

Mount Holly Elementary School Handbook

Table of Contents

	Page
Mission Statement	2
Parent-School Compact	
Beliefs	3
School Calendar	4
Personnel Directory	5
General Information.	6 - 12
Special Services	13
Medication	14
Policies	15 - 26

Mount Holly Elementary School

Mission Statement

Mount Holly School is dedicated to creating a positive and safe learning environment. We will provide students with an exceptional education that, while recognizing their individuality, challenges all levels of learners with high academic standards. We will encourage family and community involvement as a means of developing citizens with an appreciation for diverse ideas. Together we will empower students by fostering the academic, social and personal skills needed to prepare them for an increasingly complex society. With strong administrative leadership, a clear vision, and a highly skilled and dedicated staff, we will nurture a respectful school community of healthy, responsible, lifelong learners.

Home/School Partnership

Belief Statements

We believe the foundation for life long learning is a responsibility shared by family, community, and school.

We value and respect each child.

We believe the educational system has the responsibility to recognize and develop the unique qualities and talents of each student.

We believe high expectations result in high achievements.

We believe that there are certain conditions basic to student learning. These include appropriate amounts of sleep, a healthy diet, good hygiene, self-discipline, and regular, on-time attendance at school.

We believe that every student should be treated with respect and dignity in a safe and nurturing school environment.

We welcome the challenge to change.

Parents will:

- * organize time – (TV, friends, chores and create a homework ritual (time, space/materials)
- * read with each child regularly and encourage library use
- * attend parent conferences, workshops, volunteer at school, and share your talents
- * integrate academic skills into everyday life
- * teach children respect, manners, compassion and tolerance
- * have consistent rewards and consequences for behavior
- * encourage independent learning and responsibility
- * create a language rich environment
- * eat meals together as much as possible
- ** **Parents and Teachers will work actively to assure the success of this compact.**

Teachers will:

- * inform parents of homework expectations
- * provide course of study and goals
- * encourage family visits to their classrooms to observe, volunteer and participate
- * inform parents of upcoming classroom units
- * communicate children's progress as needed
- * provide a school-wide discipline system
- * communicate disciplinary action with parents
- * meet and communicate with parents throughout the school year
- * initiate parent workshops

CALENDAR

Rutland/Windsor Supervisory Union

8 High Street

Ludlow, Vermont 05149

PERSONNEL DIRECTORY

Central Office

Pullinen, Judith
Ficken, Julie
Frechette, Eleanor
Frangiose, Joan
McKillop, Ann Margaret

Hammond, Cheryl
Boni, Krista

Superintendent
Secretary
Business Manager
Special Education Coordinator
Educational Technology
Professional Development Coordinator
Bookkeeper / Accountant
Bookkeeper

Board of School Directors

Tarbell, Kelly, Chr.
Venter, David
Bixby, Randy

Greineder, Paul
Faenza, Brigid

Mount Holly Elementary School

Hutt Vater, Craig
Collins, Raye Lin
Perry, Doris
Lienhard, Laura
Long, Suzanne
Nevin, Judith
Manney, Margaret
Coldwell, Penelope
Townsend, Shelley
Cormier, Danielle
Cole, Paula
Hyjek, Judy
Wilcox, Connie
Tobey, Rebecca
Ahlers, Theresa
French, Lily
Caldwell, Betsey
Goraj, Julie
Perry, Nancy
Pierce, Darica
Veysey, Kristin
Ehlert, Wendy
Demers, Robin
Larsen, Roy
Larsen, Kristine

Principal
Office Manager
Kindergarten
Grade 1
Grade 2
Grade 3
Grade 4
Grade 5
Grade 6
Pre-School
Pre-School Paraeducator
Paraeducator
Music
Learning Specialist
Title 1 Reading & Math
Speech/Language
Physical Education
Librarian
Bus Driver
Bus Driver
Nurse
Guidance Counselor
Hot Lunch Staff
Custodian
Custodian

Mount Holly Elementary School

School Hours

Students who walk or are driven to school are asked to arrive no earlier than 8:00 a.m. School dismissal is at 3:00 p.m.

School Closings

It becomes necessary at times to close school because of inclement weather. In such cases you will be informed by announcements from the AlertNow phone messaging system as well as on area radio stations as soon as the decision to close school is made.

If school must be closed after the school day has begun you will be notified in the same way. It is important that the school have an emergency phone number to contact you in such cases.

Attendance

All students are expected to attend school each day, except in the case of illness. Any work missed during an absence needs to be made up. Students must bring in a written excuse when they are absent or tardy.

Students may be excused for family emergencies or family vacations by notifying the teacher(s) and the principal. *According to state law, a student may be excused from school for up to ten days.* Excused absences longer than 10 days will require the consent of the superintendent or school board. Requests for extended absences must be made in writing to the principal at least one month in advance of the planned absence.

Students who are absent from school, without being excused by the Principal, cannot attend school functions held after school or in the evening of the day of absence.

If your child must be absent from school, please notify the school office (259-2392) by 8:30 a.m. If the school is not notified by this time, the office will call the student's home for verification.

Tardiness

Students are expected to arrive at school by 8:10 a.m. Being on time gives the students a great start to their day and saves them from being behind and disrupting their class. Student arriving after 8:20 a.m. are considered tardy.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued three times a year. Parent-teacher conferences are held at the end of the first and second trimesters. Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers whenever they have a concern or question.

Emergency Drill

Fire drill procedures are posted throughout the school. In the event of a fire, students exit through the nearest exit and proceed to the playground area where all students and staff are accounted for. Fire drills are conducted once each month throughout the school year. The detailed procedures for lock-down emergencies, site evacuations and other more serious situations are outlined in the Crisis Response Plan that is reviewed annually. Parents may request a copy at any time.

Student Behavior

All students will feel a sense of belonging, will learn the social skills necessary for a community to function, and will be held accountable for their behavior. We encourage students to share and show kindness to each other. To set the conditions necessary for learning and belonging, the following rules have been established:

1. Students will show respect for others, self and property. This includes the “Golden Rule” of treating others the way that they wish to be treated, and using common courtesies, such as listening, following directions and saying “please” and “thank you”.
2. The possession, use and distribution of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or and regulated drug on school property or at school functions by children and adults is *strictly prohibited* and will be reported to the proper authorities.
3. Students will be in the proper place at all times, and will use proper traveling habits when moving from class to class.
4. Proper language and behavior are expected at all times; this includes school functions, after school activities, and field trips. Students displaying inappropriate behavior may be excluded from these activities, at the discretion of the Principal.
5. Students are responsible for their personal property and any property that has been assigned to them by the school. Replacement of any lost or damaged property is the responsibility of the student and/or parent.
6. The following are not permitted:
 - Physical aggression against others or property.
 - Foul language.
 - Stealing.
 - The possession of firearms, knives or weapons.
 - Rough-housing
 - Chewing gum.
 - Candy.
 - Soda, coffee (caffeinated beverages)
 - Inappropriate clothing.

Mount Holly Elementary Playground Rules

1. **Be Polite – Fighting, pushing, kicking, tripping, throwing stones, swearing, and spitting are not allowed.**
2. **Treat people the way you want to be treated and include others in your game.**
3. **Share the playground and the equipment. Take turns.**
4. **Play safely on the slide, swings and near the windows.**
5. **Remain in the playground area.**
6. **Please help to keep our playground clean.**

PLAYGROUND RULES

Developed by Mt. Holly Elementary School Students

“IF YOU DON’T FEEL SAFE, DON’T DO IT!”

SWINGS

Use feet to stop
Keep safe distance away
Hold on with both hands
Sit on the swing
Keep swing from “snapping”
Swing separately
Swing independently
No flipping / jumping off
No underdogs

MERRY-GO-ROUND

Stop to let people on and off
Keep your body inside
Hold on while it is moving
Keep feet on the platform
Stand and push from one spot

CLIMBING APPARATUS

Slide on your back
Slide feet first
Slide down only / don’t climb up
Keep tag games on grassy area
Share
Keep hands off others
Standing on ground – higher than waist
Don’t jump off

BASKETBALL AREAS

Share area and equipment
No hanging on nets or rims

PICNIC TABLES

Sit on benches
Keep feet off benches & tables

Bus Rules

The following rules are in place for buses. Violations of these rules, or other behavior problems, will be handled according to the policy “Students Conduct on Buses.”

1. The bus driver is in charge of the bus at all times.
2. Students must be at the pick-up points on time.
3. Students are to remain well out of the roadway or parking lot when waiting for the bus.
4. Getting on and off the bus will take place in an orderly manner.
5. Students are to remain seated while the bus is in motion and they must keep all parts of their bodies inside the bus at all times.
6. The aisles of the bus must be kept clear at all times.
7. Nothing will be thrown either in or out of the bus.
8. Drivers are **not** permitted to let children get off the bus at a stop other than their own without a note from a parent or guardian.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to insure the safety and well-being of their child(ren) up until the time he/she gets on the bus in the morning, and resume that responsibility when their child(ren) gets off the bus in the afternoon.

Students who do not follow the behavior expectations for the bus may be subject to bus reports. The 1st bus report will result in an in-school consequence, the 2nd bus report results in an automatic 3 day suspension from the bus, a 3rd bus report results in an automatic week long suspension from the bus and any additional reports may result in the loss of bus riding privileges for the remainder of the year.

Dressing for Weather

Children are expected to dress for the weather conditions. They are required to have adequate clothing, boots and mittens to go to and from school and out for recess during the winter months. Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times in school. Boots are limited to outside wear in winter as it is not healthy to wear them inside all day.

Dress Conduct Standards

A student's appearance or mode of dress or cleanliness will not be permitted to disrupt the educational process or constitute a threat to health or safety. When in the judgment of a principal, a student's appearance or mode of dress disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety, the student may be required to make modifications. A student : (1) must groom his/her hair so that it is clean and safe for any school activity in which he/she will take part ; (2) must use footwear ; (3) must wear attire that is not a distraction.

Clothing and conduct are prohibited when they are: obscene, lewd, vulgar, harassing, threatening, abusive, demeaning, intimidating, disrespectful, sexually suggestive or suggestive of illegal activity.

Some examples of clothing that are not allowed are: hats, tops that allow the midriff to show, tank tops with spaghetti straps, low-cut tops, skirts and shorts above mid-thigh length and pants that allow the underwear to show.

Homework

Homework is assigned in varying amounts according to grade level. Generally, the higher the grade level, the more homework assigned.

Students should remember that studying involves more than the completion of written assignments; time should also be allowed for independent reading. Students should be provided with a relatively quiet, distraction-free area to complete their homework.

Homework can help a child develop the habit of independent study. It also gives students the opportunity to practice basic skills and teaches them how to budget their time.

Student Records

Mount Holly Elementary School collects and maintains academic information on all students. This information is stored in the students' records, which are kept in a secure place in the principal's office. In accordance with the rights afforded by the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*, and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, P.L. 101-476, parents or guardians have the right to request a review of their child(ren)'s records. Students records are not released, to other than authorized school personnel, without written permission from the parents or guardians. Mount Holly Elementary School has written policies and procedures related to student records. These policies and procedures are available for review.

Volunteers

A parent or community member giving time to the school to assist teachers and children is a valuable asset to the overall program. The involvement of volunteers serves to promote understanding, support, appreciation and cooperation. Volunteers are welcome and you may contact the school as to your interest. Volunteers are required to complete a form in the office before they begin volunteering.

Parent/Teacher Group

The PTC provides programs and sponsors various school activities through the support of parents and the Mt. Holly community. All parents and friends are welcome to attend the PTC meetings which are held the first Wednesday of each month.

Asbestos Management Plan

In accordance with the provisions of the Asbestos Emergency Response Act, the Mt. Holly School building has been inspected for asbestos containing materials. Such materials are assumed to be located in the building and a “management plan” has been developed and submitted to the Governor. This plan is available for inspection during normal working hours in the school or in the central office at 8 High Street in Ludlow.

Electives

Art

The art program's foremost concern is for the creative and developmental growth of each student. The curriculum is designed to be a vehicle for self expression and creative thought. All students are exposed to and explore the areas of visual perception, creative behavior, manipulative skills and aesthetic judgments.

Chorus

Elementary Chorus is offered to grade three through grade six students on an elective basis. Choristers will learn proper vocal technique and sequential melodic and harmonic partwork that will allow them to sing a variety of quality literature in a choral setting.

Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Activities

Students at MHS may participate in a wide range of athletic activities through the Ludlow Recreation Department and Ludlow Little League. These offerings include soccer, basketball, baseball and softball. There are nominal fees associated with these programs and we rely on volunteer coaches to make these programs possible. In addition, the formal sports programs MHS has an After-School Program available to students Monday through Friday. Activities include homework club, indoor/outdoor sports, yoga, arts & crafts, culinary arts, gardening and other enrichment activities.

Drama

The theater program at Mount Holly School is designed to give every child, Kindergarten through grade six, an opportunity to express themselves in a theatrical setting. Students work together to create a performance learning awareness of audience and stagecraft. They assume roles and develop a character through movement, voice, and costumes. Students also learn how to be an attentive, respectful, and appreciative audience.

General Music

Music class allows each child to express their deepest feelings in many ways. Music skills are taught to children through a developmentally appropriate and sequential approach which allows music literacy to develop in an active and natural way. The singing voice is used to teach a wealth of folk songs, traditional singing games, dances and quality composed music.

Instrumental Lessons

Instrumental lessons begin in grade 4 for interested students. The lessons are provided on a weekly basis and follow the school calendar. Students/families are responsible for the cost of instrument rentals or purchase.

French

Using a wide variety of learning methods from signing puppets to pen pals, Kindergarten through 6th graders are introduced to the French language and Francophone culture. Mt. Holly School recognizes that even our youngest students should be aware that they are a part of the global community. In their weekly French classes, students learn some of the basics of communicating in a second language, while also learning about and experiencing cultural similarities and differences.

Ski Program

All students in grades 1-6 may participate in an organized downhill ski/snowboard program/cross country ski program at Okemo Mountain. The program runs from January through March for 1 afternoon per week. Students will receive instruction, equipment and a lift ticket for a nominal fee.

Library

A Message from the Librarian

Mount Holly School students are enthusiastic readers and library users. At any given time during the school year, there are hundreds of library books checked out of the library. The majority are returned on time and in good condition. However, occasionally students have difficulty keeping track of the books they have checked out, and either don't return them on time or lose them for a period of weeks to months. This prevents other students from having access to them. Also on occasion, books are returned in a damaged condition which prevents their re-use.

It would be helpful if you would remind your child to be responsible with the books they check out. To help your child keep track of their library books, try choosing a special spot at home where our child can keep the books between readings. This way they will be less likely to be misplaced or mixed in with the family's own books. Our policy is that books that are lost or badly damaged need to be paid for using a replacement cost basis.

Students in grades K-2 may take out one book a week for a one week period, and students in Grades 3-6 may take out two books a week for a one week period. With permission, students may check out additional curriculum related materials. Students may renew a book for an additional week two times with approval of the library. Each class visits the library once a week for a scheduled class period. Students may return a book any day of the school week, and take out another that same day as a "trade" to ensure that all students have access to reading materials as needed. Students who have an "overdue" book need to return that book before they may take out another.

If you happen to move out of the area during the school year, please remind your child to return all books before leaving the Mount Holly School. Thank you for helping your child be a responsible library user!

Mount Holly School Library Media Center

Acceptable Student Computer and Internet Use Policy

- Student use of computer technology, the Internet, the computer network, and other telecommunications equipment at Mount Holly School is intended for educational purposes only.
- Students are responsible for appropriate behavior when using school computers at all times. Use of computer technology, the Internet, and telecommunications is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in immediate consequences.
- Students and staff are expected to:
 - Use computer services for curriculum-related purposes,
 - Monitor time online in consideration of others,
 - Use appropriate language and etiquette,
 - Observe copyright laws,
 - Comply with all school rules concerning behavior and personal conduct,
 - And practice responsible, ethical, and legal behavior
- Students and staff may not:
 - Use computer technology, the Internet, and telecommunication services for financial gain
 - Degrade or disrupt the computer or telecommunication system performance and integrity,
 - Access information inconsistent with curriculum-related purposes,
 - Or reveal home telephone numbers, addresses, or other personal information
 - May not, without permission, install programs, install or remove any type of hardware, download mp3 files or games,
 - Alter the appearance of programs or a desktop background,
 - Or script code into any program or web page while using the school computer system.

Continued~

Mount Holly School Library Media Center

Acceptable Student Computer and Internet Use Policy

- Students must always use their own log-in name when using any computer in the school and not reveal their password to others.
- School staff reserves the right to monitor computer use and communications for acceptable use. Consequences for unacceptable use are decided by the school principal or designee and may result in cancellation of privileges and disciplinary action including suspension from school.
- Students and their parents/guardians will sign an agreement giving permission for the student to use the computer network and Internet at the Mount Holly School.

Special Services

Special Education

Special Education services are provided to students who meet the criteria for eligibility in the following areas: speech language deficiencies, learning disability, impairments in vision, hearing, orthopedics and emotional disturbance.

Parent involvement is encouraged through IEP's (Individual Education Plan). We welcome parent input. It is very important to the program and a crucial element to the child's success.

Speech/Language Service

The speech and language program is responsible for seeing that student's academic progress is not hindered by a communication problem. The program offers services to children whose problems are most severe. Children may receive services individually or in small groups. The speech therapist also serves preschool children and is available for informal consultations at any time.

Title I

Title 1 is a federally funded program available to students who are recommended by teachers and who score below the 40% on standardized tests. The program is coordinated with classroom goals and parents are encouraged to become actively involved. Since 1991, Reading Recovery has been a part of Title 1. This is an early intervention program where first grade students work 1:1 with a teacher for 30 minutes a day for an average of 60 days.

Educational Support System and Educational Support Team for All Students

The Educational Support System in a school based system designed to help all students improve their school performance and help them grow academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. This system provides a way for the school staff to address student's varying needs in school.

We believe that a comprehensive system of instructional support designed and implemented in consultation with the parents should be available to any student who needs assistance. To the maximum extent possible, this Educational Support System will provide educational resources and accommodations in a manner that will allow all students to succeed in their regular classrooms.

To achieve this end our school shall identify its educational support service resources such as guidance, on site consultation, collaborative strategies, classroom accommodations, community resources, public services, and remedial service. In order that students and teachers may receive appropriate assistance from the identified resources, an Educational Support Team (EST) shall be established to accept referrals from teachers and parents. All teachers and parents shall be informed of the Educational Support Team process. If warranted the EST shall allow for the timely referral to Special Education. The membership of this team shall come from the professional staff of the school. The team will make appropriate recommendations concerning in-service programs to meet the needs of professional and support staff members.

A child may be referred to the EST by school staff or a parent. If you have concerns, questions, or would like to refer your child, you can contact your child's teacher or the school Principal.

Medication

Prescription Medication

Mount Holly Elementary School recognizes that many children are able to attend school because of the effective use of prescribed medications. These medications are used to treat chronic disabilities or illnesses. Although it is most desirable to have these medications administered at home, we understand that this is not always possible. In those circumstances, the following regulation must be complied with:

Any medication (prescription or non-prescription) to be used by students at Mount Holly Elementary School must be reported to the school nurse who will supply the parent/guardian with a form to be filled out and returned to school.

This regulation provides the school with the necessary health information to assist your child in case of an emergency. *There are no exceptions to this rule.* Forms are available at the nurse's office.

Non-Prescription Medication

Non-prescription medication will be administered only after a permission form has been signed by the parent/guardian. Non-prescription medication must be left with the nurse.

Mount Holly School District

Policy CL

HARASSMENT, HAZING and BULLYING

A. STATEMENT OF POLICY

This policy is intended to comply with the requirements of 16 V.S.A. Sec. 565 regarding the prohibition by school boards of harassment, hazing, and bullying.

The Mt. Holly School District is committed to providing a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect and to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment, or hazing or bullying. The School District prohibits any form of harassment, or hazing or bullying including, without limitation, harassment, hazing or bullying on the basis of disability, creed, color, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.

B. GENERAL PROVISIONS

It is the intent of the District to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with and protects students' rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The District respects and promotes the rights of students and others to speak freely and to express their ideas, including ideas that may offend the sensibilities of others. The purpose of this policy is to prevent conduct or communication that is directed at a person's particular characteristics as defined and that is likely to substantially disrupt the educational environment or interfere with the rights of others.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a student for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment, hazing or bullying as defined here, otherwise violates one or more of the Board's disciplinary policies or the District's code of conduct.

- 1. Violation. It is a violation of this policy for any student, group of students, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel to harass or haze a student, group of students, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel through conduct or communication including, without harassment or hazing on the basis of disability, marital status, national origin, race, creed, color, religion, sex, or sexual orientation.*

2. Complaint. Any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or hazing may make an internal complaint as described below and/or pursue other remedies provided by federal and state law.

C. DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

1. Definitions. (under VT Law)

a. *“Harassment”* is an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct based on or motivated by a person or person’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability that has the purpose of effect or objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or a person’s performance or a person’s access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

b. *“Sexual harassment”* is a form of harassment which means conduct that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur:

(i) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of that person’s position or of a student’s education;

(ii) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that person; or

(iii) Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a person’s or a person’s family member’s actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to racial customs.

(iv) Harassment of members of other protected categories, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a person’s or a person’s family member’s actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation or written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

c. *“School personnel”* means school board members, school district employees, agents of the school district, unpaid volunteers, contractors and persons, other than students, who are subject to the supervision and control of the School District.

d. *“Hazing”* means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being

initiated into, affiliating with, holding office, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with an educational institution, and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating, or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of a student. Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off the campus of an educational institution.

e. *“Bullying”* means any overt act or combination of acts directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:

- (i) is repeated over time;
- (ii) is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
- (iii) occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity.

f. *“Designated employee”* means an employee who has been designated by the School District to receive complaints of harassment, hazing or bullying in accordance with this policy.

g. *“Notice”* means a written complaint or oral information that harassment, hazing or bullying may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the person allegedly subjected to the harassment, another person, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred. If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the time, place, and nature of the conduct, and the identity of the participants and complainant.

2. Examples. Examples of behaviors which, if sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent to interfere with a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from school programs, include but are not limited to physical aggression or force, the threat of physical aggression or force, demeaning comments or behavior, slurs, mimicking, jokes, gestures, name-calling, graffiti, stalking, sexual advances, use of nicknames emphasizing stereotypes, comments on manner of speaking, negative references to customs, and derogatory comments regarding surnames.

D. REPORTING

1. Voluntary report.

a. *Students*. It is the express policy of the District to encourage student targets of harassment, hazing or bullying and students who have first-hand knowledge of such harassment, hazing or bullying to report such claims. A student should report an allegation of harassment, hazing or bullying he or she has experienced or witnessed at school or during school sponsored activities to

any adult school personnel. Students may choose to report to a person of the student's same sex.

b. Adult school personnel. Any adult school personnel may report an allegation of harassment, hazing or bullying he or she has experienced at school or during school sponsored activities to a person designated, in accordance with procedures developed under this policy, to receive complaints of harassment, hazing or bullying.

2. Mandatory report. Any adult school personnel who witnesses or receives notice of harassment, hazing or bullying at school or during school sponsored activities shall report it in accordance with procedures developed under this policy.

Under certain circumstances, alleged harassment/hazing may constitute child abuse under Vermont law. The statutory obligation to report suspected abuse, therefore, may be applicable.

3. Privacy. The School District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the report is directed, and the witnesses to the extent consistent with the School District's obligations to investigate, take appropriate action, and conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

E. INVESTIGATION

The School District shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the school officials, initiate an investigation no later than one school day from the filing of a complaint and the investigation and determination by school officials are concluded no later than 5 school days following receipt of a report or complaint, formal or informal, written or oral, alleging harassment, hazing or bullying.

F. ACTION

1. Duty to act. The School District shall take disciplinary or remedial action in all cases where this policy has been violated. Any person found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate consequences and/or remedial action including, but not limited to, warning, exclusion, suspension, expulsion, transfer, dismissal, or remedial action such as training, education, or counseling.

2. The School District shall not take any action which is inconsistent with applicable collective bargaining agreements, state and federal laws, and other School District policies.

3. False report. The School District shall take appropriate action against any student, teachers, administrator or other school personnel who makes a false report of harassment, hazing or bullying knowing it to be false.

4. Retaliation. The School District shall take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel who retaliates against any person for making a good faith report of harassment or for participating in an investigation or other part of the process established by this policy. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, hazing or bullying. The procedures established to implement this policy shall include a statement that retaliation for reporting harassment, hazing or bullying or cooperating in an investigation of harassment, hazing or bullying is unlawful.

G. APPEAL

A person determined to have violated this policy and, subjected to action under it may appeal the determination and/or the action taken in accordance with procedures adopted under this policy, which shall be consistent with the provisions of any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Independent review.

1. A student who desires independent review because the student is either dissatisfied with the final determination of the school officials as to whether harassment occurred, or believes that although a final determination was made that harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem, shall make such request in writing to the Principal or Superintendent of schools. Upon such request, the Superintendent shall initiate an independent review by a neutral person elected from a list developed jointly by the Commissioner of education and the human rights commission and maintained by the commission.

2. The independent review shall proceed expeditiously and shall consist of an interview of the student and the relevant school officials and review of written materials involving the complaint maintained by the school or others.

3. Upon the conclusion of the review, the reviewer shall advise the student and the school officials as to the sufficiency of the school's investigation, its determination, the steps taken by the school to correct any harassment found to have occurred, and any future steps the school should take. The reviewer shall advise the student of other remedies that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution.

4. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the school for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records.

5. *The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the school.*

6. *The school district may request an independent review at any stage of the process.*

7. *Evidence of conduct or statements made in connection with an independent review shall not be admissible in any court proceeding. This shall not require exclusion of any evidence otherwise obtainable from independent sources merely because it is presented in the course of an independent review.*

H. DISSEMINATION AND TRAINING

1. *Dissemination.* *This policy shall be:*

a. *Posted conspicuously throughout each school building in the areas accessible to all persons;*

b. *Printed in any school district publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for school district employees.*

c. *Printed in any school district publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for school district employees.*

2. *Training.* *The Superintendent shall develop a method of discussing this policy with students and employees.*

3. *Review.* *The School Board shall review this policy periodically for compliance with state and federal law.*

I. ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCESS

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

DATE WARNED : October 4, 2004

DATE ADOPTED : October 11, 2004

LEGAL REFERENCES : 16 V.S.A. S 565; 16 V.S.A. S 11 (a) (26) ; 9 V.S.A. Chapter 139; 16 V.S.A. s 11 (a) (30)

POLICY CROSS REFERENCE : Board commitment to Non-Discrimination (BO)

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS OF HARASSMENT, HAZING OR BULLYING OF STUDENTS

The Mt. Holly School Board hereby adopts the following procedures to implement the School District's policy with respect to harassment, hazing or bullying.

A. MANDATORY REPORTING

1. To Principal. Any adult school personnel who witnesses or receives a report, formal or informal, written or oral, of harassment, hazing or bullying at school or during school sponsored activities shall report it on a form developed by the Superintendent to the Principal or the Principal's designee. If the report involves the school Principal, the reporter shall make report directly to the School District Equity Coordinator or Superintendent.

2. Principal's duty. Upon receipt of a report of harassment, hazing or bullying the principal shall decide whether to retain and act upon it at the school site or to forward it directly to the School District Equity Coordinator.

a. Retained by principal. If the principal acts upon the report at the school site and if the matter is not resolved informally in accordance with Section B, he or she shall forward to the School District Equity Coordinator, within 5 days, a report of any action taken.

b. Forwarded to School District Equity Coordinator. If the principal decides to forward the report directly to the School District Equity Coordinator, he or she shall do so immediately, without screening or investigating the report. The principal may request, but not insist upon, a written complaint. The principal shall forward to the School District Equity Coordinator:

i. a written statement of the complaint within 24 hours; and

ii. any available supporting documentation as soon as practicable.

3. Equity Coordinator. The Superintendent shall designate one individual within the School District/Supervisory Union as the School District Equity Coordinator to receive reports of unlawful harassment. If the report involves the School District Equity Coordinator, the reporter shall make it directly to the Superintendent. The School District shall post the name, mailing address, and telephone number of its Equity Coordinator conspicuously. The District Equity Coordinator is:

*Support Services Coordinator
8 High Street
Ludlow, VT 05149
(802) 228-3738*

B. INFORMAL RESOLUTION

1. *Students.* If the complainant and respondent(s) are students, they may agree to a meeting facilitated by a school employee. If each student involved agrees the situation has been resolved by such a meeting, the school employee shall report to the principal only that the matter has been resolved informally. If any student involved does not agree that the situation has been resolved, he or she may proceed to a formal investigation.

When informal resolution is attempted, and the complaining student or the student about whom the complaint is made is under the age of 18, the student's parent(s)/guardian shall be notified in accordance with the District's disciplinary policies.

2. *Adult school personnel.* If the complainant and respondent(s) are adult school personnel, they may agree to a meeting facilitated by a school employee. If each school personnel involved agrees the situation has been resolved by such a meeting, the school employee shall report to the principal only that the matter has been resolved informally. If any school personnel involved does not agree that the situation has been resolved, he or she may proceed to a formal investigation.

3. *Students/Adult school Personnel.* If the complainant is a student and the respondent(s) is(are) an adult school personnel, no informal resolution process shall be used. Likewise, if the complainant is an adult school personnel and the respondent(s) is(are) a student(s), no informal resolution process shall be used.

4. *Other.* If the situation cannot be resolved in #1 or #2 (above) then Informal Resolution will not be used.

C. FORMAL COMPLAINT

The Principal (or designee) shall ensure that an harassment, hazing or bullying complaint form based on the written or verbal allegations of the complainant is completed and details the facts and circumstances of the incident or pattern of behavior.

If a student under 18 years of age is involved, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified by the complaint officer as soon as is practical under the circumstances.

D. INVESTIGATION

1. *Who.* Unless the matter is resolved in accordance with Section B, the School District Equity Coordinator or designee shall conduct an investigation upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging harassment, hazing or bullying.

2. *How.* The investigator may interview individuals involved and any other persons who may have knowledge of the circumstances giving rise to the complaint and may use other methods and documentation.

3. *When.* The investigator shall complete the investigation as soon as practicable, but in no event later than fourteen (14) days following receipt of the complaint.

4. *Result.* Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator shall decide if a violation of this policy has occurred and report that decision, along with the evidence supporting it, to the Superintendent or, if the complaint involves the Superintendent, directly to the School Board, for appropriate action in accordance with School District disciplinary policy.

E. APPEAL

A person determined to have violated the policy on harassment, hazing or bullying and subjected to action under it may appeal the determination and/or the action taken as follows;

1. *Student.* If the person filing the appeal is a student, the appeal shall proceed in accordance with school district policy governing discipline of students and with the law.

2. *Staff.*

a. *Applicable collective bargaining agreement.* If the person filing the appeal is an adult school personnel who has applicable appeal rights under the grievance procedure in a collective bargaining agreement, the appeal shall proceed in accordance with the person's rights in that agreement.

b. *Other.* If the person filing the appeal is an adult school personnel who does not have applicable appeal right under the grievance procedure in a collective bargaining agreement, the appeal shall proceed in accordance with school district policy governing personnel discipline and with law.

F. INTERNAL REVIEW

All internal reviews of the school's initial determination, including the issuance of a final decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the school officials, be completed within 30 days after the review is requested.

G. RETALIATION

Retaliation for reporting harassment, hazing or bullying or cooperating in an investigation of harassment, hazing or bullying is unlawful under 16 V.S.A. S 565(c) (3).

H. RECORD KEEPING AND NOTIFICATION

1. Record keeping. *The Superintendent shall assure that a record of any complaint and investigation of harassment, hazing or bullying is maintained by the School District in a confidential file accessible only to authorized personnel.*

The Superintendent and/or school Principal shall maintain the written report of the investigation and results in a locked file for at least six years after the report has been completed. In the case of an investigation conducted by the School District, the Superintendent shall be given a copy of the investigation report and results by the school Principal.

2. Notification. *The Superintendent shall assure that the complainant is notified whether allegations of unlawful harassment were found to be valid, whether a violation of the policy occurred, and whether action was taken as a result.*

If a claim of harassment/hazing against a professional educator is substantiated, a report of the findings shall, when required by State Board of Education Rule 5711.7 be forwarded by the Superintendent to the Licensing Office of the Vermont Department of Education.

I. NOTICE

The Superintendent shall provide annual notice of the policy on harassment, hazing and bullying and these procedures to all school personnel and to custodial parents or guardians of students. The notice shall:

1. *Be in age-appropriate language;*

2. *Include examples of behaviors which, if sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent to interfere with a person's ability to participate in or benefit from school programs, would be harassment, hazing or bullying; and*

3. Provide the following information about additional method of pursuing claims of harassment/hazing:

A person may make a complaint of harassment to the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the federal Office of Civil Rights at the following places:

Vermont Human Rights Commission

133 State Street

Montpelier, VT 05633-6301

(802) 828-2480 (voice or tty) or (800) 416-2010

Director, Compliance Division Area II

Office for Civil Rights

U.S. Department of Education, Region I

John W. McCormack Post

Office & Courthouse, Room 222

Post Office Square

Boston, MA 02109

(617) 223-9667

Mount Holly School District

Policy CK

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT PERSONNEL

Resolution of the complaints about school personnel shall first be referred to the school administration for a study and solution.

The district places trust in its employees and desires to support their actions in such a manner that employees are freed from unnecessary, spiteful, or unjustified criticism or complaints. The complainant shall be encouraged to first bring a complaint to the individual concerned. If the problem cannot be resolved with the individual concerned, it should be brought to the attention of the immediate supervisor or administrator. The complaint should be in writing stating the issues and supporting facts. The individual employee involved shall be given every opportunity for explanation, comment, and presentation of the facts as he/she sees them.

If the issue is not resolved by involvement of the immediate supervisor, the complainant may refer the issue to the Superintendent for his or her review and decision.

If the above steps do not resolve the concern of the complainant, he/she may request an executive session of the board for the purpose of reviewing the Superintendent's decision. All parties involved, including the school administration, shall be asked to attend such a meeting for purposes of presenting facts making further explanations, and clarifying the issue. The Board shall conduct such meetings in a fair and just manner. The Board shall then render a decision.

It is the intent of the Board that the rights of employees under collective bargaining agreements and Vermont law be protected through the administration of this policy.

DATE WARNED : July 5, 2004

DATE ADOPTED : July 12, 2004

LEGAL REFERENCES : 16 VSA1751; 1 vsa 312 et. Seq.

POLICY CROSS REFERENCE: CE

Mount Holly School District

Policy JX

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Retention should only be considered when it is deemed educationally beneficial. Factors to be considered include: the students academic ability, social emotional maturity, physical maturity, parent/guardian concerns, school attendance history and whether or not the student has previously been retained.

- *Retention will be considered when a student has missed in excess of 22 school days.*
- *Retention will be considered when a student has a yearly average of 65% or below in any one subject area. In this instance it may be considered that a child make up this class in a summer program.*
- *Students who have a yearly average of 65% or below in 2 or more core classes will be retained.*

When a student is in danger of a failing grade in any class a notice will be sent to parents and a plan to improve the grade in questions will be created. This plan could include make up work, homework journals, weekly progress reports, parent teacher conferences, or any other help aid that the teacher and parents/guardians agree to.

As soon as retention is being considered a meeting will be planned with the student (when appropriate), students, parents/guardians, teachers and school administration and other pertinent people as necessary. This meeting shall be called no later than the end of the second marking period. Timeline for improvement will be discussed and decisions will be made no later than April 1st except for rare and unusual circumstances. The final decision will be made by school administration with input from parents and teachers.

Students in grade 5 and 6 must complete a minimum of 10 hours community service per school year.

In addition to the above requirements, students transitioning from grade 6 to grade 7 must complete a minimum of 10 hours of community service as documented by the school. Such service must be completed in grade 5 and in grade 6.

DATE WARNED : November 1, 2004

DATE ADOPTED : November 8, 2004

LEGAL REFERENCES :

POLICY CROSS REFERENCE: