

**BETHLEHEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
and
MITCHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**



2010 - 2011

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

**Bethlehem Elementary School
92 East Street
Bethlehem, CT 6751
Telephone: 203-266-7506
Fax: 203-266-7876**

**Mitchell Elementary School
14 School Street
Woodbury, Connecticut 06798
Telephone: 203-263-4314
Fax: 203-263-4244**

Website: <http://www.ctreg14.org>

REGION 14 VISION STATEMENT

The Region 14 School District will rank in the top ten of school districts in the State of Connecticut on all current measures of school effectiveness.

REGION 14 MISSION STATEMENT

We, the educational community of the Region 14 School District, are dedicated to creating a quality, dynamic learning environment so that each individual learner becomes a respected contributing member of the community with values, skills, and resources that promote the advancement of society.

BETHLEHEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The Bethlehem School community is committed to helping children and other learners to realize their potential in the life-long process of meeting the challenges of our ever-changing world. We provide an environment that encourages learning and cooperation, and one that fosters responsibility for self and others.

MITCHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Mitchell Elementary School, in partnership with the communities of Woodbury and Bethlehem, guarantees rich learning experiences for students. We support students in setting goals for intellectual development by maintaining high expectations. We provide opportunities for students to engage actively in problem solving in all aspects of their lives. Our school code fosters the development of high personal standards so that students become responsible and caring citizens in a global society.

WELCOME

Welcome to Bethlehem Elementary School and Mitchell Elementary School! Our faculty, students, and families are pleased that you have taken the time to learn about our special schools, located in beautiful Litchfield County. We are part of Regional School District #14, serving the communities of Bethlehem and Woodbury.

Bethlehem Elementary School serves approximately 400 students and their families in kindergarten through second grade. Our school provides an environment that is conducive to the academic, social, and personal growth of the early elementary age child. Central to our educational program is an emphasis on early literacy supported by continuous instruction in the basics of reading including letter and sound identification, phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, and an appreciation of literature. In mathematics, students learn the basic principles of arithmetic, understanding the use and concept of numeracy, addition, subtraction, number value, and mathematical reasoning.

Mitchell Elementary School provides a warm, nurturing, and academically challenging experience for Bethlehem and Woodbury children in the intermediate grades. We have a dedicated team of teachers and support staff that provides exciting learning opportunities to approximately 400 students. Mitchell Elementary School is committed to supporting each child in his or her personal journey to achieve to the very best of his or her ability. Our goal in every classroom is that each child be actively engaged in learning both academic concepts and processes that will enable them to become independent learners. Classroom teachers work closely with special services staff as well as art, music, library-media, physical education, and technology teachers. We offer a comprehensive curriculum for third through fifth grade with a strong emphasis on balanced literacy as we provide an environment that motivates students and fosters reading development and positive attitudes towards reading. Through our mathematics program, students develop abilities in problem solving, communication, reasoning, and applying mathematical concepts. Through the lens of scientific inquiry, literacy, and numeracy, the science curriculum engages students in the studies of science and technology in society, life science, earth science, and physical science.

In both schools, we stress the tenets of good citizenship in daily activities both within our school and in the community. Our school code, "I am Safe, Responsible, Respectful, Prepared" focuses on the benefits of a climate of kindness and respect where all community members feel accepted, important, and secure.

The partnership between home and school is one of our highest priorities. Both Bethlehem and Mitchell Elementary Schools are fortunate to have very involved Parent-Teacher Organizations that sponsor many exciting programs, school and family activities, and volunteer and fundraising efforts throughout the year.

The Region 14 Elementary Schools are special places, and we thank our communities for helping us to maintain our positive school climate. We pledge to continue in our efforts to provide the best possible learning opportunities for our students, to ensure that they are valued members of our community, to encourage them to become good citizens, and to work closely with their families and the residents of the Region 14 communities of Bethlehem and Woodbury for the benefit of our children.

For additional information, please feel free to call Bethlehem Elementary School (203) 266-7506 or Mitchell Elementary School (203) 263-4314 at any time.

Most sincerely,

Melinda A. McKenna, Bethlehem Elementary School Principal

Len Tomasello, Mitchell Elementary School Interim Principal

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Hours:

Bethlehem Elementary School

Regular Session - Grades K-2	8:20 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
Scheduled Modified Day Session (see calendar for dates) Grades K-2	8:20 a.m. – 12:50 p.m.
Delayed Opening Session – Grades K-2	10:20 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.

Parents who transport their children to and from school may not drop off students prior to 8:00 a.m. because there is no supervision available. Students who arrive after 8:20 a.m. must report directly to the school office to obtain a late pass before going to class.

Please note that our traffic pattern has been carefully designed to prevent the crossing of car and bus traffic. We expect that, for the safety of all students, these procedures will be followed at all times.

When a child is absent, parents are to call the **BES absentee line (203) 266-7120** by 8:15 a.m. All absences must be verified.

For the safety of all students, parents who transport their children to and from school may not drop off students prior to 8:00 a.m. because the school doors will be locked and there is no supervision available.

All students being picked up at dismissal will be signed out from the cafeteria beginning at 2:50 p.m. Parents should park in the Harrison Lane parking lot in back of the school (the second driveway) by the playground area. Bus students will be escorted to their buses by staff members.

Mitchell Elementary School

Regular Session – Grades 3-5	9:05 a.m. – 3:35 p.m.
Scheduled Modified Day Session (see calendar for dates) Grades 3-5	9:05 a.m. – 1:35 p.m.
Delayed Opening Session – Grades 3-5	11:05 a.m. – 3:35 p.m.

If your schedule does not allow you to drop off your children after 8:45 a.m. you must make childcare arrangements. Drop off is at the gymnasium lobby entrance. **Please do not park your car in this area. Please do not walk your child to class.** Students who arrive after 9:05 a.m. must report directly to the school office to obtain a late pass before going to class.

Please note that our traffic pattern has been carefully designed to prevent the crossing of car and bus traffic. We expect that, for the safety of all students, these procedures will be followed at all times.

When a child is absent, parents must call the **MES absentee line (203) 266-4389** by 9:00 a.m. All absences must be verified.

Dismissal

We do not interrupt instruction to page children for early pick-up. If it is absolutely necessary to remove a student prior to dismissal, the office should be notified in writing in advance. A note should accompany the child to school on the day of early dismissal. **Parents may not go to the classroom for early dismissal pick up.** You must come to the office and sign your child out.

Dismissal is at 3:35 p.m. No announcements will be made over the intercom to dismiss a child after 3:00 p.m.

In order to ensure the safety of our students, please follow this procedure for afternoon dismissals. It is our intention to make sure all students are dismissed in an orderly fashion so that bus students can safely board their buses and students who are picked up by parents or their designee are properly dismissed without mishap.

Beginning with the first day of school, Mitchell Elementary School students will be dismissed in the following manner:

- Students who ride the bus home will be called as each bus arrives and escorted to their buses by staff members.
- Students who have activities or social engagements after school are not permitted to ride other buses to or from school. Transportation arrangements must be made with a responsible adult and the teacher must be notified in writing of the arrangements.
- Students who are scheduled to be picked up **must bring a note to school letting the teacher know that they will be picked up.** If a student is to be picked up on a regular basis, a note stating what that schedule will be needs to be sent to the teacher only once. If a change is made to that schedule, **a note must be sent to the teacher indicating that change. Students will always be put on their bus unless a written note informs us of alternate plans.**
- We will not release students without written notification from the parent, so please be certain that dismissal notes and emergency contacts are always up-to-date. **Dismissal requests are not taken over the phone, except in an emergency situation.**
- Students who are scheduled to be picked up will report to the Mitchell Elementary School gymnasium at 3:30 p.m. Mitchell Elementary School parents will park in the rear lot on Washington Street (near the gymnasium).
- When the side exit door of the gymnasium is opened by a staff member at 3:30 p.m., parents will enter the gymnasium **via that door** to pick up their children. Students will be released from the gymnasium to a parent or their designee.

TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS, PLEASE BE PREPARED TO SHOW PHOTO IDENTIFICATION TO THE STAFF MEMBERS ON DUTY WHEN PICKING UP YOUR CHILD.

Do not go to your child's classroom as teachers are instructed not to release students to anyone who appears at their door. Again, this is for your child's safety and we appreciate your cooperation in our enforcement of this policy.

In both the morning and afternoon, parents may not disrupt the flow of buses when they are dropping off or picking up students in the vicinity of the front parking lot. During school hours visitors may park in the front of the building, and use the main entrance and report directly to the office.

Bus Students

Students who are bus students will be put on their regular bus upon dismissal each day unless **a written note from the parent** is presented to the school with alternate instructions indicating they will be picked up. Changes will not be accepted verbally by a student or via telephone call from a parent. With written permission, students can usually get off at another stop on the route, but they may not ride another bus.

Visitors

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit our schools. Parents and visitors must make arrangements with teachers prior to coming in to visit classrooms. **Parents may not wander halls or disrupt classrooms or teachers during class or school time.** Appointments must be made with teachers by note or email.

A security system has been installed at each of the Region 14 elementary schools. School doors will be locked throughout the school day. When you visit, please press the "CALL" button next to the front door. Someone in the school office will buzz you in, and you may proceed directly to the office to sign in.

ALL VISITORS MUST REPORT TO THE OFFICE, SIGN IN, AND PICK UP A VISITOR BADGE UPON ENTERING EITHER BUILDING AND BEFORE VISITING CLASSROOMS. VISITORS MUST ALSO SIGN OUT AND RETURN BADGE PRIOR TO LEAVING.

Attendance and Truancy

Connecticut state law requires parents and persons having control of children between the ages of 5 and 18 must ensure that such children attend school regularly unless the parent or person having control of such child is able to show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public schools. Parents may also decide not to enroll a child in kindergarten until ages 6 or 7. Any student enrolled in Region 14 with four (4) unexcused absences in one month or ten (10) unexcused absences in a school year will be considered truant. Within ten days of determining that a student is truant, school personnel will hold a meeting with parents or guardians of the student to review and evaluate the reasons for the truancy. If parents or guardians fail to attend such meeting or refuse to cooperate with the school in attempting to solve the truancy problem, the Superintendent of Schools shall file a written complaint in Superior Court.

Tardiness

Tardiness to school is a significant academic concern. When a student is late to school, his or her educational routine is disrupted. Consistent routine in the morning is extremely important to students in the elementary grades as the tone for the day is established at the start of the school day. Please also note that a student who is consistently late typically also misses the introduction to the lesson in the same subject area every day.

Vacations

We strongly urge you to plan your vacations around the school vacation schedule whenever possible. No matter what make-up work is done, students cannot fully duplicate the classroom time that is lost by going on a vacation for a week or more. Some students have a very difficult time catching up with their class when they return. If you find you have no option but to take your child out of school for an extended period, please:

- Note that the Connecticut Mastery Test is administered annually to all 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students during the first two weeks of March. Please avoid this time.
- Contact the school office and inform the school secretary that your child will be absent from school.
- **We do not provide work in advance to be completed during a vacation.**

The staff has established the following general guidelines for make-up work; however, this varies with individual teachers.

- While students are on vacation, they may be asked to write a daily diary of their trip. The length and content will vary by grade level. The journals will be handed in to the teacher upon returning to school and, if appropriate, shared with the class.
- While students are on vacation, each teacher will keep a folder of essential work missed. When the student returns to school, this work will be sent home. Assignments should be completed daily. As work is completed, it should be brought in to school for the teacher to review.
- Any tests missed while a child is on vacation will be made up when the teacher feels the child is ready.

Please refer to Board Policy #5113.2 for additional information regarding attendance.

Change of Address

If a change of address in or out of town is planned, parents or guardians **MUST** notify the office immediately in writing.

Report Cards

Conferences

Students are dismissed early from school in the fall for parent-teacher conferences. Every effort is made to coordinate the conferences for each family when more than one child is in school.

Please note: Conferences are only once a year, in the fall.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued three times a year for grades K through five. Our grading system reflects our developmentally appropriate program.

Student Records

Either the parent or legal guardian of a minor student is entitled to knowledge of and access to all educational, medical or similar school records maintained in their child's cumulative folder.

Release of student information or transfer of records may take place only with the written consent of the parent or legal guardian. Information regarding federal, state and local policies regarding student records is available from school administrators – see Board of Education Policy #5125(a-r).

Lunch Program

Children have the option of bringing a bag lunch or purchasing hot lunch. Students bringing lunch from home may purchase milk if they wish.

Information on the payment process for purchasing lunches is made available at the beginning of the school year. The cafeteria operates on a daily cash or credit/debit basis. Parents are expected to keep track of the number of lunches for which they have paid in advance. Students whose accounts become overdrawn will only be allowed to charge **two (2)** additional lunches. Please be sure you keep your child's account current.

A choice of lunches will be available each day. Menus are available on the school website: www.ctreg14.org

Free and Reduced Lunch Program guidelines and applications will be sent home with each child and will be available in the office.

Cost of lunch including milk	\$2.35
Cost of milk	.50

When preparing your child's snack and/or lunch, be sure to make healthy choices. Soda is not allowed in school. For the safety of all students, do not send metal silverware, knives of any kind, or glass containers to school.

Snacks

Some grade levels have a brief mid-morning snack period for the students. We strongly encourage children to bring "healthy snacks" (ex. fruit, raw vegetables, crackers, etc.). This will further reinforce our efforts to teach the students positive nutritional habits. State guidelines prohibit candy and soda. Drinks should be limited to water, milk, or 100% juice.

- Please be aware that many students have peanut or nut allergies that range from mild to severe. Before sending food items to your child's class for parties and other special events, please check with your child's teacher to be sure that classroom has not been designated as a "Nut Free Zone".

Student Activities

Student activities are scheduled throughout the year. Occasionally, there is a cost to families associated with these activities. No student will be excluded from a school-sponsored activity in cases of financial hardship. Please contact the principal if you need assistance or additional information.

Party Invitations

Social acceptance among peers plays a critical role in building self-esteem with elementary age school children. Discovering a child has been omitted from a social event – birthdays, sleepovers, parties, etc. – even if inadvertently, can have a devastating effect on children in this age group. With this in mind, the following policy has been initiated:

- Parents are requested not to have children distribute party invitations through the school unless all students in the class are invited.
- Invitations to **ALL BOYS** or **ALL GIRLS** is acceptable and in many cases appropriate. Telephone numbers and/or addresses will not be provided. Please use the PTO Directory for the purposes of obtaining this information.

Student Use of Phone

Student use of the telephone should only occur when it is essential and then only with the permission of the principal or the secretary. All student phone calls must be made from the school office **ONLY**. Students are not permitted to bring cell phones to school.

All arrangements to visit friends, etc., are to be made at home before coming to school. A note to this effect should accompany the child to school and be given to the teacher. Students will **not** be permitted to call home for this permission. **Please note that students may not take the bus with a friend, although with a specific note, students may be permitted to get off at a friend's stop if they ride the same bus regularly.**

Photography and Videotaping

Photography and videotaping of students and/or school activities are not permitted without prior consent of the principal. Parents may decide not to grant permission for their children to be photographed and published in the newspaper, school publications, and/or the Region 14 website.

Dress Code

Children should come to school appropriately dressed based on climate, safety, and age. Hats are not to be worn during the school day except during morning arrival and dismissal. Articles of clothing and accessories displaying obscenities, profanity, or other inappropriate messages are not permitted. Halters, spaghetti straps and shirts exposing the midriff are not permitted. Short skirts and short shorts are not permitted. Shoes should be comfortable yet sturdy. Avoid heels, loose sandals, and flip flops as they present a safety hazard. Proper dress during inclement weather is imperative, since students will be going outside for recess provided the temperature is at least 20 degrees Fahrenheit and it is not raining. Snow boots and snow pants are required if the children wish to play in the snow. Final decisions regarding appropriate dress will be determined by the administration.

No School—Early/Emergency Closing/Delayed Opening

“No School” and “Early Closing” announcements will be made via the Region 14 AlertNow system for families who sign up for that service as well as on the radio and TV stations listed below. Please discuss with your child the procedure he/she should follow in the event that no one is at home when an early dismissal occurs.

AM Stations:

WLAD – 800
WINE – 940
WELI – 960
WTIC – 1080
WATR – 1320

FM Stations:

WKSS – 95.7
WEZN – 99.9
WDRC – 102.9

TV Stations:

WVIT – 30
WTNH – 8
WFSB – 3

This information is also available on the Region 14 website: www.ctreg14.org.

Please Note:

Due to the ever-changing weather conditions in New England – especially during winter – it is very important that you keep an eye on the daily forecast. If we have an early dismissal, the

AlertNow system will be activated. Early closings are also posted on the Region 14 website (www.ctreg14.org). It is most important that you use this outlet for information rather than call the school. The office is extremely busy during weather incidents and continuous calls about an early dismissal are a considerable distraction. Your cooperation on this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Also, if school is unexpectedly closing early due to the weather, please be sure your 3rd, 4th, or 5th grade student knows what to do, especially once they get home. Often these disrupted schedules mean that a parent is not home and a child might not be able to enter the house. A support plan between you and your child under these circumstances is paramount. Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade students will be taken to Mitchell Elementary School if no adult is home.

HEALTH

Accidents/Illness

If there is any question of your child not feeling well in the morning, please keep him/her at home. **If a child has an elevated temperature, he or she should remain home until the temperature has returned to normal and is maintained at normal for 24 hours. Children who are sent home by the nurse for illness and/or elevated temperature should remain at home an additional 24 hours to complete their recovery.** Parents must sign their child out from the main office prior to picking up their child in the Health Office. The school nurse and principal are the only persons authorized to dismiss a child from school.

The school nurse will administer first aid if a child becomes ill or injured. No medications will be given without a physician's order. The parent will be contacted by the school nurse or office when necessary. If your child tells you that he or she received an injury at school and that it was not reported to the nurse, please inform the nurse as soon as possible. Accident insurance is available to each student; information regarding this coverage is sent home the first week of school. The school cannot be held responsible for injuries occurring outside of school. Our school physician is Dr. Andrea Needleman.

Students in casts or who require crutches must have a physician's written authorization to attend school and to participate in the full program, including recess.

Students requesting an indoor recess or any excuse from P.E. classes must have a physician's note.

Insurance

During the first week of school, children will receive insurance information. Parents should sign the form whether or not they want coverage. Signed forms should be returned to the school as soon as possible.

- HUSKY Health Insurance Policy – The State of Connecticut sponsors a health insurance program for children that covers basic health and welfare needs. The cost of this program is determined on a sliding scale tied to income guidelines. If your child is not covered by any type of health insurance coverage, you might be interested in looking into the details of the HUSKY Program. Please see the school nurse for further information.

Allergies

We ask that all parents be sensitive to common childhood allergies. Some classrooms are designated “nut free zones”. It is imperative that all students in any of these classrooms not bring products with nuts into school. Due to latex allergies in both buildings, latex balloons, gloves, and other products are prohibited.

Communicable Diseases

If you suspect that your child has a communicable disease, please do not bring him/her to school to see the school nurse. Please schedule an appointment with your physician. All communicable diseases should be reported to the nurse. These include: STREP THROAT, HEAD LICE, CONJUNCTIVITIS, IMPETIGO, CHICKEN POX, RINGWORM, PINWORMS, etc.

- Chicken Pox requires a 6-day exclusion after the appearance of the rash or until all scabs are dry. The child is to report to the school nurse upon return to school.
- Any suspicious appearing skin condition should be reported to the nurse. Children with IMPETIGO, RINGWORM and SCABIES are to be excluded from school until they have a doctor’s permission to return. Children with HEAD LICE are to be excluded for 24 hours following treatment. In cases of severe infestation, we may require a longer absence.
- The school nurse will examine a sore throat. If a sore throat persists for two days or if there is fever with it, the child should be seen by the family physician. If a throat culture shows streptococci, the child should remain at home on medication for 24 hours and be non-symptomatic before returning to school.

Emergency Cards

Cards are sent home prior to the opening of school or on the first day of school. Please complete and return the emergency information at once. It is extremely important that we receive this information and that it is kept current throughout the school year. The purpose of the emergency information card is to provide care for your child if you are unavailable. It is important that we have a card for each of our students. Before parents fill out these cards, we ask that you take a few moments to consider the information listed below. Parents should:

- Consider carefully who their emergency contact people will be.
- Ask the people chosen if they would be willing to assume responsibility for your children in an emergency situation.
- Choose people who will be able and available to take care of your children.
- Choose people who live locally or close by.
- Choose people who either do not work outside of the home or are able to leave work if necessary.
- Make sure all emergency numbers are kept current during the school year.
- Let the school know where they can be reached if they expect to be unavailable at any of the routine emergency numbers.
- Recognize that the first consideration in all case must be the child’s welfare.

Medications

Pursuant to Connecticut State Law, a physician’s written order including directions for administration must accompany any medication sent to school. The nurse must also receive the written permission from the parent to administer medication. This law includes both prescription and over-the-counter drugs. The only exception under the law is vitamins. The medication must be brought to school by a parent or other responsible adult and brought home by a parent or other responsible adult for children in grades 3-5. Students are not allowed to keep medication with them in school. The nurse will dispose of any remaining medication not

brought home after one week. The medication bottle must be labeled with the name of the student, the name of the doctor, the name of the medication, the date it was ordered and the directions for administration.

Tylenol, Advil and Motrin may not be dispensed unless there is a written order from a physician.

Authorization forms for medication administration are available in the Health Office. In the absence of the school nurse, the Principal may administer medications. **NO MEDICATION WILL BE ADMINISTERED WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORIZATION.**

Immunization

Connecticut law mandates that all students be protected by adequate immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, hemophilus influenzae type B, and any other vaccine required by the schedule for active immunization adopted pursuant to state law (e.g., varicella). Students who have not been adequately immunized will not be admitted to school except in cases where the parent/guardian has provided a certificate from a physician stating that such immunization is medically contraindicated or the parent/guardian presents a statement that such immunization would be contrary to the religious beliefs of the child. Homeless children are entitled to immediate enrollment even if the documentation of immunization is not immediately available.

Screenings

Annual vision and auditory screening is done for all children in grades 3-5.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

School Code

Both Bethlehem and Mitchell Elementary Schools are communities of approximately 400 students and 70 adults working closely together every day. We can only be effective if every member of that community treats everyone else with respect. All members of our school communities are expected to honor the school code:

I am:

- Safe
- Responsible
- Respectful
- Prepared

Homework Policy

Parents are the key to making homework a positive experience for their children. It follows, therefore, that parents must play an important role in the homework process. We ask that parents establish homework as a top priority for their children by making sure that children do homework in a quiet environment, establishing a daily homework time, and providing positive support when homework is completed. **It is our expectation that every child read for pleasure on a daily basis in addition to assigned homework.**

Homework is regularly assigned by the teacher. Homework is an important aid in helping students make the most of their experience in school. It reinforces what has been taught in

class, prepares students for upcoming class topics, teaches students to work independently, develop self-discipline, responsibility and organizational skills.

Homework may be a reinforcement, extension or enrichment of studies previously presented in class.

Homework is typically assigned Monday through Thursday. Homework is not assigned over weekends or holidays except for make-up work or long-term project assignments. General guidelines follow, but vary with individual teachers.

Kindergarten – not regularly assigned.

Grade One – 0-10 minutes daily.

Grade Two – 10-15 minutes daily.

Grade Three – 15-30 minutes daily.

Grade Four – 30-45 minutes daily.

Grade Five – 30-45 minutes daily.

It is expected that assigned homework will take no longer than the above time allotments. If the child is spending significantly longer time periods than the above, please contact the teacher. It is understood that children with special needs may have their homework and time modified according to their individual educational programs.

Students have responsibilities for meeting homework requirements. It is expected that all assignments will be completed. Students will turn in work that is done to the best of their abilities. Students will turn in homework assignments missed due to absence.

If there is a legitimate reason why a student is unable to finish or do homework, please send a note on the day the homework is due stating the reason it is not completed. The note must be signed by the parent.

Guidelines for Make-Up Work

We expect students to make up essential work missed during illnesses or absences. The following general guidelines outline the procedure to be used in making up work:

- If a student is going to be out of school for one or two days, then make-up work will be given to the student by the teacher upon his/her return to school.
- If a student is going to be absent for three or more days, then we encourage parents to pick up work for the student.
 1. Parents should contact the office the day before they wish to pick up work.
 2. The office will contact the teacher and materials will be sent to the office by 3:00 p.m. the next day.
 3. Parents may then pick up work from the office.
 4. Make up work will be determined at the discretion of the teacher.
- In general, work will be sent home for no more than one week at a time.

Toys/Sporting Goods

Children are not permitted to bring any toys, dolls, trading cards, electronic devices, sporting goods, (i.e. skateboards, hard balls, remote control cars, etc.) to school unless specifically requested by a teacher. We are **not** responsible for any lost or damaged above-mentioned items.

Classroom Conduct

Each classroom teacher establishes a set of rules that will help to provide an atmosphere of mutual respect and concern. Classroom teachers maintain positive behavioral support strategies in managing their classrooms. If a routine discipline situation does arise, the classroom teacher will work with the student or students to resolve the problem, and will contact parents if necessary. If the discipline problem is serious or continuous, the principal may become involved along with the parents.

Consequences may include any of the following depending upon the severity of the infraction:

- Verbal warning
- Loss of recess
- Loss of classroom privilege
- Reassignment of task
- Removal from activity
- Parent contact and involvement
- Staying after school
- Parent/Teacher or Parent/Teacher/Administrator conference
- Replacement/reimbursement for damaged property
- Compensatory work by the student for damaged property
- Expressing verbally or in written form the effects of the misbehavior and a future plan of action
- In School Suspension
- Out of School Suspension

Weapons or harmful materials will not be tolerated in school. Any student found with such items will be subject to consequences, which could range from suspension to expulsion.

Special Note:

Students referred to the principal for any rules infraction at any time MAY BE SUSPENDED FROM SCHOOL from one to ten days as stipulated in the Board of Education Policy 5131(a) and 5114(a)-5114(i) and Connecticut General Statutes 10-233a through 10-233f.

Bullying

“Bullying” means any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school-sponsored activity or on a school bus which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. The term ‘bullying’ may also include acts that occur outside the school setting if such acts have a direct and negative impact on a student’s academic performance or safety in school. In order for acts of bullying that take place outside the school setting to be subject to disciplinary action, they must violate a school policy and seriously disrupt the educational process.

Bullying activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school district and are prohibited at all times. Any individual who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action including suspension and expulsion.

A student who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying should report the matter orally or in writing to any teacher, counselor or member of the school administration. Students may

also make anonymous reports. A copy of the board of education policy #5131.911 on bullying is available at the main office in every school.

Cafeteria Behavior

We understand that children have been taught proper table etiquette by the time they arrive at school. However, in a large group sometimes manners are forgotten. We want your child to have a pleasurable experience during the lunch period and observe the following guidelines.

Students are to:

- Use polite table manners.
- Sit at assigned tables.
- Remain seated until they are given permission to line up.
- Speak in a normal tone of voice.
- Be silent when lights are turned off.
- Clean table areas and throw litter away when trash bin is brought to tables.
- Refrain from running in the cafeteria.
- Use the lavatory before lunch or after recess.

Consequences may include the following:

- Student may be removed from assigned table to another area.
- Student may be removed from the cafeteria to eat in another supervised area.
- Students may lose a recess as a consequence for inappropriate behavior.
- Parents may be contacted.
- Referral to principal may occur.

Bus Rules

Regional School District #14 provides bus service to and from school. Students are expected to ride their assigned buses. Students are not allowed to ride a different bus after school unless it is a daily occurrence (day care/child care), the bus has adequate space, and the office has been notified in writing. We will not accept phone calls or faxes to hold your child or send them home on the bus. It is very busy at the end of the day and we will not place any child at risk due to a last-minute change in dismissal plans. If there is a change in destination for your child at dismissal, you must send a note to the teacher in the morning outlining the instructions.

The bus company is First Student in Bethlehem (203-266-7352). Proper student behavior on the bus will help ensure the safety of everyone. Students who violate the rules are reported by the driver to the principal, who will, depending on the seriousness and/or frequency of the violations, notify the parents as to the child's behavior. A bus referral form is sent home if misbehavior is reported in writing to the principal by the bus driver. If the violation is very serious as to endanger the safety of the driver and other passengers, immediate bus suspension will occur following parent notification.

Chronic misconduct will result in the student's denial of bus privileges and parents will be responsible for the child's transportation.

The bus driver has immediate authority over students at all times that they are on his/her bus. The bus driver is fully occupied driving the bus and alert to traffic, pedestrians and other hazards. Therefore, it is particularly important that children abide by the following specific rules of safety and courtesy:

- Students must remain seated and facing front while the bus is in motion. While the bus is at rest, students may change seats only with the permission of the driver.
- Conduct on the bus should be substantially the same as classroom conduct.
- No indecent or profane language shall be permitted on the bus nor shall there be any shouting.
- Unnecessary talking with the driver is prohibited.
- The throwing of any object on or out of the bus is specifically prohibited.
- Students must not at any time extend their arms or heads out of the bus window.
- Bus windows shall not be opened without the consent of the driver.
- Students shall assist in keeping the bus clean, sanitary and orderly and shall refrain from abusing the bus, its cushions, or other equipment.
- Upon entering or leaving the bus, students shall avoid crowding or in any way disturbing others.
- No student shall leave the bus without permission from proper school authorities, except at his or her designated stop.
- Students shall enter and leave the bus only by the front door except in case of emergency.
- When seated, students must at all times keep their feet out of the aisles of the bus.

Parents are asked to review and reinforce these bus rules regularly with their child(ren).

Discipline and Conduct on the Bus

When a complaint is received from a bus driver concerning a discipline problem, the following procedure shall be utilized:

1. The administrator shall discuss the problem with the student. At that time a review of proper behavior will be discussed and a reminder given concerning the consequences of repeated acts.
2. Should a second complaint be made, the administrator will again discuss the situation with the student. The parents will be notified of the problem and informed that continued misbehavior may result in a suspension of bus privileges.
3. A third complaint will result in official notification of parents and could involve suspension of bus privileges. Transportation during the period of suspension shall be the responsibility of the parents.

In cases where the offense is of such gravity as to endanger the safety and/or well being of other occupants of the bus, the above procedure may be disregarded and immediate suspension will be invoked. In all cases, due process procedures shall be followed as described in District Policy 5114.

Lost and Found

We have a Lost and Found box, which is located outside the cafeteria at Bethlehem Elementary School and in the gym lobby at Mitchell Elementary School. Parents are requested to place the child's name in all of his/her outer clothing, mittens, boots and lunch boxes. If your child has lost an item, please have him/her check the Lost and Found. The Lost and Found box will be emptied on the 1st of each month. Unclaimed items are donated to charity.

SPECIAL AREAS

Art

The elementary art program emphasizes creative expression and the ongoing development of the self. Cultivated through an array of aesthetic experiences in a safe and secure art lab the art program gives the student the opportunity to explore various artistic techniques using a variety of materials, mediums, and processes. The program also includes studies in theory and technique, art history, and artistic aesthetics and criticism. Assessment and evaluation is based primarily on the process as well as the finished art product. Our objective is that upon completion of the art program, students are able to value their individual expression and the unique ability to create art.

Computer Lab

Each class has a designated period scheduled in the Computer Lab. Keyboarding and word processing are taught on a regular basis. Other computer programs are offered which interact with curricula and enhance educational concepts in language arts, creative writing, science and social studies. The Technology Teacher, teachers and support personnel work together in the lab to assist with this program.

Library-Media Center

Each class visits the LMC regularly. Opportunities for book exchange, storytelling activities, information retrieval and to practice library skills. Students are allowed to visit the LMC on an individual basis. LMC materials and resources, both print and non-print, support curriculum needs. The LMC has an automated circulation system as well as other technologies such as an electronic encyclopedia, computers, VCR units, DVD units, and other forms of media.

Faculty, students, parents and visitors are always welcome in our library-media center. All visitors are reminded to sign in at the school office first.

Students are expected to be responsible in caring for and returning borrowed books. Students are not charged fines for overdue books or other library materials. However, students are charged for lost or damaged books or library materials. It is expected that all library matters be settled by the end of the school year.

Music

Children sing, play, listen and move to a variety of new and traditional music. Rhythmic awareness and developmental response are emphasized on all grade levels. Instruments are used which enhance the children's interest, enthusiasm and awareness in playing and creating music.

Other benefits of music include increased coordination ability, memory training, academic awareness, and listening skills. All this is happening to the children as they share the enjoyment of a favorite song.

Students meet with the music teacher weekly. Students in grades 4 and 5 may choose to participate in chorus once per week and have the option of joining the beginning band program.

Physical Education

The physical education program is an integral part of the total education process for students. Some components of the program include:

- Movement education and body mechanics.

- Physical fitness and body conditioning activities.
- Manipulative skills.
- Rhythm and dance.
- Apparatus and tumbling.
- Team sports, simple games and recreational activities.

Students in grades K-5 have two physical education classes each week. Sneakers are required for participation. If students are to be excused for medical reasons, a note from a physician is required.

STUDENT SERVICES

Literacy Support

Students may be entitled to receive literacy support services. Classroom teachers, the literacy specialist, special education teachers, and literacy tutors provide intervention through small group, individualized, and whole class instruction.

Mental Health Services

The school psychologist and social workers work with students and their families to make the elementary school years smooth, productive and fun. Referrals for services come from teachers, the Student Consultation Team, the Planning and Placement Team or directly from parents. Services include administration and interpretation of psychological and psycho-educational evaluations; counseling with students on an individual or group basis as a need arises or at a regularly scheduled time, and consultation with parents about issues of concern. The psychologist and social worker are available to provide information and referrals for out-of-district resources and work as a liaison with other agencies.

Students with Disabilities

A student who has a disability impacting the ability to learn or function in the school environment may be entitled to special services including reasonable accommodations (Section 504 Plan) and special education (Individualized Education Plan). A 504 Plan outlines the modifications and accommodations that a student with a disability needs in order to participate fully in the programs offered by the school.

Special education is specially designed instruction created to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities. In providing special education to students, the district complies with the requirements of federal and state law. Eligibility for special education is determined by a planning and placement team. Before a child is referred to a planning and placement team, alternative procedures and programs in regular education shall be explored and, where appropriate, implemented. Referrals for special education may be made by school personnel as well as from a student's parents, physician, or social worker.

Parents who have questions about the services available to students with disabilities should contact the Director of Special Services at 263-0416.

Student Consultation Team

Our student consultation team meets on a regular basis. The SCT is a team of permanent members from a variety of disciplines. This is not a special education process but rather a

regular education team who meet to discuss children experiencing difficulties that seem to inhibit academic growth. The SCT follow federal Response to Intervention (RtI) and state Scientific Research Based Instruction/Intervention (SRBI) guidelines.

The team may:

- Offer specific strategies to the classroom teacher.
- Offer to observe the child in the classroom to gather data.
- Collect more information by informal assessment.
- Recommend that a formal referral be started.

The team tracks each child's progress. Careful notes are kept of the meeting, recording concerns and actions taken by the team.

POLICIES

Board of Education Policies

The Board of Education establishes policies for the operation of the school district. The rules, expectations, guidelines and consequences that define and qualify the daily operations of our elementary schools are consistent with established policy.

Behavioral and disciplinary processes outlined in this handbook, which apply to students, are consistent with Board of Education policy. For purposes of information, reference and access, some of the more widely applied policies are listed below.

Individuals seeking further information regarding these, or other Board of Education policies, should direct inquiries to the Board of Education.

School Records and Confidentiality

The Region #14 Board of Education has adopted a written policy concerning the confidentiality and accessibility of student records. Copies of the complete board policy are available at the board of education office. Consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the student records policy affords parents of students and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records. Parents of minor or dependent children and eligible students are entitled to review educational records upon request made to the school principal.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records when the parent or eligible student believes such records are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. A request for an amendment to educational records should be made in writing to the school principal and identify the record(s) at issue and the reason for the request.
3. The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records except to the extent that the law authorizes disclosure without consent. For example, written consent prior to disclosure is not required in the following circumstances (*this is not an exhaustive list*):

- a. To other school officials within the school system who have a legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Education; a person or company with whom the school district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, bus contractor, medical or educational consultant or therapist); or a person serving on a Board of Education committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or as a hearing officer in discipline cases, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
 - b. Upon request, to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
 - c. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided that the school makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena prior to compliance therewith.
 - d. To parties in a health or safety emergency.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by school officials to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Notice of Intent to Release Directory Information Without Prior Consent

The following types of information contained in the education record of an enrolled student are hereby designated as directory information and may be disclosed by school officials to the public without the prior consent of a parent or eligible student:

- The student's name
- The student's address
- The student's telephone listing
- The student's electronic mail address
- The student's photograph
- A videotape identifying the student
- The student's place and date of birth
- The student's dates of attendance
- The student's grade level
- The student's participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- The student's weight and height as a member of an athletic team
- Honors and awards received by the student

Pursuant to federal law (the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the National Defense Authorization Act of 2002), the school district is required to provide, upon a request made by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students names, addresses, and telephone listings. In addition, the school district is required to provide

military recruiters with the same access to secondary school students and on-campus recruiting opportunities, as well as to directory information as is provided generally to post-secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students.

The Region will use discretion in releasing any student information. Data will only be released for educational purposes or as required by law.

Right to object to the release of directory information:

A parent, guardian or eligible student may object to the disclosure of any or all of the categories of directory information without prior written consent. A parent, guardian or student may also refuse to allow school officials to release the student's name, address, and telephone listing to military recruiters or an institution of higher education without prior written consent. To prevent the release of directory information in any of these situations, a parent, guardian or student must file a notice of objection in the main office of the school in which the student attends.

Drugs and Alcohol Policy

Regional School District #14 Board of Education has adopted Drug, Alcohol & Tobacco Policy 5131.6.

The Regional School District #14 Board of Education establishes a student code of conduct that prohibits student possession, use and/or distribution of any drug, alcohol or drug paraphernalia or being under the influence of any drug or alcohol on school premises, during school, at any school sponsored activity or while on transportation provided by the Board.

Recognizing the potential of each student and that drug and alcohol abuse and dependency can seriously impair a student's ability to learn, the Board directs the administration to take positive actions to prevent drug and alcohol abuse. These actions will include education, school intervention, parental involvement, medical assessment, referral to community agencies and police referral in the handling of incidents in the schools involving the possession, distribution, sale and/or use of behavior-affecting substances.

Any student found to be violating this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the regulations developed by the administration. The consequences of this policy will be listed in the student handbooks and may ultimately result in the expulsion from school and/or criminal prosecution. Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interest of the student, school population and community in mind.

School properties may be inspected by school authorities in the interest of maintenance, health and safety. Inspections for the location of drugs, narcotics, alcohol, weapons, poisons and missing properties or matters relating to health and safety and may be regarded as reasonable purposes for inspection by school personnel. (cf.5145.12 – Search and Seizure) Personal privacy rights of students shall be protected as provided by law.

Non-Discrimination Policy

In all of our programs and activities, the Regional School District No.14 Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, alienage, or any other basis prohibited by law. The following people have been designated to handle questions about our

policy of non-discrimination as well as complaints of discriminatory treatment or unlawful harassment:

For non-discrimination with regard to disability, please contact the district's Section 504 compliance officer:

Kimberly A. Culkin
Director of Special Services
203-263-0416
5 Minortown Road
Woodbury, CT 06798

For non-discrimination with regard to all other categories, including sex and issues regarding sexual and other unlawful harassment, please contact the district's Title IX coordinator:

Kimberly A. Culkin
Director of Special Services
203-263-0416
5 Minortown Road
Woodbury, CT 06798

Sexual, Racial, and Other Unlawful Harassment

It is the policy of the Regional School District #14 Board of Education to maintain a working and learning environment that is free from sexual, racial and other unlawful harassment. The Board will not tolerate the harassment of any student or employee based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, alienage, or any other basis prohibited by law. All forms of harassment are prohibited whether verbal, physical or visual, and regardless of the medium through which it occurs. Such harassment violates state and federal law as well as the student code of conduct.

Board of education policy prohibits sexual and other unlawful harassment of students by employees, other students, teachers, administrators, Board members, volunteers, and others contractually or otherwise under the control of the school system. It protects against harassment on school premises, at school-sponsored activities and at other places where these individuals come in contact with students in connection with their education by the school system.

Students are prohibited from harassing teachers, administrators or other school personnel on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, ancestry, marital status, or age.

Complaint Procedure

All members of the school community are responsible for helping to assure that unlawful harassment is avoided. Any student who feels that he/she has been harassed in violation of board policy should immediately bring his or her complaint to the attention any of the following personnel: Guidance Counselor, Assistant Principal, Building Principal, or Title IX Coordinator. The school official may assist the student in putting the complaint in writing. Any person who has observed or otherwise become aware of conduct prohibited by this policy should bring the matter to the immediate attention of the Building principal and/or Title IX Coordinator.

All complaints will be promptly investigated in as confidential a manner as practical and appropriate corrective action will be taken when warranted. Any employee, student, volunteer or other individual under the control of the school system who is determined after an investigation to have engaged in harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, including possible dismissal or expulsion.

Please refer to Board Policy # 5145.5, 5145.52 and regulations for the complete details on the complaint procedure for unlawful harassment.

Pesticide Use Policy

The Regional School District No. 14 has an integrated pest management plan. Specific guidelines for the implementation of the pest management plan are provided to staff and parents/guardians of students at the beginning of each school year. Staff and parents/guardians may register for prior notice of pesticide applications within school buildings or on school grounds. Persons who have registered for prior notice will be notified by any means practicable on or before the day that any pesticide application is to take place at a school.

Homeless Students

Enrolled students who become homeless (lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence) and homeless students seeking enrollment in Region No. 14 schools should contact the district's homelessness liaison, Christopher Quirk, Director of Special Services, 203-263-0416, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, CT 06798. Homeless students may be entitled to transportation to the student's school or origin, immediate enrollment despite the lack of certain records (e.g., immunization history) and other services that the district provides.

Student Policies

	Reference
Truancy	5113.2
Removal, Suspension and Expulsion	5114
Vandalism	5131.3
Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco	5131.6
Weapons and Dangerous Instruments	5131.7
Sexual Harassment	5145.5
Search and Seizure	5145.12
Bullying	5131.911

PLEASE NOTE: The Board of Education periodically revises policies. The administration therefore reserves the right to enforce changes in rules or policies not available at the time of publishing.

Parent Responsibilities

We ask that each Region 14 School parent make the following commitment:

I understand the responsibilities in the District's student behavior policies as outlined in this Handbook. I also understand that my child shall be held accountable for the behavior and consequences outlined in the discipline policy at school and at school-sponsored and school-related activities, including school-sponsored travel and for any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location. I further understand that any student who violates the school's rules of behavior shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including referral for criminal prosecution for violations of law.

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