed for the weather. Students are required to go outside during recess time, weather permitting, unless there is a medical reason for them to remain inside. Persistent requests will require a note from a doctor.

Students are expected to dress appropriately for daily activities; i.e., recess, physical education, field trips, etc. If student clothing is inappropriate, dangerous or distracting, parents will be called. Tank tops with oversized arm openings, short shorts, and short tops are not appropriate dress for school. Midriff (belly shirts) and spaghetti strap tops **are not** allowed and shorts must extend from waist to fingertips when arms are extended. There should be no skin visible between a student's shirt and pants/shorts. No clothing with alcohol or cigarette advertisements, guns, or violence will be allowed.

Hat Rule: Students are not to wear hats in the building. Students should refrain from wearing high heels, flip flops, platform shoes, and heels as they pose a safety hazard for primary students. Students are not allowed to bring make-up to school. (i.e. eye shadow, lipstick, lip gloss).

ELEVATOR USE

The elevator is to be used only by those students who are physically unable to use the stairways. Only those students approved by the office may use the elevator.

FIRE DRILLS

A fire drill evacuation map is posted in each room. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with proper exits in each of their classrooms. The teacher in each classroom will give instructions on proper evacuation procedures. Students will evacuate the building in a quick, quiet, and orderly fashion. Running and loud disturbances will not be tolerated. All driveways, roads, and parking areas are to be kept clear of any obstructions so that emergency vehicles may move freely.

Fire drills will be conducted to provide students with practice of how and where to evacuate each of our facilities.

- Fire drill will be indicated by a continuous buzzing sound. All clear for return to the building will be sounded on the outside speaker.
- Please walk briskly, but do not run.
- Teachers: All teachers should instruct students assigned to their homerooms and daily classes on the proper procedures for leaving the building from the various locations in the building.
- The teacher should be the last one out of the room after closing all windows and doors. Once outside the teacher is responsible for attendance of assigned students. Any missing students are to be reported immediately to administration.
- Lockdown drills may occur periodically throughout the year.

FOOD SERVICE

The Spruce Mountain Nutrition Program offers students a variety of food choices. A meal with fruit and vegetable choices may be obtained daily. Meals served to meet the federal meal pattern requirements of the National School Lunch Program.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM:

One breakfast is free for all students. The cost of an adult breakfast is \$2.50. The breakfast menu varies.

LUNCH PROGRAM:

One lunch is provided free for every student. School lunch personnel maintain a record of lunches provided and a la carte sales. Parents will be notified when there are limited meal funds available in his / her account. Parents are also reminded that the school board does NOT endorse the charging of lunches. Students without lunch money should bring money for lunch on the next school day. The cost of meals (subject to change):

Adult Lunches: \$4.60

Student Breakfast: Free

Student Lunches: Free

Reduced Student Lunch: Free

Single milk purchase: \$0.50

Online payment may be made using "My School Bucks" <https://myschoolbucks.com> Checks should be made payable to the "Spruce Mountain Lunch Program" for individual students or all students in a family attending RSU #73 schools. (please note any and all names with amounts on your payment if paying for multiple students).

HARASSMENT

Spruce Mountain School District recognizes the rights of each student to work in an atmosphere free of intimidation, ridicule, hostility and offensiveness. In order to insure such an atmosphere students are prohibited from harassing other students where harassment is based upon race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, or handicap. Acts of this nature are not only a violation of this policy but also constitute illegal discrimination under state and federal laws. Examples of prohibited harassment include unwelcome sexual advances, gestures, comments or contact; threats; offensive jokes; and ridicule, slurs, derogatory action or remarks.

If students feel they are being harassed they should tell the person doing it that his or her behavior is not welcome or appropriate and that the behavior needs to stop. If a student is uncomfortable with confronting the alleged harasser, he or she should go to a teacher, social worker, or administrator with the complaint. Also, if a student has confronted the alleged harasser and the behavior has not stopped, the student should go to the social worker or administrator. The social worker or administrator will determine the extent of the harassment and begin an investigation if necessary.

During a harassment investigation, the student will complete a harassment report and the principal or his or her designee will interview the alleged harasser. The purpose of this investigation is to determine the facts and to get any harassing behavior to stop. If the behavior does not stop, disciplinary measures will be applied.

At any time in this process, the student who feels he or she is being harassed and/or his or her parents can contact the principal or the District's Affirmative Action Officer, Chris Hollingsworth (897-6722) for advice on the various options available to them. If the student and/or parents do not feel the situation has been resolved, they may also contact the Director of the U.S. Office of Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C. and/or State House Station #51, Augusta.

RSU 73 recognizes its responsibilities to address, investigate and take action relative to violations of individual Civil Rights, Hate Crimes, Intolerance and Prejudice that may occur on school grounds or at school sanctioned activities. In addition to school related discipline involving these specific areas, victims of such violations may be encouraged to go outside the school district and file their specific complaint with the Maine Department Attorney General.

HEALTH SERVICES AND SAFETY

The school nurse provides health services and programs that are beneficial to the students' physical and emotional well being in the school environment. Health counseling and free health pamphlets are available. Students not in compliance with Maine law concerning immunizations may be excluded from school until the matter is resolved.

For emergency first aid and illness during school, assistance is available from the school nurse who will determine a course of action. When the nurse is not present, students should go to the main office. Students must not leave the building because of illness without authorization.

Physical examinations are recommended for all students entering kindergarten, grade six and grade nine, and are to be done by the students' own physicians. A school physical form should be filled out by the student's physician, returned to the school nurse, and kept in the student's health record. Records shall be retained according to the current State schedules pertaining to student health records. The school nurse will report any identified medical problems to the principal for that student. Information regarding a student's wellness, allergies, medications, precautions, and restrictions during physical education or school athletics should be given in writing to the school nurse and any of his or her athletic coaches.

The school will make every effort to inform the parents of an accident or illness occurring at school that may need care or observation at home. However, no students will be sent home unless a responsible adult is there to receive them.

MEDICATION POLICY:

If your doctor requests that a medication be administered to your child at school, it must be left in charge of the nurse or school official. The following information is required:

1. Student's name
2. Parent's Signature
3. Dosage, time, duration to be given
4. Doctor's signed request or the bottle with the prescription on it
5. Name of medication
6. Condition for which drug is prescribed
7. Side effects, if any

It is against school policy for students to carry medication/drugs on school property. Medications must be transported to school by an adult. Medications such as cough syrup, cough drops, Tylenol and “over-the-counter” drugs **will not** be given at school. Please give these around school hours. Children with a persistent cough should be home.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child’s health, please contact the school nurse.

SCENTED PRODUCTS/ESSENTIAL OILS

We discourage the use of scented products at school like perfumes, sprays, oils or lotions as they may cause an adverse reaction in others with sensitivities/allergies.

We are NOT allowed to administer items that are not FDA approved. Therefore, we cannot administer items such as but not limited to herbal supplements, essential oils, and other naturopathic items. These items have proven effective for many, and if used should be administered at home. Consider applying to locations, such as the soles of the feet that allow the user to reap the benefits while minimizing untoward reactions in those with sensitivities.

HOMEWORK

It is important for parents to become involved in their child’s homework. All K-2 students should read nightly. A copy of the homework policy is enclosed for your information.

LOST AND FOUND

Every year many personal articles of clothing remain unclaimed. It is strongly recommended that parents write their child's first and last name on their clothing (especially winter gear). Parents are encouraged to have their child check the lost and found hooks if anything is missing. Parents are also encouraged to ask about unfamiliar articles that your child may have as clothing sometimes gets mixed up and children may exchange things without parental knowledge. Unclaimed clothing is donated to those in need.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Spruce Mountain School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, or physical or mental disability in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: RSU 73 Affirmative Action Officer, Chris Hollingsworth.

Inquiries concerning the application of nondiscrimination policies may also be referred to the Regional Director, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, S.W. McCormack POCH Room 222, Boston, MA 02109-4557.

PARKING

Parents are requested to park in the parking lot on the church side of the school. There is no parking near the school. This area is for emergencies and buses. NOTE: It is against state law to pass a school bus when its red lights are flashing, even in the school yard. The circle is for drop off only (stop and go). Please do not block the roadway. If coming into the building use one of the five designated parent parking spots or other available parking spots.

PARTIES

School parties are scheduled by the classroom teachers and will be restricted to special occasions. Students wishing to have parties for teachers are requested to do so with the permission of the building principal.

PERSONAL PARTIES

Your child will not be allowed to distribute personal party invitations at school unless they have invitations for every student in their classroom.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

From time to time, student pictures are taken or videos made for various purposes at school including, but not limited to documenting projects, awards ceremonies, and special projects. **If you do not wish to have your child’s picture taken and/or published please contact the school and document your request in writing.**

Your child's classroom teacher may choose to place classroom pictures on their classroom web page. This may indicate that your child's picture could be added to the web page. However, student names will not be used at any time on the web page (picture only). **If you do not wish to have your child's picture on our school web page, please document this in writing to the school.**

PERSONAL PROPERTY

These items should be brought to school:

- Recommended supplies (pencils, crayons, markers, rulers, erasers, scissors, pencil box, folders, colored pencils, glue sticks, pencil sharpener, yellow highlighter, and other items identified by grade level staff).

These items must not be brought to school:

- Large items or live animals on the bus
- Dangerous articles (i.e. knives, guns, bullets, matches, etc.)
- Expensive/valuable articles such as radios, tape player, CD players, electronic games, trading cards of any sort, etc.
- Large amounts of money
- Any alcohol or tobacco product.
- Inappropriate literature and/or publications
- Other items as may be determined by the principal

PICKING STUDENTS UP AFTER SCHOOL

Parents who are going to pick up their children after school will remain outside of the school. **Please arrive by 2:00pm** to ensure that your child is not dismissed from the bus. Once students have been signed out – parents will wait outside of the main entrance. This will help maintain a secure environment for our students and to minimize interruptions as teachers are completing instruction, processing the days events with their classes, and getting all students prepared for the end of the day. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

PLAYGROUND RESPECT AND SAFETY

1. No contact sports allowed.
2. No hardballs, bats, or skateboards.
3. Use equipment properly. (i.e. no walking up slide, standing on swings, jumping off swings, walking across top of equipment)
4. Use trash cans. Do not litter.
5. Line up immediately at the teacher's instruction.
6. Enter the building quietly.
7. No gum, hard candy or lollipops.
8. Slide in the correct forward manner.
9. Stay away from windows and all doors.
10. Do not leave the playground or enter the building without teacher permission.
11. Do not throw ice or snow. Stay off icy areas.
12. Dress appropriately for each season.
13. If without boots, stay on paved areas only. If without snow pants, do not slide on banks.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance will be conducted each morning. All students are encouraged to stand.

PRE-K & KINDERGARTEN

Students entering school for the first time must register during registration day in late spring if a resident of Jay/Livermore/Livermore Falls at that time. All incoming Pre-K and Kindergarten students will be screened, as mandated by state guidelines. The screenings consist of the following: a vision and hearing check, speech screening and academic testing. Parents will be provided information on this screening, especially if there are any possible concerns noted.

QUESTIONING AND SEARCHES

In order to maintain a safe and orderly environment in the school, administrators are authorized to question and search students. In addition, student use of all school storage facilities, including but not limited to lockers, desks, and parking lots, is a privilege granted by the school district. All storage facilities are district property and remain under the control, custody and supervision of the district. Students have no expectation of privacy in district storage facilities or for any items

placed in such storage facilities. District staff has the authority to inspect and search storage facilities and their contents on a random basis, with or without reasonable suspicion, and without notice or consent.

If a search produces evidence that a student has violated or is violating the law or school or district policy, such evidence may be seized and impounded by the administrator and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken. Evidence may be forwarded to law enforcement authorities as required by law or as deemed appropriate by the administrator.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS, DELAYS OR EARLY DISMISSALS

It is sometimes necessary to cancel school, delay opening or dismiss early due to poor weather conditions. When concerned about weather conditions, parents should listen to the following radio stations for special school closing announcements: WKTJ in Farmington, WPOR in Portland, WBLM in Portland, WGAN in Portland, WKCG in Augusta, WCSH-TV in Portland, and www.rsu73.com. District personnel will also use Robocalls.

We encourage parents to provide specific instructions as to where your child will go when dismissed for inclement weather. As time permits, we will Robocall for parent notification.

SCHOOL EVACUATIONS

School closing due to evacuation will also be broadcast as listed. A telephone network will be set up for evacuations only.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for all school properties, such as chairs, desks, and library books, which are assigned for their use. Reimbursement for any damage is at the current replacement price.

Students will be provided with storage for appropriate books, materials, and personal belongings of the students. However, the school shall remain the owners of such storage. School authorities for any reason, may conduct periodic general inspection of school storage space at any time — without notice, consent, or search warrant.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Parents are sent a volunteer sign-up form at the beginning of the year.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Students with special education needs have the right to a free and appropriate educational program by law. The process by which these services are assessed in the public schools is by a referral to the Individualized Education Planning Team (IEP) of the school. The IEP is composed of teachers, parents, special educators and administrators. It is the assessments and recommendations of the IEP, which determine the kind and amount of services provided. More information may be obtained by contacting the special education director at 897-6722 X118.

Section 504 is part of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which was enacted by congress to combat discrimination against individuals with disabilities in services, programs and activities administered by any entity that receives federal funds, including public schools. Students found eligible under Section 504 will be provided with an equal educational opportunity to gain access to a free and appropriate public education.

STUDENT RECORDS

The School maintains accurate, updated records on all students. Parents have certain rights and responsibilities and should contact the principal with any questions on this policy.

Parents are responsible for completing the Student Information Sheet and returning it to the school as soon as possible. Parents are also responsible for contacting the school if any of the information on this sheet changes. It is imperative that the school knows how to reach parents or have another designated person's telephone number to use in the event of an emergency.

Parents shall have the right to inspect and review any and all official records, files, and data related to their children, including the material which is part of student's cumulative record folder, and intended for school use or to be available to parties outside the school or school system, and specifically including — but not limited to — identifying data; academic work completed; level of achievement; attendance data; scores on standardized intelligence, aptitude, and psychological test; interest inventory results; health data; family background information; teacher or counselor rating and observations; and verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns.

RSU 73 has established appropriate procedures for granting a parent request for access to their child's school records.

Such requests should be made to the principal. The school shall provide a school employee to interpret the information within the folder to the parents. Parents may request copies of materials contained in their child's records at their own expense.

Information, which the school maintains for student identification purposes, may be released to other parties at the discretion of the principal. This information includes items such as name, address, parent's name, etc. Parents may request that this information not be released. These requests must be in writing and should be sent to the principal.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

K-2 students are administered the Northwest Evaluation Assessment (NWEA). Additional information is found at www.rsu73.com and then clicking on the Spruce Mountain Primary School icon.

All students are given reading tests when appropriate and use of the Brigance Assessment assists in determining student strengths and needs. Teacher developed tests are given as announced by the teacher and students should be encouraged to study for them.

Parental permission is obtained prior to administering any individual test batteries to determine student ability, learning disabilities, etc.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY USE

The information technology and network use policy governs the use of computers and networks in Spruce Mountain School District. As a user of these resources, students are responsible for reading and understanding this policy. It protects the consumers of computing resources, computing hardware and networks, and the system administrator. Spruce Mountain School District utilizes filtering technology designed to block any materials that are obscene or harmful to minors. The district is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) as mandated by federal law. Spruce Mountain School District is not responsible for internet use at home with equipment owned by the school. Computers and networks can provide access to resources on and off school campuses, as well as, communication with other users worldwide. Such access is a privilege and requires that individual users act responsibly. Users must respect the rights of other users, respect the integrity of the systems and related physical resources, and observe all relevant laws, regulations, and contracted obligations. Users must exercise care in acknowledging and respecting the work of others through strict adherence to software licensing agreements and copyright laws. Users do not own accounts on RSU 73's computers but are granted the privilege of use. Technology staff will have access to users' files in the normal course of their employment when necessary to protect the integrity of computer systems or the rights or property of RSU 73. All employees, students, parents and community members are expected to observe the following rules of network etiquette:

- Do not disclose personal information about yourself or others.
- Give credit to copyrighted materials found on the World Wide Web.
- Use of e-mail must comply with Spruce Mountain educational policies. Threatening or harmful e-mail will result in loss of privileges and possible further legal action.

Computers, networks and the Internet are provided for educational curriculum and applied research consistent with the learning objectives of RSU 73. Each user is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving school unit computers, networks and Internet services, and for his/her computer files, passwords and accounts. Examples of unacceptable use that are expressly prohibited include but are not limited to the following:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| • accessing inappropriate materials | • misuse of passwords/unauthorized access |
| • illegal activities | • malicious use/vandalism |
| • violating copyrights | • unauthorized access to chat rooms/news groups |
| • plagiarism | • unauthorized games, downloads and software installation. |
| • copying software | |
| • non-school related uses | |

RSU 73 assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by students, including but not limited to credit card charges, long distance telephone charges, equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use of its computers such as copyright violations.

Be mindful that the availability of the Internet as a research tool is a tremendous benefit to the students, parents, employees and community users. Any attempts to vandalize, destroy data, will be cause for revocation of privileges.

STUDENT USE OF OFFICE TELEPHONE

Students will be allowed to use the office telephone only in emergency situations, and then only with the permission of the classroom teacher. Students may not use cell phones during school hours.

SUBSTITUTES

Our school is fortunate in having capable people to help us whenever our regular teachers are ill or are attending conferences. A substitute teacher is an important asset whose impression of our school will be carried into the community. Let us be certain that these are good impressions by being polite, helpful and as considerate as you would be to your regular teacher.

TITLE IA SERVICES

Title IA services are provided in the areas of supplemental math and reading instruction at the K-2 level. Parents are notified of their child's eligibility and/or participation in this program.

VISITORS

Visits and other meetings must be pre arranged with the classroom teacher or main office prior to the visit. To help ensure the safety of our students, all visitors must report to the main office and be buzzed in. They will be asked to state their business and issued a visitor's pass **PRIOR** to going to any part of the building. School staff have been asked to report any unauthorized persons immediately to the office. The building administrator has the authority to refuse entry to school grounds. This may include, but is not limited to visitors whose behavior is combative, disruptive, or potentially unsafe.

WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Any communication device that is brought to school must be turned off and kept in the office or backpack until the end of the school day. If a student needs to call home (for instance, to arrange after school transportation: to pass on cancellation information; or to have something from home brought to school), they must first get permission from one of their teachers to use the office telephone.

SPRUCE MOUNTAIN POLICIES

All schools in RSU 73 are subject to RSU 73 policies. If there is a conflict between a primary school procedure and a district policy, the district policy shall be updated to the SMPS handbook and may occur throughout the year. In all cases the most up to date handbook will be on the school's web page.

Pest Management Notification

ECB-E1

RSU 73 uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to the control of insects, rodents, microorganisms, weeds and other pests in school buildings and on school grounds. IPM combines a variety of methods for managing pests including monitoring, improved sanitation and food storage practices, pest exclusion and removal, biological control, and pesticides. The objective of the IPM The program is to provide effective pest control while minimizing pesticide use.

Pesticides

Non-chemical pest management methods will be implemented whenever possible. However, Sometimes pesticide use may be necessary to control a pest problem. When that happens, the school will use the least hazardous effective pesticide feasible.

Notification

When required by law, parents/guardians and school staff will be notified at least five days in advance of specific pesticide applications. When required by law, pesticide application notices will be posted in school and on school grounds.

Notification need not be given for pesticide applications recognized by law or regulations to pose little or no risk of exposure to students or staff. Adopted: August 23, 2012

SPRUCE MOUNTAIN DISTRICT PROMOTION & RETENTION OF STUDENTS IN GRADES K to 8 POLICY

IKE

Philosophy:

It is the intent of Spruce Mountain School District to offer appropriate instruction to all students in a developmental, progressive and sequential way. The grade placement of each child should be made on an individual basis and promotion should be tied to the attainment of academic and developmental criteria. Spruce Mountain believes that parents, teachers,

and administration should be involved as early as possible in identifying areas of need.

Spruce Mountain Board of Directors
School System Commitment to Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior Policy

ADAA

The Board of Directors believes that promoting ethical and responsible behavior is an essential part of the school unit's educational mission. The Board recognizes that ethics, constructive attitudes, responsible behavior, and "character" are important if a student is to leave school as a "responsible and involved citizen," as described in the Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results. The Board also recognizes that Maine law requires the adoption of a district-wide student code of conduct consistent with statewide standards for student behavior developed by the Commissioner of the

Department of Education in compliance with 20-A MRSA § 254(11).

The Board seeks to create and maintain a school climate in which ethical and responsible behavior can flourish. The Board believes that instilling a sense of ethics and responsibility in students requires setting positive expectations for student behavior as well as establishing disciplinary consequences for behavior that violates Board policy or school rules. Further, the Board believes that in order to teach ethical and responsible behavior, adults who interact with students must strive to model and reinforce ethical and responsible behavior. To that end, the Board supports an active partnership between schools and parents.

Recognizing that collaboratively identified core values are the foundation for a school culture that encourages and reinforces ethical and responsible student behavior, the Board is committed to the establishment and implementation of a process for identifying shared values and setting and enforcing standards for behavior, including prescription of consequences for unacceptable behavior. The process for identifying such shared values will invite and include the participation of Board members, school administrators, staff, parents, students, and the community. Core values will be reviewed periodically, with opportunity for public participation. The Board will direct the Superintendent/designee to develop a process to assess school system progress toward achievement of an ethical and responsible school culture.

Following the identification of core values, the Board, with input from administrators, staff, parents, students, and members of the community, will adopt a Student Code of Conduct consistent with statewide standards for student behavior¹ that shall, as required by law:

- A. Define unacceptable student behavior;
- B. Establish standards of student responsibility for behavior;
- C. Prescribe consequences for violation of the Student Code of Conduct, including first-time violations, when appropriate;
- D. Describe appropriate procedures for referring students in need of special services to those services;
- E. Establish criteria to determine when further assessment of a current Individual Education Plan (IEP) is necessary, based on removal of the student from class;
- F. Establish policies and procedures concerning the removal of disruptive or violent students from a classroom or a school bus, as well as student disciplinary and placement decisions, when appropriate; and
- G. Establish guidelines and criteria concerning the appropriate circumstances when the Superintendent/designee may provide information to the local police or other appropriate law enforcement authorities regarding an offense that involves violence committed by any person on school grounds or other school property.

The Student Code of Conduct will be reviewed periodically by the Board, with input from administrators, staff, parents, students, and members of the community.

Students, parents, staff, and the community will be informed of the Student Code of Conduct through handbooks and/or other means selected by the Superintendent/designee.

Ethics and Curriculum

The Board also encourages schools, school administrators and staff to provide students with meaningful opportunities to apply values and ethical and responsible behavior through activities such as problem solving.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 254, 1001(15)

Adopted: September 13, 2012

¹The statewide standards are the "core values" identified in the report of the Commission for Ethical and Responsible Student Behavior, Taking Responsibility: Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior in Maine Schools and

Communities. The core values are: Respect, Honesty, Compassion, Fairness, Responsibility and Courage. The Code of Conduct must be “consistent with,” not identical to, the statewide standards developed under 20 M.R.S.A. § 254(11). This provides an opportunity for communities to identify their own core values and articulate what they “look like” when applied to behavior. The core values serve as a basis for school system expectations for student conduct.

Appendix A

SMPS Major Assessments			
Grade	Assessment	Measures	Testing Date
Pre-K	Owl, Brigance	Readiness	Sept
K	Fountas/Pinnell	Reading Achievement/Comprehension	Jan/May
	NWEA	Academic Performance in Math/Reading/Language Usage/Science	Jan/May
	Brigance	Readiness	Sept
	Observation Survey	Letter ID/Hearing/Recording Sound/Concepts of Print	Sept/May
1	Fountas/Pinnell	Reading Achievement/Comprehension	Oct/Jan/May
	NWEA	Academic Performance in Math/Reading/Language Usage/Science	Oct/Jan/May
	Observation Survey	Hearing & Recording Sounds/Letter Name Identification/Sound ID	Sept
2	Fountas/Pinnell	Reading Achievement/Comprehension	Oct/Jan/May
	NWEA	Academic Performance in Math/Reading/Language Usage/Science	Oct/Jan/May

Appendix B

Spruce Mountain Primary School *PBIS School-Wide Rules and Expectations*

	<i>Bathroom</i>	<i>Hallways/*Stairway</i>	<i>Cafeteria</i>	<i>Playground</i>
Be kind	Use kind words	Walk around, not through, when there is a conversation in the hallway.	<Assist classmates with opening packages, cartons, etc. <Use kind words. <Use please and thank you.	Invite others to play. Share equipment. Allow everyone to play. Take turns. Be an up stander
Be safe	Wash and dry your hands. Keep hands to yourself. Put paper towels in the trash.	TWalk on the right side at all times. TFace forward when walking. TFollow the door policy.	A. Remain seated and facing forward. B. Eat your <u>own</u> lunch. C. Clean up your eating area/floor. A. Walk at all times.	A. Wear appropriate clothing. B. Only closed-toe shoes on the structure. C. Use equipment appropriately. D. Stay in designated areas. A. Be aware of people around you.
Be respectful	1. Give privacy. 2.Use quiet voices.	Use quiet voices. Maintain your place in line. Respect personal space and property. Be respectful to others in the hallway and classrooms.	<Talk quietly and use inside voices. <Use table manners. <Listen to adults. <Respond politely.	Follow teacher's directions. Respect personal space. Stand in line quietly to enter and exit the building. Respect the property of others. Use appropriate language.
Be responsible	Flush the toilet when done. Leave the bathroom area clean. Shut off the faucet. Report any problem to an adult. Take care of business in a timely manner.	Report any unsafe behaviors or concerns to an adult.	Follow the quiet rule in response to lighting change. Follow directions. Fill in each table until it's full. Raise your hand for assistance. Clean up your things and pick up after yourself. Wait to be dismissed to dump and line up quietly.	Accept consequences without arguing or complaining. Report issues to the duty teacher. Follow the rules of the game.

Appendix C

SMPS Lunch Rules & Procedure

1	Face Forward in Line with Quiet Voices & Walking Feet
2	Keep Hands to Ourselves
3	Use Good Manners When Receiving Your Tray
4	Give Lunch Number to the Cafeteria Person
5	Fill Every Seat at Your Table (No Saving Seats)
6	Voices at a Whisper

7	Raise Your Hand Silently if You Need Help.
8	Stay in Your Seat Unless Given Permission to Move
9	Listen to All Adults on Duty
10	No Talking When the Lights are Off
11	Empty Your Tray When Told to Do So
12	After Emptying Your Tray, Return to Your Seat and Sit Quietly.
13	Quietly Line-Up on The Ramp When Directed to Do So.

Always follow the Phoenix Promise:

Be Kind – Be Safe – Be Respectful – Be Responsible

Appendix D

The Parent-Teacher Partnership

The experts have been polled and the results are in: a positive parent-teacher relationship contributes to your child's school success.

"Easier said than done," you may be thinking. After all, there are teachers your child will love and teachers your child may not. There are teachers you'll like and dislike as well. There are teachers who may adore your child, and those who just don't understand him. But whatever the case, your child's teacher is the second most important person in your child's life (after her parents, of course). And you can help make their relationship a strong and rewarding one.

"A positive parent-teacher relationship helps your child feel good about school and be successful in school," advises Diane Levin, Ph.D., professor of education at Wheelock College. "It demonstrates to your child that he can trust his teacher, because you do. This positive relationship makes a child feel like the important people in his life are working together."

Communicating well is a key factor for making this relationship work. "Communication on both sides is extremely important," notes teacher Susan Becker, M. Ed. "The parents need information about what and how their child is learning, and the teacher needs important feedback from the parent about the child's academic and social development."

But communicating effectively with a busy teacher, who may have up to 20 kids in a class, can be challenging. When's the right time to talk — and when isn't? How can you get her attention? What should you bring up with her with and what should be left alone? How do you create a relationship with someone you may only see a few times a year? And how do you do this without coming across like an overanxious pain in the you-know-what?

Read School Memos

"Read the school memos, rules and schedules so you know what's happening and what's expected of your child and of you. Keep school information in one place, or better yet, in a loose-leaf binder so it doesn't get lost. This information should help you answer your child's questions about homework and school policies. This is the single most important thing you can do to foster a positive relationship with the school."

Diane Levin, Ph. D..

Nurturing the Relationship

Try these strategies to build a positive relationship with your child's teacher.

Approach this relationship with respect. Treat the teacher-parent-child relationship the way you would any really important one in your life. Create a problem-solving partnership, instead of confronting a teacher immediately with what's wrong. "Meet with a teacher to brainstorm and collaborate ways to help your child, instead of delivering a lecture," recommends Susan Becker, M. Ed.

Let your child develop his own relationship with the teacher. "This is one of the first relationships with an adult your child may have outside the family unit. If you take a back seat and let the relationship develop without much interference, a special bond may develop," advises guidance counselor Linda Lendman. "For young children, the teacher-child relationship is a love relationship," adds Michael Thompson, Ph.D. "In fact, it may be their first love relationship after their parents and it can be pretty powerful and wonderful."

Try not to brag. Of course you think your child is brilliant, but bragging over her many accomplishments may send a message to the teacher that you think he may not be good enough to teach your child. "You don't need to sell your child to the teacher," notes Michael Thompson Ph.D., "you have to trust that your teacher will come to know what's important herself. Telling a teacher that your child loves to read will thrill the teacher. But challenging your teacher with statements like 'Susie read 70 books over the summer' or 'Matthew is a whiz at math,' may backfire."

Remember how you liked (or disliked) your teachers. Your experience at school is likely to affect your attitude toward your child's teacher. "It's important to leave your own baggage at the door, so you can talk about your child with the teacher (and not about you!)" adds Michael Thompson, Ph.D.

Talking with Teachers

Find the right time to speak to the teacher. Always ask the teacher if she has time to talk at that moment, or better yet, when it might be convenient for her to do so. If a conference is not coming up soon, ask if you can make an appointment for a brief conversation. "Don't expect to have an extended conversation during drop-off and pick-up," advises teacher Susan Becker, M. Ed. "Mornings and after school can actually be quite hectic times. The teacher may appear free but she's not."

Write short, effective notes. If you want a quick response, keep your correspondence brief. Nobody (particularly teachers) has time to read more than one page, and a short paragraph will probably get the fastest response. Be specific about the issue and ask for guidance. For example, you might say, "Lucy's been having trouble with the math homework recently. She struggled for 30 minutes and then we stopped. Can we speak on the phone for a few minutes at your convenience about how to help?"

Make sure your message gets to the teacher. Handwritten notes, leaving occasional messages on teachers' voicemail or sending emails (if allowed by school policy) are effective ways to communicate. Sometimes mailing a note to the school can be the most reliable way to get information through, for parents who do not take their kids to school. But don't be upset if you don't get an immediate response. If you don't hear back after a few days, make sure your teacher got your communication, particularly if you sent it via your child.

Come prepared to conferences. Make a list in advance of what you want to discuss. Let the teacher know you have some questions and be specific: give concrete details that paint an objective picture of a problem. Instead of sweeping comments like "Denzel is having a terrible year," offer tangible data, like "at least three days a week, Denzel melts down while trying to do his math homework. He says 'I don't understand' and 'I'm stupid.'" This way you can collaborate with the teacher on solutions.

Discuss what matters most. Your teacher wants to know about how best to teach your child, so share what your child loves to learn about as well as any struggles he may have. This way, you can look at the whole picture of your child together. "Instead of focusing just on grades, focus on what your child loves, how he learns, and what he struggles with. Think of specifics you can offer the teacher to help her teach your child and listen to what he has to say," advises Michael Thompson, Ph.D. "If you have a report card to review, use it to brainstorm together how you can both support your child's learning, instead of dissecting each grade. Ask how your child functions in the classroom as a person. Does he make friends? How does he resolve conflicts?"

Supply data. Teachers will find comments from previous teachers useful, and giving this data is a non-threatening way to address issues. You might say, "Last year, Johnny's teacher noted he was struggling with attention issues. He was tested and this is how we are handling it." Or you might explain, "Betsy was put in a special reading group last year by Mr. Miller because he evaluated her and thought she needed more advanced books."

Accept your differences with your teacher. Recognize that your teacher may have a different style from you, but that doesn't make her a bad teacher. "Some teachers will be older and seasoned veterans, others will be younger and more idealistic. There are lots of differences in styles of communication and educational philosophy. You will need to really listen to your child's teacher to get a sense of who he is," notes Dalton Miller-Jones, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Portland State University and an advisor to the Portland School district.

Ask what you can do to help. When discussing a problem your child may have, ask your teacher for specific ways you can help at home. Ask her to define what your role should be in the problem-solving partnership, making sure the teacher, parent, and child all play important roles.

It's the Chemistry

"In the end, there is a fit between child and teacher. Some fits are good, some are not. Keep in mind that this is an arranged marriage and both sides have to work at it. The teacher can't expect that all children will adapt to her and parents can't expect that all teachers will adapt to their child. The teacher has to reach out to the child and the child has to learn the patterns and behaviors of the teacher. Parents have to help the child realize that the teacher is just a person with strengths and limitations. The teacher needs to learn the same about the child. Everything about good teaching is meeting in the middle." **Michael Thompson, Ph.D.** Author, *The Pressured Child*

Addressing Problems There may be times when serious conflicts arise and you will need to meet with a teacher, a guidance counselor or principal to discuss them. Check out these ideas before you go to that meeting.

Acknowledge your child's feelings. "If you get repeated complaints that make sense, you do need to validate your child's feelings and then take some action," advises Michael Thompson, Ph.D. "Unfortunately this may interfere with the trust you want to exist between parent and teacher, but in these extreme cases, your child needs to know that you take her feelings seriously."

Consider the teacher's point of view. While it's important to acknowledge your child's description of an event, you should also keep an open mind and listen to what the school has to say before making a judgment, particularly when serious complaints and discipline issues arise. "The story you may hear from your child may

not be the whole gospel truth," notes Lawrence Cohen, Ph.D., author of *Playful Parenting*. "It's usually a complex situation that requires a perspective from the teacher. But don't dismiss your child's complaint either."

Evaluate teachers fairly. There will be some teachers you may love and your child may dislike, there may be others your child may love, but you may not. "There are ways to work out a positive relationship with your child's teacher, even if you have issues about the teacher," advises Diane Levin, Ph.D. "Keep in mind that your child may feel very differently than you do, both positively and negatively. And your job is to advocate for your child and remember that you are not the one in the classroom, he is."

Meet with the administration. If a respectful meeting with the teacher does not produce solutions for your concerns, then you need to go to a guidance counselor or principal and say, "my child is having a difficult time," and explain why. Approach this meeting with specific information, and offer to brainstorm what can be done to help. Describe specific incidents in a factual way. "You cannot expect immediate action, but it's important to give the feedback, and to ask the school system to address these issues with the teacher and find a solution that works for your child," advises Michael Thompson, Ph.D.

Supporting Your Learner. Caught in a battle over homework? Or working around the clock with your child completing a school project? Wondering what to do when your child forgets to hand in an assignment — a few days in a row? Baffled by experts who tell us we should help our children enjoy school and become independent learners? "Great," you might think, "but how?"

"Our children become independent learners very gradually," advises guidance counselor Linda Lendman, M.S.W. They learn at their own pace and you can support their process at home by nurturing what they are interested in and giving gentle guidance when they need assistance."

"What happens at home has a lot to do with supporting your child's success as a learner — and this goes way beyond making sure she gets her homework done or studies for the test. You want to help kids learn how to feel competent and positive about their learning. One way to begin is to help kids organize themselves (at their developmental level); create a schedule for doing their work and discover how they can follow it, so school work becomes a rich part of their after-school lives, but not the only part," advises Diane Levin, Ph.D., professor of education at Wheelock College.

While there's no magic recipe, there are ways to help kids plan their time, complete their homework, and make the most of school. These strategies can help you help your child get excited about learning (or at least get you through some tough spots along the way).

The Parent's Role Although a parent's role in their children's learning evolves as kids grow, one thing remains constant: we are our children's learning models. Our attitudes about education can inspire theirs and show them how to take charge of their own educational journey.

Be a role model for learning. In the early years, parents are their children's first teachers — exploring nature, reading together, cooking together, and counting together. When a young child begins formal school, the parent's job is to show him how school can extend the learning you began together at home, and how exciting and meaningful this learning can be. As preschoolers grow into school age kids, parents become their children's learning coaches. Through guidance and reminders, parents help their kids organize their time and support their desires to learn new things in and out of school.

Pay attention to what your child loves. "One of the most important things a parent can do is notice her child. Is he a talker or is he shy? Find out what interests him and help him explore it. Let your child show you the way he likes to learn," recommends Dalton Miller-Jones, Ph.D.

Tune into how your child learns. Many children use a combination of modalities to study and learn. Some learn visually through making and seeing pictures, others through tactile experiences, like building block towers and working with clay. Still others are auditory learners who pay most attention to what they hear. And they may not learn the same way their siblings (or you) do. By paying attention to how your child learns, you may be able to pique his interest and explain tough topics by drawing pictures together, creating charts, building models, singing songs and even making up rhymes.

Practice what your child learns at school. Many teachers encourage parents to go over what their young children are learning in a non-pressured way and to practice what they may need extra help with. This doesn't mean drilling them for success, but it may mean going over basic counting skills, multiplication tables or letter recognition, depending on the needs and learning level of your child. "There may be times to review, but don't take on the role of drill master," adds Diane Levin, Ph.D. "And when you do review it should feel as if your child wants to be a part of the practice."

Set aside time to read together. Read aloud regularly, even to older kids. If your child is a reluctant reader, reading aloud will expose her to the structure and vocabulary of good literature and get her interested in reading more. "Reading the first two chapters of a book together can help, because these are often the toughest in terms of plot," notes Susan Becker, M. Ed. "Also try alternating: you read one chapter aloud, she reads another to herself. And let kids pick the books they like. Book series are great for reluctant readers. It's OK to read easy, interesting books instead of harder novels."

Connect what your child learns to everyday life. Make learning part of your child's everyday experience, especially when it comes out of your child's natural questions. When you cook together, do measuring math. When you drive in the car, count license plates and talk about the states. When you turn on the blender, explore how it works together. When your child studies the weather, talk about why it was so hot at the beach. Have give-and-take conversations, listening to your child's ideas instead of pouring information into their heads.

Connect what your child learns to the world. Find age-appropriate ways to help your older child connect his school learning to world events. Start by asking questions. For example, ask a second-grader if she knows about a recent event, and what she's heard. Then ask what she could do to help (such as sending supplies to hurricane victims). You might ask a younger child if he's heard about anything in the news, and find out what he knows. This will help your child become a caring learner.

Help your child take charge of his learning. "We want to keep children in charge of their learning and become responsible for it," says Dalton Miller-Jones, Ph.D. "We want them to be responsible for their successes and failures, show them how engaging learning is, and that the motivations for learning should be the child's intrinsic interests, not an external reward."

"One of the best ways to help children become independent and responsible learners (and get their homework done) is to encourage them to take ownership over their work.

You might start by asking your child to make a homework schedule. Giving your child some control over this schedule will empower him to do his work. Be prepared to negotiate — but not too much — as you need to maintain approval. Once you set a schedule, stick to it.

Some children benefit by writing out their schedule and posting it. And when needed, change it."

Diane Levin, Ph.D.

Professor of Education, Wheelock College.

Don't over-schedule your child. While you may want to supplement school with outside activities, be judicious about how much you let or urge your child to do. Kids need downtime as much as they may need to pursue extra-curricular activities. "If a child has homework and organized sports and a music lesson and is part of a youth group in church or synagogue, it can quickly become a joyless race from one thing to another. Therefore, monitor your child to see that he is truly enjoying what he is doing. If he isn't, cut something off the schedule," advises Michael Thompson, Ph.D.

Keep TV to a minimum. "Watching lots of TV does not give children the chance to develop their own interests and explore on their own, because it controls the agenda," advises Diane Levin, Ph.D. "However, unstructured time with books, toys, crafts and friends allows children to learn how to be in charge of their agenda, and to develop their own interests, skills, solutions and expertise."

Learn something new yourself. Learning something new yourself is a great way to model the learning process for your child. Take up a new language or craft, or read about an unfamiliar topic. Show your child what you are learning and how you may be struggling. You'll gain a better understanding of what your child is going through and your child may learn study skills by watching you study. You might even establish a joint study time.

Helping with Homework

Wondering how to help your children with homework — or how to get them to do it without a struggle? Here's how.

What's the point of homework? "Homework is designed to help students reinforce key concepts, process and solidify new information, provide time for extra practice of skills, and reflect on how much they've learned," notes teacher Susan Becker, M. Ed. However, approaches to homework vary from district to district, school to school and teacher to teacher. Some schools don't give children homework until the 2nd grade. Others start in kindergarten. Some teachers create original homework, while others use or modify prepared worksheets.

Don't do the homework for your child. Most teachers use homework to find out what the child knows. They do not want parents doing their children's homework but do want parents to make sure homework is completed and review any mistakes to see what can be learned from them.

Don't take over your child's projects. Teachers do not want parents doing their kids' projects. Instead, they want parents to support their kids' learning and make sure they have what they need to accomplish a task. Check with your child's teacher for his policy and review it with your child.

Set up a good space to work. All children need the same thing: a clean, well-lit space. But keep in mind that each child may work differently; some will do their work at the kitchen table and others at their desks in their rooms.

Pay attention to your child's rhythms and help him find the right time to begin his work. Some children will work best by doing homework right after school; others need a longer break and must run around before tackling the work. Most will need a snack. If your child does after-school activities, set a homework time before or after the activity, or after dinner. Whatever routine you choose, help your child stick to it.

Find out how your child studies best. "You should find the ways your child likes to study. For example, some kids will learn spelling words by writing them out, others by closing their eyes and picturing them and saying them aloud," advises teacher Susan Becker, M. Ed. "The sound environment is also important," adds Michael Thompson, Ph.D. "Some kids may want to listen to music, some are helped by being in the middle of noise, others need absolute quiet."

Don't hover — but stay close by. Keep in mind that it's their homework, not yours, but remain available in case you are needed. "The ideal set up would be for a parent to be reading nearby while the child is studying because then you both are doing your educational work together, but that's not always possible," says Michael Thompson, Ph.D. "A parent may be working out of the home, or need to be working in the home and cooking dinner. So if you are home, stay close, and if you are not there, have another adult check to make sure it's going OK. And remember that all homework is not equal, so not everything will need your rapt attention."

Limit media exposure. Turn off the TV and the iPod when your child does homework. Turn off the computer too, unless it's being used for research. You might start by asking how much time he thinks he should spend on this, and negotiate from there. Remember, you have the final word. And keep in mind that if you watch TV when your child can't, the plan may backfire.

Let the teacher know if you gave your child a lot of homework help. "If your child needs extra help or truly doesn't understand something, let the teacher know. Write on the assignment, 'done with parental help,' or write a separate note," advises Michael Thompson, Ph.D. If your child resists, explain that homework is used to practice what you know and to show the teacher what you need help learning more about — so it's a parent's job to let the teacher know.

The Tough Stuff

No matter how hard you try, your child may struggle academically at some point in his school career. Here are some strategies to help you both cope when the going gets tough.

Let your kids get frustrated. When kids are having a hard time with homework or a school-related subject, they often explode with anger. And parents wonder "What did I do wrong?" "You didn't necessarily do anything," advises Michael Thompson, Ph.D. "Sometimes when kids feel misunderstood at school or frustrated by a subject, they get angry or provoke the parent — as a way of making you feel as helpless or angry as they feel. It's almost like your child is saying, 'would you hold my hopelessness for a while?' Or 'I need you to feel what I am going through, so I am going to make you angry.'"

Take a break. If your child says, "I can't do it!" and throws the pencil down, take a little break. Maybe she needs to rant and blow off a little steam. Come back in five minutes and start fresh. (Those five minutes could save you an hour of struggle.) This also gives a child a chance to "save face" and start over, without even discussing the previous difficulty or outburst.

Don't always try to have a rational conversation. When kids get very upset about school, the upset may get in the way of their being rational. So wait it out instead of arguing or grilling children about the situation. Once they cool down, you might be able to talk it through.

Let your child make his own mistakes. It's hard not to correct a child's homework, but most teachers ask you not to take over unless your child asks for your help or the teacher requests it. Teachers generally want to know what the child understands, not what the parent understands about the material.

Put a time limit on the work. Most teachers will not expect younger kids to work longer than a half-hour on homework from any particular subject, but ask your teacher for a time limit. If your child struggles (while actively trying) and exceeds the limit, write the teacher a note explaining that's all that could get done.

Contact the school. If homework or a project is turning into a dreaded battle, talk with the school. Don't wait for your next conference. It's obviously time for some new insights and new strategies.

Don't Fix It

"As parents, we usually want to jump in and take our kids' pain and mistakes away, and find a solution. But what they really need is someone who understands and accepts their frustration or sadness, without changing it. Sometimes you just need to sit and listen to your child without solving it. A simple hug and words like 'I know,' 'I understand,' or 'I'm sorry it's so hard' may be what your child needs. Later on, you can encourage her to find a solution, but not in the moment of peak frustration. "

Michael Thompson, Ph.D.

Author, *The Pressured Child*

Help your child learn how to organize himself. This is a life-long skill that can be taught, but it can be challenging to do so. However you can help your child discover the organizational tricks that will work for him by sharing some of your own. "It's very difficult to teach children to be organized if it is not in their nature (or yours)," says guidance counselor Linda Lendman, M.S.W. "Encourage your child to label everything. Develop strategies, like the 'must-do list' before you leave school (put your math book in your backpack). Schedule a weekly 'clean out the backpack and clean off your desk' time so papers don't build up. Be patient, and try not to place blame. **“Recognize that schoolwork will never be conflict-free.** No one ever raised a child without a homework battle. "There is no conflict-free homework strategy for most kids," says Michael Thompson, Ph.D. "At times, kids will find it fun and fascinating. Other times, it may be something they just have to do, and you have to help them find the structure for getting it done." **The Faculty and Staff at Spruce Mountain Primary School hope that these helpful tips allow you and your child to have a successful year at Spruce Mountain Primary School.**

SPRUCE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT

RSU 73

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Annual Notification Of Asbestos-Containing Building Materials In All RSU 73 School Facilities

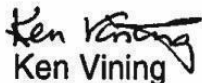
All school / buildings in RSU #73 School District have been inspected for the presence of Asbestos – Containing Materials (ACBM's). A written plan (Asbestos Management Plan) for the management of ACBM's has been developed. The Asbestos management plan identifies the type and location of ACBM's in school buildings and outlines operational procedures for proper building maintenance to minimize exposure to asbestos hazards. The school also maintains records of all asbestos reinspections, surveillance activities, and response actions. These records are available for inspections at the Central Office Building.

All schools In RSU 73 except for the Central Office Building have been inspected and documented as being Asbestos Free.

Sincerely,



Scott Albert
Superintendent of Schools



Ken Vining
AHERA Designated Person

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SUBJECT: TRUANCY	
Date of Original Policy: November 12, 2020 Date of Next Review: 2024 Cancels Policy Code: None Revision Date:	
JURISDICTION: RSU 73 Schools	

POLICY: **TRUANCY**

TRUANCY DEFINED

A student is truant if he/she is required to attend school or alternative instruction under Maine's compulsory attendance law (20-A MRSA § 5001-A) and he/she:

- A. Has completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year; or
- B. Is at least 6 years of age and has not completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of 7 full days of unexcused absences or 5 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year.
- C. A child 5 years of age or older and under 6 years of age who is enrolled and who has not withdrawn from a public day school is required to attend that school during the time it is in session. Such a child will be considered truant if he/she has the equivalent of 7 full days of unexcused absences or 5 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year.

ATTENDANCE COORDINATORS

In accordance with Maine law, the Superintendent shall appoint one or more attendance coordinators. The duties of the attendance coordinator include, but are not limited to:

- A. Interviewing a student whose attendance is irregular and meeting with the student and the parents to determine the cause of the irregular attendance and filing a written report with the principal;
- B. Filing an annual report with the Superintendent summarizing school year activities, findings, and recommendations regarding truants;
- C. Serving as a member of the dropout prevention committee; and
- D. Serving as the liaison between the school and the local law enforcement agency in matters pertaining to student absenteeism under Maine law.

TRUANCY PROCEDURES

As required by law, the following procedure shall be followed when a student is truant.

- A. The principal, upon determining that a student is truant, shall notify the Superintendent of the student's truancy within five school days of the last unexcused absence.
- B. Within five school days of notification, the Superintendent/designee will refer the student who has been determined to be truant to the individual buildings' intervention personnel.
- C. The intervention personnel will meet to determine the cause of the truancy and assess the effect of the student's absences, as well as any future absences for the student. If it is determined that a negative effect exists, the student assistance team shall develop an intervention plan to address the student's absences and the negative effect of these absences.

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An intervention plan may include, but is not limited to:

1. Frequent communication between the teacher and the family;
2. Changes in the learning environment;
3. Mentoring;
4. Student counseling;
5. Tutoring, including peer tutoring;
6. Placement into different classes;
7. Evaluation for alternative education programs;
8. Attendance contracts;
9. Referral to other agencies for family services; and
10. Other interventions including but not limited to referral to the school attendance coordinator, student assistance team, or dropout prevention committee.

Failure of the student or the student's parents to appear at scheduled meetings does not preclude school administrators from implementing a plan to address a student's truancy.

The student and his/her parents/guardians shall be invited to attend any meetings scheduled to discuss the student's truancy and the intervention plan.

If the Superintendent/designee is unable to correct the student's truancy, the Superintendent/designee shall serve or cause to be served upon the parent(s) in-hand or by registered mail a written notice that the student's attendance is required by law. The notice shall:

1. State that the student is required to attend school pursuant to 20-A MRSA § 5001-A (compulsory attendance law);
 2. Explain the parent's right to inspect the student's attendance records, attendance coordinator's reports, and principal's reports;
 3. Explain that the failure to send the student to school and maintain the student in regular attendance is a civil violation in accordance with 20-A MRSA § 5053-A and will jeopardize the student's status in the grade he/she is in;
 4. State that the Superintendent/designee may notify local law enforcement authorities of a violation of 20-A MRSA § 5053-A and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) of a violation under and 20-A MRSA § 5051-A(1)(C); and
 5. Outline the plan developed to address the student's truancy and the steps that have been taken to implement that plan.
- F. Prior to notifying local law enforcement authorities, the Superintendent/designee shall schedule at least one meeting of the student assistance team as required by law and paragraph B of this policy and may invite a local prosecutor.
- G. If after three school days after the service of the notice described in paragraph E of this policy the student remains truant and the parent(s) and student refuse to attend the meeting referred to in paragraph F, the Superintendent/designee shall report the facts of the unlawful absence to local law enforcement authorities. Local

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law enforcement may proceed with enforcement action against the parent unless the student is at once placed in an appropriate school or otherwise meets the requirements of the compulsory attendance law.

- H. When a student is determined to be truant and in violation of the compulsory attendance law, and the student assistance team has made a good faith attempt to meet the requirements, the Superintendent shall notify the Board of the student's truancy.

ANNUAL REPORT TO COMMISSIONER

The Superintendent shall submit an annual report regarding truancy to the Commissioner by October 1. The report must identify the number of truants in the school administrative unit in the preceding school year; describe the school unit's efforts to deal with truancy; account for actions brought to enforce the truancy law; and include any other information on truancy requested by the Commissioner.

Legal Reference: 20-A MRSA §§ 5001-A; 5051-A; 5054-A
22 MRSA § 4002

Cross Reference: JEA - Compulsory Attendance
JFC - Dropout Prevention - Student Withdrawal from School
JLF - Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Adopted: November 12, 2020

Revisions: