



SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

**33 Mechanic Street
Fair Haven, VT 05743
Tel: 802.265.4905
Fax: 802.265.2158**

BENSON VILLAGE SCHOOL



Our Mission

We are dedicated to the academic excellence of every student by empowering them with the means for the successful completion of standards, and by challenging them to be productive members of our global society. We are committed to a comprehensive system of support to assure each student has the opportunity to develop the skills and talents necessary for college and career readiness.

Parent/ Student Handbook

Updated August 2020

Benson Village School
Parent/ Student Handbook
2020-2021



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DISTRICT**

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Parent/Guardian Signature Requested

The daily operations of the school require the cooperation of families and school personnel to provide our children with a safe, efficient educational setting. This requires effort on the part of all, and we appreciate you taking the time to read this handbook.

Once again we are offering parents/guardians two options: The handbook may be read online at slatevalleyunified.org, or a hard copy may be requested. In either case, we ask that once you have read the handbook please sign and return this page to school with your child. Thank you.

Please read and check one of the following:

- ☐ I have read the Student/Parent Handbook online.
- ☐ Please send home a hard copy with my child.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Names: _____

Please sign and return this page to school with your child. Thank-you



SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Slate Valley Board Of Directors

<i>Name</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>Term Expires</i>
Patricia Beaumont	patricia.beaumont@svuvt.org	2021
Rebecca Spears	rebecca.spears@svuvt.org	2021
Rebeckah St. Peter	rebeckah.stpeter@svuvt.org	2022
Julie Finnegan	julie.finnegan@svuvt.org	2023
Toni Lobdell	toni.lobdell@svuvt.org	2021
Timothy Smith (Chair)	timothy.smith@svuvt.org	2022
Tara Buxton (Clerk)	tara.buxton@svuvt.org	2021
Michael Bache	michael.bache@svuvt.org	2022
Richard Wilson	richard.wilson@svuvt.org	2023
Joshua Hardt	joshua.hardt@svuvt.org	2022
Christine Pouliot	christine.pouliot@svuvt.org	2021
Glen Cousineau	glen.cousineau@svuvt.org	2022
Peter Stone (Vice Chair)	peter.stone@svuvt.org	2021
John Wurzbacher	john.wurzbacher@svuvt.org	2023
Angela Charron	angela.charron@svuvt.org	2022
Tanya Tolchin	tanya.tolchin@svuvt.org	2023

Slate Valley Administration

Brooke Olsen-Farrell, Superintendent	bfarrell@svuvt.org	265-4905
Kristin Benway, Director of Special Services	kbenway@svuvt.org	265-4905
Cheryl Scarzello, Director of Finance	cscarzello@svuvt.org	265-4905
Chris Cole, Director of Operations	ccole@svuvt.org	265-4905
Casey O'Meara, Director of Curriculum	comeara@svuvt.org	265-4905

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***ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF DESIGNATION OF DIRECTORY
INFORMATION AND RIGHT OF REFUSAL***

TO: All parents/guardians of students, and to eligible students*, currently attending schools in the Slate Valley Unified School District.

DATE: August 2020

Schools in the Slate Valley Unified Union School District may disclose designated directory information on students and eligible students without the prior consent of the parent/guardian of the eligible students, and without any record of such disclosure. The following types of personally identifiable information have been designated directory information:

- Student's name, address, date of birth, dates of enrollment;
- Parent or legal custodian's name and address;
- Student's grade level classification;
- Student's participation in recognized school activities and sports;
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- Student's diplomas, certificates, awards and honors received.

Disclosure may include such personally identifiable information contained or reflected in photographs.

If you are an eligible student and are currently attending any of the Slate Valley Schools, or if you are the parent/guardian of a student currently attending school in any of the Slate Valley Schools, you have a right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of these types of information as directory information concerning your child or (if you are an eligible student) yourself, by providing written notice of your refusal, listing the type(s) of information which you refuse to have so designated, to the principal of the school your child attends (or the school you attend, if you are an eligible student), on or before September 1, 2020.

*You are an eligible student if you are at least 18 years of age or are attending an institution of post-secondary education.

NOTIFICATION OF MANAGEMENT PLAN AVAILABILITY

TO: Parents, Teachers, Employees, Other Personnel or their Guardians
Parent-Teacher Organization Presidents

FROM: Brooke Olsen-Farrell, Superintendent of Schools
Slate Valley Unified Union School District
33 Mechanic Street
Fair Haven, Vermont 05743
Telephone: 265-4905

DATE: August 2020

RE: Designated Persons for Asbestos

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (40 CFR 763.93 (g)(4) requires that written notice be given that the following schools have Management Plans for the safe control and maintenance of asbestos-containing materials found in their buildings. These Management Plans are available and accessible to the public at the administration office of each facility listed below.

SCHOOL TELEPHONE

ADDRESS

Benson Village School
537-2491

Benson, VT 05731

Castleton Elementary School
468-5624

Bomoseen, VT 05732

Castleton Village School
468-2203

Castleton, VT 05735

Fair Haven Grade School
265-3883

Fair Haven, VT 05743

Fair Haven Union High School
265-4966

Fair Haven, VT 05743

Orwell Village School
948-2871

Orwell, VT 05760

Slate Valley Central Office
265-4905

Fair Haven, VT 05743

DESIGNATED PERSONS:

David Ward

Fair Haven Union High School
Fair Haven Grade School

Patrick Goodwin

Orwell Village School
Benson Village School

Mark Cassidy

Castleton Elementary School
Castleton Village School

Chris Cole

Director of Operations
Slate Valley Unified School District

NCLB PRIVACY LETTER

Fall 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

In accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education ACT (ESEA) Section III (h)(6) I want to inform you of the following:

1. As a parent of a child who attends a school that receives Title I funds, (Castleton Elementary School, Castleton Village School, Fair Haven Grade School, Fair Haven Union High School, Benson Village School, and Orwell Village School), you have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher. This information could include:
 - ☐ Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas taught.
 - ☐ Whether the teacher is teaching under licensure waiver.
 - ☐ A teacher's degree background.
 - ☐ Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.
2. Schools are required to provide upon request of a military recruiter or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers. Parents may request that their children's contact information not be released to military recruiters or institutions of higher education. This should be done in writing to the school on or before September 4, 2020.
3. Parents have the right upon request to:
 - ☐ Inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.
 - ☐ Be informed of the administration of any non-emergency, invasive physical examinations, or screenings that are not otherwise permitted or required by state law, including those without parental notification.
 - ☐ Inspect any third-party surveys before they are administered.
 - ☐ Be made aware of the collection and use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing that information (except for the purpose of developing educational products for services).

4. Parents are required to give written prior parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any Education Department funded survey, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
- ☐ Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent.
 - ☐ Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
 - ☐ Sex behavior or attitudes.
 - ☐ Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
 - ☐ Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships.
 - ☐ Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
 - ☐ Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent.
 - ☐ Income other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program, or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to call your school's Principal or the Superintendent's Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brooke Olsen-Farrell".

Brooke Olsen-Farrell
Superintendent of Schools

Slate Valley A to Z

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is a fundamental principle for all educational institutions. It is imperative students understand the importance of assuming responsibility for their own work, as well as their contribution to group work assigned by the teaching staff. Our faculty and staff understand the need to educate children about academic honesty within the classroom.

Slate Valley recognizes that cheating, plagiarizing, stealing academic material, and missing class deliberately on the day of a test/quiz are all included in our Academic Honesty Expectations. Staff members will handle problems related to academic honesty directly with our students and families. It is up to the discretion of the teacher to decide if and at what point to bring the matter to the Principal.

Access Control

It is the policy of the Slate Valley Unified School District to provide a safe environment for students and employees while facilitating access to school buildings, premises and equipment by authorized users. The safety and security of the district's physical space and assets is a shared responsibility of all members of the Slate Valley Unified Union School District.

The Superintendent has established access control procedures to address the design, administration and management of access control systems and measures. Access-control privileges shall be determined and assigned by the Director of Operations and/or his or her designee based on the specific needs and requirements of the District and the electronic identification/access badge.

Access To Student Records

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible student") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. Parents or students (age 18 or older) have the right:

1. To inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.
2. To request the amendment of the student's education records that either the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate or misleading.
3. To consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's records, except to the extent the FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. To file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Achievement Testing & Assessment

The primary purpose of assessment is to guide instruction and promote student learning. Through assessments, educators will determine that all students are making progress toward meeting the Common Core and Next Generation Standards. Assessments will provide a variety of valid and reliable information to inform instruction and meet accountability priorities at all levels - student, parent, school, community, and state.

Specifically, SVUSD assessments will:

1. Be meaningfully aligned with curriculum goals and grade expectations;
2. Provide evidence that students can apply knowledge and skills in a variety of settings;
3. Determine what a student can do independently;
4. Provide students with purposeful feedback about their learning;
5. Identify areas of curriculum and instructional strengths and weaknesses;
6. Focus professional development opportunities to ensure assessment literacy and instructional knowledge and skills;
7. Identify the next steps for teaching and learning.

Overview of Types of Assessments

Summative assessments: provide data about student performance at a particular point in time and provide valuable information about the effectiveness of curriculum, programs, materials and instructional practices. They may be used for progress monitoring of student growth.

All performance indicators assessed summatively are averaged together and result in a proficiency score. [Here](#) is a visual representing the language above.

Formative assessments: provide ongoing feedback for students and teachers about learning. It is the intent of our Local Comprehensive Assessment Plan to support and provide the resources for ongoing professional development for teachers in the use of formative assessment practices to guide instruction. Teachers use classroom assessment data to make changes that will lead to increased student understanding.

Strategies for Assessing Student Progress on Grade Expectations

SVUSD assesses student progress relating to the CCSS, NGSS, GE's and curriculum documents. The variety of ways are listed below:

1. Formative Assessment Strategies (feedback, questioning, self/peer assessment, learning targets with criteria)
2. Looking at Student Work
3. Student Demonstrations - (Assessment activities will be conducted within each classroom.)
4. Standardized Assessments - (e.g., NECAP, SBAC, NWEA)
5. Performance Tasks
6. Curriculum program assessments (unit tests)
7. Common District Assessments (across classroom)

Athletics

Our interscholastic sports program is based upon promoting the respective sport as a positive, enjoyable experience to our students. To do this, we must emphasize good sportsmanship, ensure the significant participation of all teams and encourage responsibility, dedication, self-discipline, teamwork and the spirit of competition. We also hope to help improve and develop the skills of all team members. We do subscribe to the fair playing time philosophy: however, students must have regular attendance, a good attitude and attend all practices in order to be allowed playing time. We also realize the importance of setting priorities and placing academics first and foremost in our students' total educational program. Please remember that while winning is nice, these principles must come first in our program.

(The standards for Athletics and Activities for the Middle Schools are outlined by the Vermont Principals' Association. These guidelines are available online at: <https://vpaonline.org/> or by request at any of the schools.)

Attendance

It is the policy of the Slate Valley Unified Union School District to set high expectations for consistent student school attendance in accordance with Vermont law in order to facilitate and enhance student learning. Legal pupils between the ages of 6 and 16 and who are residents of the school district and non-resident pupils who enroll in school district schools are required to attend school for the full number of days that school is held unless they are excused from attendance as provided in state law. Students who are over the age of 16 are required to attend school continually for the full number of school days for which they are enrolled, unless they are mentally or physically unable to continue, or are excused by the superintendent in writing.

Attendance Procedures

When a student is absent:

Parents/Guardians are expected to contact the school by 8:15 am with a verbal reason for the absence. If the school does not receive a call or receives a call but no reason for the absence it is considered unexcused or truant until we receive an acceptable excuse for that absence. The building principal determines whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

Based upon State law (§ 1121), a parent / guardian is responsible for their child attending school, unless the child:

- (1) is mentally or physically unable to attend; or
- (2) has completed the tenth grade; or
- (3) is excused by the superintendent or a majority of the school directors. (The superintendent of a public school may excuse, in writing, any student from attending the school for a definite time, but for not more than ten consecutive school days and only for emergencies or for absence from town).

Parents/Guardians must obtain prior approval from the Superintendent for any extended leave due to emergencies or absence from town.

If a child has not arrived at school, and we have not received a phone call, a designated school employee will call the home every day a student is out. If there is no answer we will contact the emergency number you have provided. This procedure is designed to ensure that a child is safe if they do not arrive at school.

If a student has an unexcused absence from school, they will not be allowed to participate in any school sponsored after-school functions, such as a game, concert, club, etc.

Written excuses:

Parents/guardians must send a signed and dated note for every absence, with child's full name and reason for the child's absence when the child returns to school or a doctor's written excuse. The note from a parent must arrive two weeks (14 days) from the date of absence.

Doctor's written excuse is required after three consecutive days of absences due to illness in order for those absences to be considered excused absences.

After a total of 10 days of absences due to illness, a doctor's written excuse is required for each additional absence due to illness. If a doctor's written excuse is not provided the absences will be deemed unexcused.

Tardiness:

Punctuality at school is extremely important. All students arriving after (the building start time) will be considered tardy. Any student arriving late to school must check into the office, to obtain a pass to class.

*Students arriving after the start of the school day without a valid excuse approved by the Principal, will not be able to participate in after school or evening activities.

Chronic tardiness may impact academic proficiency. Students with chronic tardiness will be referred to the truancy coordinator and administration to initiate a meeting with the intervention team as needed.

Notification of parents/guardian:

The attendance policy and procedures will be posted on each school's website and in each student handbook.

Unexcused absences notification:

Parents will be notified by letter when 5 unexcused absences have occurred. At 7 unexcused absences the parent will be requested to attend an attendance meeting in order to proactively develop an attendance plan.

At 10 days of unexcused absences the parent will be notified. If the parent and student are not actively working with the attendance team and following the plan developed, an affidavit will be filed with the district attorney's office and copied to the Department of Children and Families Services.

Early Dismissal/ Signing out of school:

If students need to leave school, parent/ guardian must come into the building to sign their child out. If the parent is sending a designated adult to pick up their child the person must be identified on the emergency contact card or the parent/ guardian must call the school with the name and relationship of the person picking up their child. This person will be required to provide valid identification.

At the high school level seniors who are academically eligible and meet the guidelines for senior privileges can sign out in the main office.

Excessive absenteeism:

Students with 7 or more unexcused absences will be referred to the truancy coordinator and school administration to set up an attendance intervention team meeting.

Homebound and hospitalized students:

Any student who is expected to be out of school because of a serious illness (homebound/hospitalized instruction) for more than 10 days may be entitled to a tutor in order to maintain their skill level. Please obtain a doctor's written order and contact the school if this situation occurs.

Missed assignments/ Making up work:

Planned student absence(s): Prior to any approved planned absences, students or parent/guardian are required to make arrangements for completing any missed class work or assignments.

Unexpected student absence(s): Students or parent/guardian are required to make arrangements for completing any missed class work or assignments. Students will have an equal number of days they were absent to complete the work.

Slate Valley Board of Directors Meeting Schedule

(Generally, the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month.

Exceptions during school breaks/holidays)

6:30 PM

SVUUSD Board Meetings

Mon, August 10th – Fair Haven Union High School → Finance Meeting 5:30 p.m.

Mon, August 24th - Fair Haven Union High School → Building & Grounds/Policy Meetings 5:30 p.m.

Mon, September 14th – Fair Haven Union High School → Finance Meeting 5:30 p.m.

Mon, September 28th - Fair Haven Union High School → Building & Grounds/Policy Meetings 5:30 p.m.

Mon, October 12th – Fair Haven Union High School → Finance Meeting 5:30 p.m.

Mon, October 26th - Fair Haven Union High School → Building & Grounds/Policy Meetings 5:30 p.m.

Mon, November 9th – Fair Haven Union High School → Finance Meeting 5:30 p.m.

Mon, November 23rd - Fair Haven Union High School → Building & Grounds/Policy Meetings 5:30 p.m.

Mon, December 7th – Fair Haven Union High School → Finance Meeting 5:30 p.m.

Mon, December 14th - Fair Haven Union High School → Building & Grounds/Policy Meetings 5:30 p.m.

Mon, January 11th – Fair Haven Union High School → Finance Meeting 5:30 p.m.

Mon, January 25th - Fair Haven Union High School → Building & Grounds/Policy Meetings 5:30 p.m.

Mon, February 8th – Fair Haven Union High School → Finance Meeting 5:30 p.m.

Mon, February 22nd - SVUUSD Annual Informational Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at FHUHS

Mon, March 8th - Fair Haven Union High School

Mon, March 22nd - Fair Haven Union High School

Agendas and minutes of monthly meetings are posted on the SVUSD website at slatevalleyunified.org. The policy manual for the Slate Valley Directors is available in the Superintendent's office and a complete set of the policies is also available on our website at slatevalleyunified.org. If you would like a copy of a particular policy, one can be provided to you upon request at the district office or the particular policy can be accessed online.

Bus Transportation

All resident pupils in grades K-12 living more than one mile from the school are entitled to transportation service. Riding the bus is a privilege and contingent upon proper behavior and observance of the expectations. The bus drivers are expected to enforce these expectations and make suggestions in line with good citizenship. The most important factor in bus transportation is safety. When a student ignores the expectations, it can easily result in endangering not only their safety, but also the safety of fellow passengers. Students must remember that they are

responsible for following the expectations and may be suspended from riding the bus by the school principal.

Early in the fall, students will participate in a bus orientation led by our bus drivers, which includes a review of the expectations for riding the bus and emergency evacuation procedures.

Parents are asked to have an adult waiting for any child who is younger than third grade when being delivered home. Children will not be dropped off if no adult can be seen waiting to receive the student, and the child will be returned to school to wait for their parents in the office. There is always someone in the office until we hear that all buses are in and all students have been delivered safely home.

On occasions regularly scheduled routes may need to be adjusted due to snow or mud conditions. There will also be times that students will be unable to be picked up due to mechanical issues with a bus. Parents and guardians will be notified through our Powerschool Broadcast Notification System, which will dial your home, and cell phone numbers with a recorded announcement.

Bus Expectations and Conduct

Previous to loading (on the road and at school) students will:

1. Be on time at the designated bus stops to keep the bus on schedule. Bus drivers shall wait for a student at any given bus stop no more than a reasonable length of time to allow the student to board the bus. On days when road conditions are bad, please do not expect the bus to be exactly on time.
2. Stay off the road at all times and conduct yourself in a safe manner while waiting for the bus.
3. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to board.
4. Understand that in case of inclement weather or poor road conditions, the bus driver might have to make the decision to omit all or part of a trip.
5. Have written permission from parents/guardians in order to ride a bus other than the one they normally ride. This permission slip must be given to the bus driver.
6. Park cars away from the front of the church and report immediately to the high school bus area. No waiting in cars is permitted.
7. Do not transport animals, firearms, explosives, or anything else of a dangerous nature on the bus
8. Line up (grades K-8) and board the bus following the supervising teachers' permission.

While on the bus, students will:

1. Board the bus only when the bus driver is in their seat.
2. Help look after the safety and comfort of others at ALL times.
3. Assist in keeping the bus safe and sanitary.
4. Maintain a low level of conversation and avoid loud talking. Laughing, and unnecessary confusion so the bus driver can maintain their focus. Absolute silence is required at all railroad crossings.
5. Be financially responsible for any damage to the bus, which is school property.
6. Not tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
7. Keep their books, packages, coats, and other belongings out of the aisles.
8. Keep their hands and head inside the bus at all times.
9. Not throw any objects inside or out of the bus.
10. Sit in their seats while the bus is in motion.

11. Not smoke, drink, or eat on the bus.
12. Be courteous to fellow students and the bus driver.

Please note: the bus driver has the right to direct students to assigned seats if necessary.

Chaperones

All educational field trips and other school-sponsored student travel must be adequately supervised and chaperoned by a faculty member(s) with abilities and interests paralleling the interests and objectives of the class or group. A certificated faculty member will be designated as sponsor, and other staff members or parents designated chaperones as appointed by the principal. The number of chaperones will be based on the number of students participating and the specific needs of the trip. The chaperones will need to adhere to the Volunteer Policy in regards to background checks if they are supervising students other than their own child. No group or individual shall participate in an educational field trip or school sponsored travel unless properly supervised and chaperoned consistent with the provisions of this manual.

Note: A sponsor or chaperone may not bring his/her own child on a field trip unless the child is an official member of the class or group.

Concussions

A concussion is a brain injury and can be caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Our faculty and staff as well as our coaches are educated about the signs and symptoms of concussion. All coaches are required to participate in an online training at the <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html> as there can be a greater likelihood of concussions in athletic competitions. In cases where the coach or duty teacher suspects a possible concussion, the student is removed from play; evaluated by an appropriate health care professional, in most cases, a physician; parents are informed immediately. In the case of sports, an athlete will only be allowed to return to play with the permission of an appropriate health care professional.

Per Vermont State Law (Sections 39-41 of Act 58 Statue 100) of 20122, effective as of July 1, 2011, the school is also mandated to provide training to parents and athletes with respect to the prevention and mitigation of concussion-related activities. This also applies to coaches and student athletes.

Dress

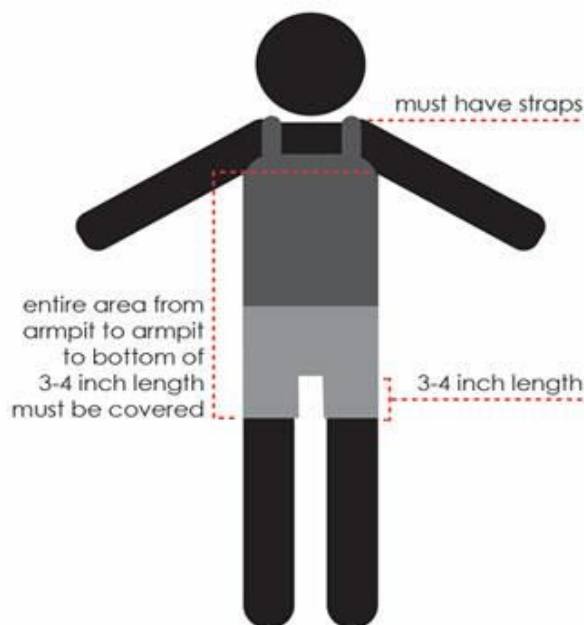
Slate Valley Unified Union School District respects students' rights to express themselves in the way they dress. All students who attend Slate Valley Unified Union's Schools are also expected to respect the school community by dressing appropriately for a K-12 educational environment. Student attire should facilitate participation in learning as well as the health and safety of students and the adults that supervise them. This dress code is intended to provide guidance for students, staff, and parents.

The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The school district is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender

expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size.

Minimum Requirements:

1. Clothing must cover areas from one armpit across to the other armpit, down to approximately 3 to 4 inches in length on the upper thighs (see images below). Tops must have shoulder straps. Rips or tears in clothing should not be within the zone of expected coverage.
2. Shoes must be worn at all times and should be safe for the school environment (pajamas, bedroom shoes or slippers shall not be worn, except for school activities approved by the principal).
3. See-through or mesh garments must not be worn without appropriate coverage underneath that meet the minimum requirements of the dress code.
4. Headgear including hats, hoodies, and caps are not allowed unless permitted for religious, medical, or other reason by school administration.
5. Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as sports uniforms or safety gear.



Additional Requirements:

Students cannot wear clothing with:

1. Violent language or images,
2. Images or language depicting alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or any other controlled substance or promoting the use of,
3. That depicts, implies, advertises or advocates hate speech, profanity, or pornography,
4. Images or language that created a hostile or intimidating environment based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected classification.

The administration at each school reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate dress.

Drug Free School

Slate Valley is proud to announce that our school is Drug, Smoke, and Substance Free. Alcohol, tobacco of any kind and other drugs are forbidden on school property. The school community shows their support for this policy by promoting “SAY NO TO DRUGS.” Our school health curriculum includes developmental and progressive lessons about the effects of drugs and tobacco.

Eligibility for Students in Grades 5-8

Slate Valley believes that every interested student be afforded the opportunity to participate in athletics and activities at the middle school level. All schools are encouraged to find creative ways and means for every middle school student to experience the personal growth and development that comes through active participation. A personalized plan of action may be developed for continued participation. (Adapted from the VPA MS Athletics Preamble.)

The following criteria for eligibility for participation in interscholastic sports are intended to set standards for academic eligibility:

1. Students should be in good academic standing as determined by the Principal in courses taken during the previous marking period.
2. Students should be in good disciplinary standing as determined by the Principal.
3. Students should be in regular attendance and should be in attendance on the day of the event unless excused by the Principal.
4. Students will also meet the criteria set forth in the guidelines of the Vermont Principals' Association.

Emergency Response Actions

It is the policy of the Slate Valley to maintain a safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environment, and to be prepared, insofar as possible, to prevent and respond to unexpected crises quickly and appropriately. While the unexpected nature of a crisis may make preparation difficult, the school believes that staff and students should be ready to respond quickly and appropriately to emergency situations.

Examples of school crises include but are not limited to fire, bus accidents, nuclear disaster, criminal acts, civil disturbances, disease epidemic, physical injury, death, presence of intruders on school premises, hazardous materials spills, weather related emergencies, natural disasters, bomb threats, terrorist activities, or other emergencies.

All schools have developed a crisis prevention and response plan and administrative procedures that identify how the students and staff shall respond to emergency situations, and the role that local emergency service providers shall play in crisis preparedness and incident management.

Students shall follow all guidelines outlined in the crisis plan and student handbook when practicing routine drills and when responding to actual emergency situations.

Students who cause school crises will be held accountable in accordance with the school discipline policy and state/federal law.

Incidents that disrupt the education process or endanger the safety of other students and staff shall be referred to law enforcement for possible criminal charges or to pursue civil litigation.

Lost instructional time resulting from response to a school crisis or emergency situation shall be made up at the discretion of the School Board.

Note: Please see the Emergency Response Commands below.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACTIONS

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 9-1-1



SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

33 Mechanic Street
Fair Haven, VT 05743
Tel: 802.265.4905
Fax: 802.265.2158

BOMB THREAT OR SUSPICIOUS OBJECT

- Do NOT touch or attempt to move any suspicious object
- Scan area for other suspicious objects
- Do NOT use cellular phone near object
- Immediately leave the area
- Report information to your school administrator
- If safe to do so, advise others to avoid the area
- Listen to instructions of emergency personnel

MISSING STUDENT

- Verify student attendance or missing status
- Notify school administrator
- Overhead announce for student to report to main office
- Call 911
- Establish perimeter confinement of school grounds
- Conduct a rapid ground search by school staff
- Determine who last saw missing student and try to protect location from contamination
- Have physical/clothing description and photo available for first responders

EARTHQUAKE

- If inside, stand in a doorway or under sturdy furniture
- Avoid windows, hanging objects or tall furniture which can topple over
- Stay where you are until shaking stops
- When shaking stops, evacuate building.
- Do NOT use elevators
- If outside, move to a clear area away from trees, poles or buildings

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

- Immediately call 9-1-1
- Notify school nurse
- Do not attempt to move injured person(s)
- Provide as much information as possible to operator
- Follow instructions of the 9-1-1 operator
- Provide the care you are competent or trained to provide
- Stay with the victim until assistance arrives

POWER OUTAGE

- Be aware of downed electrical wires
- Follow instructions of your school administrator or emergency personnel
- Unplug any voltage sensitive equipment
- If instructed to evacuate, move cautiously towards illuminated exit signs
- Do not use elevators

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

- If you witness a suspicious person or activity, immediately call your school administrator or dial 9-1-1
- Provide as much detail as possible (location, description)
- Do not confront anyone
- Maintain a safe distance from individual(s)



VIOLENT INTRUDER ACTIVE SHOOTER

- **Alert:** Recognizing the signs of danger
- **Lockdown:** Barricade the room. Prepare to EVACUATE or COUNTER if needed
- **Inform:** Communicate information in as real time as possible
- **Counter:** Create Noise, Movement, Distance and Distraction with the intent of reducing the shooter's ability to shoot accurately. Counter is NOT fighting
- **Evacuate:** When safe to do so, remove yourself from the danger zone.

FIRE / FIRE ALARM

- If you hear the fire alarm, leave the building immediately
- If you see or smell smoke, pull the fire alarm as you exit the building
- If school is in "lockdown" assess the situation to determine fire hazard before evacuating
- Do NOT re-enter the building until advised by emergency responders or your school administrator

WEATHER EMERGENCY

- If outside, seek shelter immediately
- Be aware of downed wires and falling objects
- Close doors and windows
- Avoid being next to windows as much as possible
- Stay inside until storm has passed
- Follow instructions of security or other school officials

**These are just guidelines; every situation is unique.*

This flyer is adapted from a VT DOE publication

Field Trips

The District recognizes that field trips, when used for teaching and learning integral to the curriculum, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of the schools. Properly planned and executed field trips should:

- A. supplement and enrich classroom procedures by providing learning experiences in an environment outside the schools;
- B. arouse new interests among students;
- C. help students relate school experiences to the reality of the world outside of school;
- D. bring the resources of the community - natural, artistic, industrial, commercial, governmental, educational - within the student's learning experience;
- E. afford students the opportunity to study and explore real situations and processes in their actual environment.

For purposes of this procedure, a field trip shall be defined as any planned journey for one or more students away from District premises, which is under the supervision of an instructional staff member and an integral part of a course of study.

Fundraising

The ability to offer diverse, quality educational programs and experiences for our students depends in part on our ability to secure reliable and supplemental sources of funding. To facilitate the effective and efficient management of local district fundraising, the board authorizes fundraising activities where such programs:

1. Promote Pre-K-12 education,
2. Provide educational experiences for students, and/or
3. Address local funding obligations that support the educational mission of the district and/or promote the effective, efficient, or safe management and operation of the district.
4. Are conducted in accordance with all district policies (C5 – Firearms, C9 - Wellness, C20 - Student Conduct and Discipline etc.)

Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, & Bullying of Students

The Slate Valley is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect.

It is the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Harassment may also constitute a violation of Vermont's Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and/or Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972.

It is also the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful hazing and bullying of students. Conduct which constitutes hazing may be subject to civil penalties.

The District shall address all complaints of harassment, hazing and bullying according to the procedures accompanying this policy, and shall take appropriate action against any person - subject to the jurisdiction of the board - who violates this policy. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a student for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment, bullying, or hazing as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the board's disciplinary policies or the school's code of conduct.

Our designated individuals are as follows:

Slate Valley Unified School District	Brooke Olsen-Farrell, Superintendent	265-4905 Ext. 2553
	Kristin Benway, Director of Special Services	265-4905 Ext. 2551
Benson Village School	Amy Roy, Principal	537-2491 Ext. 7101
	Laura Budde, Guidance	537-2491 Ext. 7116
Castleton Elementary School	Kim Prehoda, Principal	468-5624 Ext. 5900
	Tyler Gadway, Guidance	468-5624 Ext. 5943
Castleton Village School	Ben Worthing, Assistant Principal	468-5624 Ext. 5815
	Amy Jackson	468-5624 Ext. 5833
Fair Haven Grade School	Jennifer Paquette	265-3883 Ext. 7031
	Kim Ezzo	265-3883 Ext. 7036
	Wendy Parker	265-3883 Ext. 7002
Fair Haven Union High School	Kate Leathe, Assistant Principal	265-4966 Ext. 2503
	Margaret Hayward, Director of Special Services	265-4966 Ext. 2508
Orwell Village School	Patrick Walters, Principal	948-2871 Ext. 7400
	Ruzanne Behrens, Guidance	948-2871 Ext. 7402

[Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying of Students](#)

Home Learning Opportunities

Homework is an integral part of student learning and is an extension of the work that takes place during the school day. When learning takes place in school, concepts are introduced and opportunities for guided practice are given. As students construct their own knowledge they will be able to reinforce this through the independent practice that homework provides. Thus, homework can enhance and extend learning as well as provide additional practice.

Appropriate to the developmental age of students, teachers may provide independent practice assignments or ask students to complete unfinished class work at home. Additionally, students may be assigned long-range projects for the purpose of developing study and research skills. The time required for students to complete homework assignments will vary depending upon the assignment, the age and the ability of the student.

Parents are encouraged to monitor homework as a means of becoming familiar with what is learned in school.

Guidelines

Kindergarten	Outside reading and related activities
Grade 1	Approximately 10 minutes per night
Grade 2	Approximately 20 minutes per night
Grade 3	Approximately 30 minutes per night
Grade 4	Approximately 40 minutes per night
Grades 5	Approximately 50 minutes per night
Grades 6, 7 & 8	Approximately 60 minutes per night

Desks & Lockers

Students are reminded that desks and lockers belong to the school and are only on loan to the students. Students should never leave money or valuables in their desks or lockers. Students are not to share their lockers and are to use only those assigned to them. School administration has the right to open and inspect any locker at any time, for any reason, without notice, and without student consent.

Parent Visits

We strongly encourage you to become involved in your child's education here at Slate Valley Unified School District. Our primary concern is for the safety and well-being of our students; as such, we will be implementing the following visitor procedure.

All visitors to the School District shall display a temporary visitor ID badge while they are in any School District building or on School District grounds during school hours. All visitors shall enter all facilities via the designated visitor's entrance and immediately report to the school office to register and receive a temporary visitor ID badge. Visitors who do not comply with this policy/procedure will be asked to leave school property. School staff members who observe visitors without a visitor's badge shall ask the individual to report to the main office immediately and notify the main office of their pending arrival. In the event an individual refuses to comply with the visitor policy and refuses to leave the property, police shall be notified via 911 and the building principal or appropriate designee shall determine whether the emergency response protocol shall be initiated.

- No visitors are to enter the building with students during arrival. All visitors to our schools are strongly encouraged to have an appointment to enter the building. Entry may be denied without appointment.
- All visitors will need to access the building through the designated entrance and use the intercom system. It is expected that all visitors will state the purpose of their visit and/or specify with whom they have an appointment.
- If the visitor is granted access, they must present themselves to the main office immediately upon entry.

- Visitors may be required to show photo identification, and will be required to sign in to obtain a visitor's pass.
- It is imperative that visitors do not hold the door open for others behind them. Each visitor must be acknowledged individually through the intercom system.
- Upon entry, visitors will then be escorted to their point of contact or their point of contact will be asked to come to reception to receive the visitors. The contact will then be responsible for them while they are on site.
- Upon leaving visitors must report, sign out from the main office and exit from the designated visitor entrance/exit.
- Visitors are not to enter the building during dismissal. If you will be picking your child up early, you must notify the office in writing prior to dismissal. If it is an emergency, call the main office to notify the school.

PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports)

All schools within the Slate Valley Unified School District utilize PBIS to improve school safety and promote positive behavior. We also use PBIS to decide how to respond to a child who misbehaves.

At its heart, PBiS calls on our schools to teach our children about behavior, just as we would teach about any other subject—like reading or math. PBiS recognizes that our students can only meet behavior expectations if they know what the expectations are. A hallmark of a school using PBiS is that everyone knows what's appropriate behavior. Throughout the school day - in class, at lunch and on the bus - our students understand what's expected of them.

At PBiS schools; teachers, administrators, counselors, and family members work together to teach and support behavior expectations at school. PBiS exists to improve the behavior of all students in all school environments.

Personalized Learning Plans

The Slate Valley Unified School District will implement personalized proficiency-based learning systems for all students based on the district's vision (All students are engaged in rigorous, authentic, experiential, individualized learning that is supported or accelerated to ensure that they meet or exceed standards). Slate Valley will engage in PLP development and instructional practices to connect learning in school with student goals outside of school. This will require development of systems and practices to facilitate personalized experiential learning in our schools.

Promotion & Retention of Students

Retention

Research shows that most students do not benefit by repeating a grade. Grade promotion should be the standard. However, exceptional cases based on their own merits may warrant retention. Physical, emotional and social development are as important as academic achievement in determining whether a student will benefit from retention. Failure to achieve grade level standards/content is not in itself sufficient reason for retention. There is not any one factor, but rather a combination of factors that determine if retention is appropriate. Retention will only be considered after completion of Tier II interventions (an Educational Support Team Plan must exist) without significant success, and special education and English Language services have been considered.

Elementary & Middle School:

1. Following the end of any reporting term the school will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student at risk of retention documenting student academic and behavior progress data supporting the need for retention.
2. A conference will be held with parents as soon as possible after the notification.
3. The conference will document specific intervention(s)-schedule/timeline/person(s) involved in the intervention(s)-related to the criteria below.
 - A. indicate the student's lack of progress (significant deficit(s)) in specific standard/curriculum-based skills;
 - B. demonstrate that the intervention specifically addresses their identified deficit(s);
 - C. provides ongoing assessment of the student's progress with the intervention.
4. Conferences to review the student's progress will be held after the end of the second reporting term to review student progress.
5. An end-of-year conference will be held three weeks prior to the end of the school year with the parent(s)/guardian(s), teacher(s), school administrator(s), and appropriate student assistance personnel to determine retention.

Grade Acceleration

Grade acceleration shall be considered only in rare and extreme cases. An Educational Support Team Plan (EST) must exist in order to be considered for acceleration. Teachers are urged to utilize methods and materials of instruction which broaden the interests and achievements of those students who are academically superior and use acceleration only in an extraordinary situation. Students in grades K-8 may be accelerated to another grade if the following conditions are met:

1. Current classroom performance indicates exceeding the current grade level proficiencies.
2. The student demonstrates mastery of the grade to be skipped by scoring at the 95th percentile or higher on NWEA standardized tests for reading, writing, math, and local science and social studies assessments. (For example, a student accelerating from third grade to fourth grade would need to demonstrate mastery of third grade subjects through testing) Or the student performs at the 95th percentile or higher on the SBAC administered for the student's current grade.
3. The student's social and emotional development would benefit from acceleration.
4. The parents or guardians and the student desire acceleration.
5. The principal and teacher(s) from the current school agree that acceleration is in the student's best interest.
6. If the acceleration requires a building change, the receiving school must be included in the process.

Procedures Regarding Acceleration

1. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child notify the child's principal in writing of their desire for acceleration.
2. The principal will assemble a team that includes: the principal, a school counselor, teachers, and the parent(s)/guardian(s). If the acceleration requires a building change, the principal for the receiving school should also be included on the team.
3. The student will score at the 95th percentile on norm-referenced test (NWEA) in all core areas (reading, language, writing, math) for the student's current grade level.
4. The student must demonstrate mastery and depth of knowledge in all core areas by scoring 95% or higher on the norm-referenced assessments in each content area for the grade to be waived or 95th percentile for a criterion-referenced test in each content area above the child's current grade.
5. After all data has been collected, the principal will assemble a team to review information gathered to make a decision. Participants will include: parent(s)/guardian(s), principal(s), school counselor, current teacher, and the receiving teacher.
6. When a decision has been made, a detailed plan will be developed by the Educational Support Team to outline how the student's needs will be met through
 - a. Enrichment and extension if no acceleration is recommended
 - b. A transition plan that addresses academic, social and emotional support if the student is assigned to a higher grade.

Recess

Recess is provided during the day to give students an opportunity to play outdoors and have some free time during the school day. We expect students to adhere to our Standards for Student Behavior on the playground and follow the PBiS playground expectations.

Reporting Student Progress & Parent/Teacher Conferences

The school year is divided into three trimesters of approximately thirteen weeks in length. At the close of each trimester, pupil progress reports (report cards) will be distributed to students to bring home and share with their parents. Please consult the school calendar for the exact distribution dates.

At SVUSD, we feel that parent/teacher conferences will enable both the parents and the teachers to better understand each child, their program and their habits of work.

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled in the Fall. Parents are urged to attend these conferences in order to gain a deeper insight into their child's progress. Parents or teachers do not have to wait until these pre-scheduled conferences. If there is a question or concern about a student's progress, please schedule a conference at any time during the year.

Role of Religion in Schools (Policy D34)

It is the policy of the Slate Valley Unified Union School District to foster understanding and mutual respect among students, staff, parents and the community of diverse religious beliefs and

backgrounds. The primary mission of the District is education. The proper role of religion in the public school lies in its academic value not in the appropriation or endorsement of any particular religion or belief system or of religion over non-religion.

Teaching about religious holidays, which is permissible, is different from celebrating religious holidays, which is not. As such, there shall be no school-initiated or sanctioned formal or informal observance of religion, religious holidays or religious festivals.

We still will have celebrations and special events in schools as we know that our students look forward to these events. However, they will not be centered on religious holidays and may not coincide with dates of religious holidays.

School Closings

The Slate Valley Unified School District Board has adopted the Powerschool Broadcast Notification Service for all schools. This will allow us to contact you immediately with important information about school events, emergency closings, and weather-related closings. We will be using this system to notify you of school delays or cancellations due to inclement weather. In the event of a delay, cancellation, or emergency closing you can now have the peace of mind knowing that you will be informed immediately by phone.

What you need to know about receiving calls sent through Powerschool Broadcast:

- Caller ID will display the Central Office's main number (265-4905) when a general announcement is delivered.
- Caller ID will display 411 if the message is a dire emergency.
- Powerschool Broadcast will leave a message on an answering machine or voicemail.
- If the Powerschool Broadcast message stops playing, press any key 1-9 and the message will replay from the beginning.

We will also continue to contact the following television and radio stations in the event of a delay, cancellation, or emergency closing: WVNR, 1340 AM Poultney, VT; WNYV, 94.1 FM Whitehall, NY; Rutland Region Community; Stafford Technical Center Channel 15 & 20; WPTZ Channel 5; WSYB 1380 AM; WZRT 97.1 FM; and the Vermont Association of Broadcasters (WCAX-TV).

Security Cameras and Video Surveillance

The Slate Valley Unified School District has authorized the use of video camera surveillance on District property to monitor the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. On-campus video surveillance may occur on District property and on vehicles used for District-provided transportation. Security cameras shall be used only to promote the order, safety and security of students, staff and property and to assist school administrators in deciding upon appropriate disciplinary action.

Student Insurance

The SVUSD School Board recommends that all students have accident insurance coverage for their and their parents' protection. SVUSD does not provide insurance to cover accidental injury. Each year the district school board permits a major company to offer an inexpensive individual policy for students. This program is strictly voluntary and it is a family/insurance

company relationship. The school assumes no responsibility for this program. Parents of children participating in athletics and other extra-curricular activities must present evidence of insurance. If insurance is a financial burden at this time, please contact the school.

Telephone Use

Generally, school telephones are for school-related business. Students may use the school telephone only for emergencies and only with a teacher's permission. This does not include such calls as permission to go to someone else's home, to stay for a game, or to have forgotten homework brought to school. Students and staff will not be asked to take a call unless it is an emergency.

Valuables

It is recommended that students not bring a large amount of money or other valuables to school, or on field trips. Classroom desks/lockers are not secure. We make every effort to teach students to respect the property of others. The school will not accept responsibility for missing personal belongings or technology.

Health Services

"A publication of the American Academy of Pediatrics, [Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents](#) recommends an annual well exam for children of all ages. "

Slate Valley values the health and safety of all of our students and employs a Registered Nurse in all of our schools. In addition to the management of chronic conditions, medications, advanced First Aid and maintenance of student health records, our school nurse conducts vision and hearing screenings as recommended by the Vermont Department of Health to ensure optimal school performance.

Health Emergency Cards

It is imperative that this card be filled out accurately and completely so the school nurse may be aware of any severe allergy or medical condition (epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, vision, hearing, etc.). This information is transferred to the student's medical record and is very important for the student's care and wellbeing at school. Any changes that occur during the school year should be reported to the school nurse without delay. The school nurse will work with parents, medical providers and students in developing a health plan for school and share it with appropriate school personnel under FERPA guidelines.

Medications

If a student needs to take medication of any kind during the school day, it must be kept in the Health Office and be administered by the School Nurse or designee at the proper time. The medication must be brought to school by the parent in the original prescription bottle and the parent and physician must sign a form giving the school permission to administer the medicine. Written permission is also required if your child is to take Tylenol, or other over the counter medicines. Some over the counters are provided by the schools, if you send in something different, these also must be in the original packaging and administered by the school nurse.

Students Ill At School

If a student becomes ill at school and needs to be sent home, it is the responsibility of parents to provide a place to which the ill student can be sent in the event that someone is not at the student's home. It is also the responsibility of the parents of the ill student to provide transportation for the ill student. This must happen in a timely manner to decrease the exposure to other students in the case of illnesses.

Health Notes

If a student has a contagious disease, the school requests a written note from a doctor stating that it is safe for him/her to return to school.

School personnel may exclude a student from school (until the student is properly treated) because of contagious diseases. Head lice is no longer considered a contagious disease and it is up to the parents discretion if they remain at school. Whooping cough, measles, chickenpox, flu, and others will be managed by the school nurse and the Vermont Department of Health. In the case of outbreaks, the school nurse will work with administration to ensure management decreases the spread and inform parents, especially for students that are not immunized. All schools will adhere to Vermont state immunization law which can be found on the Vermont Department of Health website.

Any curtailment or modification of a student's physical education program because of a physical condition must be accompanied by a doctor's written excuse stating the diagnosis, treatment, limitations and length of excuse.

Opting Out of Hearing Tests

Schools are required annually to test the vision and hearing of students as per the Vermont Department of Health schedule. Parents will be sent a letter with any results indicating further evaluation. Parents are permitted to opt their children out of such tests. If a parent wishes to opt their child(ren) out of Vision and Hearing Tests in the Slate Valley School District, please send a note to the school nurse with your request.

Special Programs & Student Support Services

Act 157

Act 157 is a Vermont Law enacted to increase the capacity of schools to meet the needs of all students. This is accomplished by requiring each school to develop a comprehensive educational support system. Such a system extends the focus beyond that of academics to include other factors that may have a detrimental effect on a student's school performance (i.e. nutrition, mental health, challenging life circumstances). Such a comprehensive educational support system has been designed here at SVUSD with the purpose of insuring all students the opportunity to achieve the basic skill areas, meet the Vermont State Standards and experience success in the general education environment.

Educational Support Team (EST)

SVUSD has active EST Teams, which consist of general educators from within each building (may include the Art, Music, Library, and Physical Education instructor); the referring teacher;

parents; students; other specialists and an administrator as deemed necessary. The team meets on a regular basis to:

1. Ensure early identification of students at risk and availability of services to meet their needs.
2. Provide support to teachers to help determine what a student(s) might need to be more successful including instructional strategies and environmental accommodations.
3. Review, revise, and monitor the effectiveness of strategies and interventions employed in the classroom.

Guidance Services

Our guidance department fosters the educational, career and social/emotional development of our students throughout their academic careers. Our goal is to support students in reaching their full academic potential and enjoy a positive school experience. Our guidance counselors work with students, parents, and fellow staff members to help students receive the support needed to be successful. As counselors, they meet with students individually, in small groups, and in a whole class format. They teach students various coping strategies, skills, and methods to handle various challenges. Students, parents, and staff members may request counseling services. All counseling services are brief and solution focused. We also provide referrals as necessary for more intense services at parents' request. Counselors act as a liaison providing information and resources with school based support systems and outside agencies.

Math & Reading Support

With the support of Title I Federal and Medicaid funds, SVUSD is able to employ school-wide reading/math specialists to assist classroom teachers and students by providing small group instruction in both reading and math.

Migrant Education Program

Have you moved within the last three years to work as a farmhand or a logger? If so, your family may be eligible for free supplemental services. These services can include school-based instructional services, collaborative establishment of educational goals, and evaluation of student achievement, home visits and home-based instructional services. Students also can receive free books. In addition, health services are provided through health educators who are registered nurses. Families may contact their individual school and/or The Rural Education Center (1-800-639-2023) for more information.

Nurse

SVUSD provides the services of certified and registered school nurses. Students needing to see the nurse should secure permission from their teacher. Vision and hearing, height and weight, and blood pressure screenings are conducted for all students on a yearly basis. Scoliosis screening is also completed yearly for grades five through eight.

By law, it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child is properly immunized and that these immunizations are kept up-to-date. Parents are encouraged to keep the nurse informed of pertinent information for their child.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 prohibits the discrimination against handicapped persons by school districts and any organization receiving federal financial assistance. It protects all students with disabilities; defined as those having any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (including learning). Students who have a disability that limits their ability to participate in the education program are entitled to rights and protection under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 even though they may not be in need of special education services. Examples of students who may require protection under Section 504 (not an inclusive list) are students with health impairments such as asthma, diabetes, and AIDS, as well as, those students with emotional/behavioral disabilities or Attention Deficit Disorder.

Special Education Services

SVUSD employs special education teachers, speech and language pathologists, school psychologists, related service providers such as Occupational and Physical Therapists, and instructional assistants to serve students who qualify for special education. These students have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed by a team, including the parent, that addresses their individualized learning goals. Our special education procedures follow all applicable state and federal regulations. If you have questions about this process, please contact the school for further explanation.

Parents or teachers may refer a child for an evaluation any time there is concern about the child's academic performance or social and emotional development. Parents should discuss their concerns with the classroom teacher prior to making a referral for special services. Oftentimes, such referrals are made through the Educational Support Team.

Student & Parent Rights

Buckley Amendment

Public Law 93-380 includes an amendment popularly referred to as the Buckley Amendment, which requires school systems to refrain from publicizing any information at all about children when the parents do not wish such publicity to occur. Examples of the school's publication of a list of names would include: athletic events, honor-roll lists, contests and other recognition and awards. Unless written notification is received on or before September 4, of each school year, from the parents/guardians, it will be assumed that publication is agreeable.

Civil Rights Compliance /Non-Discrimination

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the laws of the State of Vermont, and the rules and regulations promulgated by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, it is the policy of the Slate Valley Unified School District that no person will be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, creed or handicap in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs and activities.

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

As a parent of a student enrolled in SVUSD, you have certain rights concerning the education records, which SVUSD maintains. For further detailed information regarding these rights, see the page under Parent Information in this handbook.

Mandatory Reporter/Child Safety

Everyone employed by the Slate Valley Unified School District is a mandated reporter and is legally required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families within 24 hours. Keep in mind that while mandated reporters are legally required to report suspected child abuse or neglect, *anyone can make a report*. Vermont Law (33 V.S.A.49, State Statutes 4912) defines an abused or neglected child as one whose physical health, psychological growth and development or welfare is harmed or is at substantial risk of harm by the acts or omissions of his or her parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare.

Any and all employees of SVUSD are required to report any suspicions they have or call for advice. "It is not the job of the reporter to conduct a thorough investigation, or to come to a conclusion that abuse or neglect occurred, or to weigh the consequences to the educator or the student reporting. Nor does "reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected" mean the reporter has to be convinced. Any doubts the employee may have shall be resolved in favor of reporting the suspicion.

Seclusion & Restraint

At SVUSD we do have teams of individuals who have been trained in Crisis Prevention Intervention(CPI). The focus of this training is to provide for the care, welfare, safety and security of all individuals in a crisis situation. This team will aid faculty and staff in the use of de-escalation techniques. Physical intervention is only utilized as a last resort and in cases where the student in crisis was going to harm himself or harm another individual. It is important for parents/guardians to understand that the use of these techniques are always last resorts to any intervention and only utilized for purposes of protecting the student(s).

Teacher Qualifications

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) any school that receives Title I funds must notify parents of their right to request the professional qualifications of their student's classroom teachers, including the following:

1. Whether the student's teacher-
 - a. Has met the state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
 - b. Is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
 - c. Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
2. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications

Parents in Vermont may access information about their teacher's qualifications by visiting an online portal. [Vermont's Online Licensing System](#) If you do not have computer access please contact, Chelsie Brill at the District Office to request your student's teacher(s) professional qualifications.

Policies

[Slate Valley Unified School District Policies](#)



Procedures

Slate Valley Unified Union School District Administrative Procedures

Field Trip Procedures

General Information

Educational field trips may be developed by each school to provide a variety of experiences and enhance the student's educational opportunities. Although field trips are adjunct to the instructional program, each is a learning activity and bears a direct relationship to the normal school experience.

For optimum student benefit, each field trip must be well planned beforehand and thoroughly evaluated after completion. The teacher or sponsor in charge of the group is responsible for the activity just as if it were conducted at school. All students within the class or school group must be given the opportunity to participate in the field trip.

This procedure has been developed to assist schools in planning and conducting educational field trips and travel to school-oriented activities off campus. The overall objective is to facilitate optimum learning experiences through educational field trips and school-sponsored student travel to approved activities.

Field Trips And Other Student Travel

The District recognizes that field trips, when used for teaching and learning integral to the curriculum, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of the schools. Properly planned and executed field trips should:

- A. supplement and enrich classroom procedures by providing learning experiences in an environment outside the schools;
- B. arouse new interests among students;
- C. help students relate school experiences to the reality of the world outside of school;
- D. bring the resources of the community - natural, artistic, industrial, commercial, governmental, educational - within the student's learning experience;
- E. afford students the opportunity to study and explore real situations and processes in their actual environment.

For purposes of this procedure, a field trip shall be defined as any planned journey for one or more students away from District premises, which is under the supervision of an instructional staff member and an integral part of a course of study.

The administrative procedures for the operation of both field and other District-sponsored trips, including athletic trips, shall ensure:

- A. the safety and well-being of students;
- B. parental permission is sought and obtained before any student leaves the District on a trip;
- C. each trip is properly planned, and if a field trip, is integrated with the curriculum, evaluated, and followed up by appropriate activities which enhance its usefulness;
- D. the effectiveness of field trip activities is judged in terms of demonstrated learning outcomes;
- E. each trip is properly monitored and supervised;
- F. student behavior while on all field trips complies with the Student Code of Conduct and on all other rules, policies, and procedures set forth by schools;
- G. a copy of each student's Extra-Curricular Activity/Medical Treatment Form is in the possession of the staff member in charge.

An instructional staff member shall not change a planned itinerary while the trip is in progress, except where the health, safety, or welfare of the students in his/her charge is imperiled or where changes or substitutions beyond his/her control have frustrated the purpose of the trip. In any instance in which the itinerary of a trip is altered, the instructional staff member in charge shall notify the administrative superior immediately.

The Board shall approve those field trips and other student travel that are planned to take students out of the country or more than 100 miles away from school.

No student shall be denied participation for financial inability, nor shall they be penalized academically for nonparticipation.

Transportation For Field And Other District-sponsored Trips

It shall be the procedure of the district to use regular or special-purpose school vehicles for transportation on field and other District-sponsored trips. Authorized trips include athletic trips, band trips, chorus trips, and educational trips.

Except for emergency reasons, there shall be no variation from the scheduled route of the trip. Transportation may be limited by the availability of vehicles, drivers, and scheduling and will not be available when needed for home to school purposes. All students are expected to ride the approved vehicle to and from each activity.

District students not affiliated with the trip activity, non-district students, and/or children of preschool age shall not be permitted to ride on the trip vehicle.

Approval Of The School Board

Educational field trips or student travel to activities/events outside the country or outside of a 100 mile radius, on school days or non-school days shall be submitted for Board approval.

Parent Permission And Student Responsibility

Permission for a student to participate in an educational field trip, or travel as a member of a school class or group to approved off-campus activities, must be obtained from the student's parent or guardian.

Transportation

The mode of transportation for educational field trips and other student travel to school-related activities will be by school buses, commercial carrier, or approved private vehicles. Specific procedures related to the use of school buses and private vehicles are included below.

Use Of School Buses

- A. The school must complete and submit a requisition for Bus Transportation.
- B. The seating capacity on most school buses used for educational field trips for elementary students is sixty-five (65), however, consideration should be given to the size of students and length of the trip when determining the number of buses needed. The seating capacity for secondary students on most school buses is forty-three (43) (two to a seat).
- C. Travel will begin and end at the school. Students will not be picked up or let off at other locations.
- D. Travel is permitted to the places and areas designated on the bus requisition only.
- E. Only those students who are official members of the class or group, their sponsors and chaperones are permitted to travel on the school bus.
- F. Student responsibilities and conduct on school buses on field trips are the same as traveling to and from school. Sponsors and chaperones are responsible for maintaining proper student conduct.
- G. Costs, such as tolls, admission fees, etc. are to be paid by the sponsor.
- H. Inform the Bus Company immediately when a scheduled trip is canceled.

Use Of Private Vehicles

Private vehicles may be used for educational field trips or as transportation for school-sponsored groups with the approval of the principal. However, prior to using a private vehicle to transport students, should it become necessary, the Central Office shall:

- A. verify that the driver of the vehicle (must be an employee of the district) has a valid driver's license;
- B. require the owner to show evidence of adequate insurance in force on the vehicle prior to and during the time it is used to transport students;
- C. verify and keep on file, the owner's insurance information on the form, Statement of Insurance on Private Vehicles;

- D. verify that non-student drivers have completed a criminal background screen that is in compliance with Policy;
- E. verify that each parent has been notified in writing regarding the transportation arrangement and has given written permission to transport their child in a privately owned vehicle

Chaperones

All educational field trips and other school sponsored student travel must be adequately supervised and chaperoned by a faculty member(s) with abilities and interests paralleling the interests and objectives of the class or group. A certified faculty member will be designated as sponsor, and other staff members or parents designated chaperones as appointed by the principal. The number of chaperones will be based on the number of students participating and the specific needs of the trip. The chaperones will need to adhere to the Volunteer Policy in regards to background checks if they are supervising students other than their own child. No group or individual shall participate in an educational field trip or school sponsored travel unless properly supervised and chaperoned consistent with the provisions of this manual.

Note: A sponsor or chaperone may not bring his/her own child on a field trip unless the child is an official member of the class or group.

Itinerary

An itinerary must be filed in the principal's office by the sponsor or sponsoring organization. Two (2) school contact persons, not making the trip, must be identified for parents, with each contact person's phone number in order to respond to calls or questions concerning the trip.

Accommodations

All arrangements for accommodations while on an educational field trip or school-sponsored student travel must be reviewed and approved by the principal before travel begins.

Medical Emergencies

The following procedures will be followed in the event a student becomes seriously ill or injured while on a field/activity trip.

- A. The school will ensure the Extra-Curricular Activity/Medical Treatment Form is complete for each student participating in the field/activity trip.
- B. A copy of each student's Extra-Curricular Activity/Medical Treatment Form is to be in the possession of the staff member in charge for all trips that are not completed prior to the end of the school day.
- C. If it becomes necessary to take a student to a hospital for emergency treatment:
 - 1. Contact the nearest hospital or law enforcement agency for assistance getting the student to the hospital. If the trip is to be completed before the end of the school day, contact the school and provide all essential information. The school will contact the parent/guardian and give all necessary information. Ensure the name, location, and telephone of the medical facility receiving the injured student is communicated to the parent/guardian. An adult member

assisting with the field/activity trip will remain at the medical facility with the student until a parent or guardian arrives.

2. If the student illness or injury occurs after the close of the regular school day or on a non-school day, get the student medical attention using the procedure noted above. Using the student's Extra-Curricular Activity/Medical Treatment Form, contact the parent/guardian and provide all necessary information. Attempt to contact the principal/assistant principal and provide all facts. Ensure an adult member assisting with the field/activity trip stays with the ill/injured student until the parent/guardian arrives at the medical facility.
3. Complete a written incident report at school as soon as possible. The student must complete the Incident/Accident report as soon as possible after the accident.

Instructional Objective

An educational field trip is an extension of the classroom and regular classroom instruction. A specific instructional objective(s) should be included in planning the activity since approval is based largely on the educational benefit to the students participating in the field trip. Consideration must also be given to students keeping up with instruction in other classes and making up work missed as a result of participation in the field trip.

Loss Of School Time

A statement of instructional objective(s) must be included for any trip that results in loss of school time. Where possible, trips should be scheduled without loss of school time, i.e. student holidays, spring vacation, or during the summer vacation.

Food Allergy Protocol

Although the number of children with food allergies in any one school may seem small, allergic reactions can be life-threatening and have far-reaching effects on children and their families, as well as on the schools.

A food Allergy is an adverse immune response to certain foods. Current research shows the number of students with food allergies is growing, approximately 1 out of 25 children are affected by food allergies, 20% of students with food allergies will have a reaction at school and 25% of students who have a life threatening reaction at school have no previous known food allergy.

Food allergies are not typically airborne, but some rare patients have had reactions to foods they can ingest but not inhale; likewise patients that have an allergy to ingested food may not have a reaction to inhaled particles of the same allergen. The best way to deter the transfer of allergens is hand washing before and after eating.

Eight food products cause about 90% of food allergy reactions:

1. Milk (mostly in children)
2. Eggs.
3. Peanuts.
4. Tree nuts, like walnuts, almonds, pine nuts, brazil nuts, and pecans.
5. Soy.
6. Wheat and other grains with gluten, including barley, rye, and oats.
7. Fish (mostly in adults)

8. Shellfish (mostly in adults)

Procedure

- Parents will inform the nurse of the diagnosis and assist in the plan of care while at school, on field trips and during extracurricular activities
- The Nurse will inform school individuals under FERPA the rules of a student's diagnosis and treatment plan
- Parents are encouraged to send in healthy snacks such as fruits, vegetables, cheeses, and whole grain crackers which have a low risk of containing nuts-for more information check the monthly list on the Snack Safely website
- Students will wash their hands before and after eating snacks and meals
- Teachers will observe for nuts in the classroom during snack time and if nuts are brought in the snack will be returned to the student's backpack and replacement will be organized
- Cafeteria tables will be washed after each lunch period
- A table/tables in each cafeteria will be designated as a nut free areas
- Any issues will be brought to the attention of the school nurse and administration
- Outside clubs and organizations will adhere to this protocol (Booster Club, after school care programs, sports banquets, etc.)

Meal Charge Procedure

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to establish consistent procedures to provide meals to students who have insufficient funds in their school meal accounts and the collection of unpaid meal debt.

II. General Statement of Procedure:

- A. The Slate Valley recognizes proper nutrition is essential for adequate learning to occur and to establish lifelong, healthy eating habits while also working to maintain the financial integrity of the school food service program.
- B. It is the procedure of Slate Valley to offer high quality, healthy breakfasts and lunches that meet the federal guidelines to all students at a reasonable cost to ensure no child goes hungry while at school.
- C. Meals must be paid for either in advance or with cash at the register daily. Payments to student accounts are made by either sending a check to the school which can be applied to a student's meal account or by going online to <https://abbeygroup.net> to make a payment using a credit card. Checks should be made payable to Slate Valley Food Service Program.
 - 1) It is the responsibility of families to provide meals for their students and to ensure that money is deposited into student meal accounts.
 - 2) It is the responsibility of families to maintain a positive balance in student meal accounts throughout the year.
- D. Families may apply for free and reduced-price meals at any time during the school year. Meal applications are distributed to households annually by mail or email prior to the first day of school. Parents are encouraged to complete and return the application as soon as possible. In addition, applications are available at the school

office during regular business hours and online at www.slatevalleyunified.org. If household size changes or income changes, families may re-apply for meal benefits any time during the school year.

- 1) Households who apply for free and reduced-price meal benefits are responsible for payment of all school meals and accumulated charges until approval is granted. Federal guidelines allow a maximum of 10 days to approve a new application. No child is allowed a free or reduced price meal without an approved application or direct certification information on file. Parents will receive a notification letter of the student's eligibility showing the effective date. If a notification letter is not received within 10 days, the parent should check with the approving official at the Slate Valley Central Office at (802) 265-4905 to obtain the status of the application.
- 2) Households who are receiving 3SquaresVT or Reach-Up benefits will receive a notification of eligibility letter based on Direct Certification from the district if the district has received information about your child(ren). If your household receives these benefits and you have not received a notification of eligibility letter from the district, it means the district has not received information regarding eligibility of your child(ren), and the household must contact the district immediately at 265-4905 to provide current information.
- 3) Free and reduced-price eligible students may receive one (1) reimbursable breakfast and one (1) reimbursable lunch each day at no charge.
- 4) A la carte items, such as a separate carton of milk or a second entrée, are not allowed to be charged and therefore must be paid for at the time of purchase.

III. Meal Charge Procedure:

- A. If the student account has insufficient funds to pay for breakfast and/or lunch meals, the following procedure will apply:
 - 1) When the account balance is approximately \$5.00 overdrawn the parent will be contacted by phone, and a letter will be sent home with the student stating that payment is due and required the next day.
 - 2) If a student meal account balance reaches \$10.00 or more overdrawn the building administrator will be notified. The school district will check with the student at the beginning of the school day to determine if the student has money for meals. If the student does not have money and has not brought food from home, a reimbursable emergency meal will be provided. An emergency meal might include a cheese sandwich, vegetable sticks, fruit and milk. Only one emergency meal will be provided to a student after which it will be expected that the student will bring food from home until such time as the student's meal account is no longer overdrawn.
 - 3) The Food Service Manager and the Principal (or designee) will monitor the student during meal periods to make certain the student is receiving meals provided by the student's family.

- 4) The Principal (or designee) will determine if further action is warranted when students are not being provided a meal from home which may include filing of a report to the Department of Children and Families.
- B. Free and reduced-price eligible students will always be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts.
- C. A student eligible for paid meals who has 'cash in hand' at the time of meal service will be provided a meal regardless of unpaid student accounts. The 'cash in hand' will not be applied to past due accounts.

IV. Account Status Notifications:

- A. Households are strongly encouraged to keep sufficient funds in their student's account(s) to cover weekly meal purchases. Families can check on account balances by the following means:
 - The Food Service Program will send a weekly email and paper notice to families regarding an overdue balance.
 - Families can check their account balances online via the Meals Plus system.
 - Families may contact the Food Service Manager at school:
 - Benson Village School – benson@abbeygroup.net or 537-2491
 - Castleton Elementary School – castleton@abbeygroup.net or 468-5624
 - Castleton Village School – castleton@abbeygroup.net or 468-2203
 - Fair Haven Grade School – fairhaven@abbeygroup.net or 265-3883
 - Fair Haven High School -- fhuhs@abbeygroup.net or 265-4966
 - Orwell Village School – orwell@abbeygroup.net or 948-2871
 - High school students will be given a verbal reminder or written notice in the food service line.
- B. Families will be notified when the student account balance has reached \$5.00 by either phone or a letter sent home.
 - Parents will be notified by email when the student account reaches the minimum balance of \$5.00 or less.
 - An email reminder will be sent to parents once the student account reaches \$0.
 - Weekly emails will be sent to parents whose children have a negative account balance.
 - Notices will be sent home with elementary school students weekly.

V. Collection of Unpaid Meal Debt:

When the student balance is \$5.00 or more overdrawn, the following collection activities will be followed:

- The Food Service Manager (or designated staff) will contact the household to request payment.
- The Food Service Manager will contact the building principal if no payment is received.
- The building principal (or designated staff) will contact the household to discuss the requirements of the family to provide meals for the student.
- The building principal may contact the local social services office if the household refuses to provide meals or pay for student meals.
- A certified letter may be sent to the household notifying them that the debt will be turned over to a collection agency if not paid by a certain date.

- All funds owed to the food service program will be paid in full on the last day of school.
- If a student ends the school year with an overdrawn account balance, it may affect the student's ability to participate in graduation ceremonies with their class.

Parking Procedures

Purpose:

To establish safety guidelines for staff and students who drive motorized vehicles to and from school as a part of our all-hazards approach to school safety.

Qualified Drivers:

Staff - All staff will be issued a parking permit prior to the start of the school year upon the completion of a registration form. Staff are expected to park in the designated parking areas. Substitute teachers will also be issued a permit. Only staff are allowed to park in the staff parking lot. The school will assume no liability for damage to any vehicle due to theft, vandalism, fire or accidents within the property of the school. Any violators who are illegally parked can be fined and towed at the owner's expense. If there is a need to leave a car parked overnight on school property, then it is the staff member's responsibility to alert the main office.

Students (Fair Haven Union High School) - The parking at the Fair Haven Union High School is a privilege and not a right. The school will assume no liability for damage to any vehicle due to theft, vandalism, fire or accidents within the property of the school. Any violators who are illegally parked can be fined and towed at the owner's expense. The administration or their designees reserve the right to determine the seriousness of any infraction and issue a fine and or extraction of the vehicle from the premises. Overnight parking will be prohibited with exceptions made for school-related field trips/events.

Parking Registration:

Before any Slate Valley Unified School District school parking permit is issued, the student driver/guardian or staff member must complete the following:

1. Proof of registration, insurance, and a valid license must be provided to the administration designee for issuance of the parking permit.
2. If at any time during the school year, you are no longer a student at FHU or a staff member within Slate Valley, you will be considered ineligible for a parking permit.
3. All parking permits will be displayed on the rear window lower left-hand corner. The permit must be visible at all times and if the permit is not visible this could result in the vehicle being towed at the owner's expense.
4. FHU only- Students are required to park ONLY in the student parking area located at the end of Mechanic Street as you enter the school property. The permits are required during the school hours between (7:30 am and 4:00 pm). Students that are returning back to school from meetings or school events after hours are not required to have a permit.

SLATE VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL NOT REIMBURSE FOR TOWING OF VEHICLES. Should a tow truck arrive, the tow company may require payment before a vehicle will be released.

SVUSD Parking Permit Applications can be found in the main office and on our district website.

Benson Village School at a Glance

Faculty & Staff

Benson Village School Administration

Amy Roy, Principal	aroy@svuvt.org	Ext. 7101
Pam Arel, Administrative Assistant	parel@svuvt.org	Ext. 7100

Educational Staff

Francine Broughton, Music	fbroughton@svuvt.org	Ext. 7109/7112
Laura Budde, Guidance	lbudde@svuvt.org	Ext. 7116
Nellie Burch, Spanish	nburch@svuvt.org	Ext. 7114
Ashley Casey, Nurse	acasey@svuvt.org	Ext. 7107
Liam Edwards, 4-6	ledwards@svuvt.org	Ext. 7113
Amanda Hale, Special Ed. Interventionist	ahale@svuvt.org	Ext. 7104
Sara Mason, Preschool	smason@svuvt.org	Ext. 7103
Trevor Kelson, K-8 PE & Health	jmckeen@svuvt.org	Ext. 7105
Elizabeth Schuyler, 4-8 Math/Science	emoyer@svuvt.org	Ext. 7113
Bryan Muller, 6-8 ELA, 4-8 ELA/SS	bmuller@svuvt.org	Ext. 7114
Darcie Parrott, Art, STEAM	dparrott@svuvt.org	Ext. 7109/7112
Jessica Sturtevant, Grades 2/3	jsturtevant@svuvt.org	Ext. 7117/7118
Jessica Thurston, Kindergarten	jthurston@svuvt.org	Ext. 7111
Ann Marie Witt, Librarian	amwitt@svuvt.org	Ext. 7108
Carrienn Wolcott, Home School	cwolcott@svuvt.org	Ext. 7102

Support Staff

Caitlin Bowles	Instructional Assistant
Greta Dora	Instructional Assistant
Carrieann Wolcott	Instructional Assistant
Patrick Goodwin	Facilities Manager
Ryan Wichert	Custodian
Mellisa Charron	Head Chef

Breakfast & Lunch

The Abbey Group provides a variety of breakfast foods and lunch choices including a daily entree, salad bar, and deli sandwich, soup, or salad. Students always have the option of having a peanut butter sandwich as well. It is important for parents to maintain a "0" balance in your child's lunch account. A complete description of the program and payment schedule will be sent home along with information on Free Lunch and Snack Milk opportunities. You are invited to apply for Free lunch and breakfast at anytime during the year. Simply contact the office for an application.

All students will have the opportunity to eat breakfast or their snack beginning at 7:45 every day in the cafeteria. Students are encouraged to stay and eat with the goal that students will be ready to enter the main building at 7:45 each morning. Breakfast will be available for students to take to class for those unable to make it for a sit down breakfast.

K-8	Breakfast	7:45-8:00
K-3	Lunch	11:00-11:30
4-8	Lunch	Noon-12:20

Meal Prices

School	Breakfast			Lunch			Milk
	Student		Adult	Student		Adult	
	Full Price	Reduced Price	Adult	Full Price	Reduced Price	Adult	
Benson	1.60	0	2.75	2.90	0	4.00	0.50
Castleton Elementary	1.60	0	2.75	2.90	0	4.00	0.50
Castleton Village	1.60	0	2.75	2.90	0	4.00	0.50
Fair Haven Grade	1.60	0	2.75	2.90	0	4.00	0.50
Fair Haven Union High	1.85	0	2.75	2.90	0	4.00	0.50
Orwell Village	1.60	0	2.75	2.90	0	4.00	0.50

Meal Charge Procedure

- A. The Slate Valley Unified School District recognizes proper nutrition is essential for adequate learning to occur and to establish lifelong, healthy eating habits while also working to maintain the financial integrity of the school food service program.
- B. It is the procedure of Slate Valley to offer high quality, healthy breakfasts and lunches that meet the federal guidelines to all students at a reasonable cost to ensure no child goes hungry while at school.
- C. Meals must be paid for either in advance or with cash at the register daily. Payments to student accounts are made by either sending a check to the school which can be applied to a student's meal account or by going online to <https://abbeygroup.net> to make a payment using a credit card. Checks should be made payable to SVUSD Food Service Program.
 - 1) It is the responsibility of families to provide meals for their students and to ensure that money is deposited into student meal accounts.

- 2) It is the responsibility of families to maintain a positive balance in student meal accounts throughout the year.

D. Families may apply for free and reduced-price meals at any time during the school year.

The full Meal Charge Procedure is located in the Procedures section of this handbook.

While at lunch, our students will:

1. Display good manners at all times;
2. Talk at a socially appropriate level;
3. Properly handle food, utensils, and other lunchroom materials;
4. Remain seated until dismissed;
5. Secure permission to leave the lunchroom.

Daily Schedule

7:45	Students may be on school property; no earlier
7:45	Students enter building
11:00-11:30	K-3 Lunch
Noon-12:20	4-8 Lunch
2:30	Dismissal/ Bus Load

Discipline

Our School prides itself on a discipline plan that is fair, restorative and consistent. We feel that all students have a right to go to school in a safe environment. Each student also deserves the opportunity to learn in an atmosphere of respect, free from the influence of disruptive classmates. Each student and teacher have a responsibility to do their part in creating and maintaining a respectful, safe and stimulating learning environment. We realize that there will be times when students forget their responsibility or are temporarily unwilling to be cooperative. For this reason we have developed a plan of discipline that has as its goal restoring both a safe and stimulating environment and restoring those who are negatively impacted by the misbehavior.

School-Wide Rules and Expectations:

Each child has the right to learn in a safe and healthy environment. Rules are necessary and important. To ensure this, we expect that adults will enforce the school rules. Rule infractions will be dealt with according to their severity.

The following school-wide rules will be observed:

1. Everyone will treat each other with respect.
2. Everyone will speak to each other in a courteous manner.

The following school-wide expectations will be observed:

1. Students will be on time and prepared to learn.
2. Students will keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
3. Students will conduct themselves in a safe manner.
4. Students will be honest and truthful.

- Students will cooperate, support each other, and demonstrate good sportsmanship.

Disciplinary Procedures

The Benson Village School utilizes the Three Level System of Discipline. The system recognizes that consistent adult responses to low level challenging behaviors (non-compliance, disruption, teasing) produces positive school climate in which more serious infractions will be minimized. Built on the prerequisite adult skills and system of support, the Three Level System is a protocol to be used by adults when reacting to student misconduct.

Level 1 Behaviors	Level 2 Behaviors	Level 3 Behaviors
Primary Responsibility Teacher or Supervising Adult	Primary Responsibility Teacher and Behavior Support Staff	Primary Responsibility School Administration
Student Behaviors Off-task behaviors Minor or moderate disruptions Inappropriate verbal interactions Non-responsive to teacher directions Unprepared for class	Student Behaviors All Level One behaviors which continue or escalate in intensity and frequency with teacher or support staff intervention	Student Behaviors Chronic violation of school or class rules Serious damage to property Serious verbal aggression, bullying, harassment or threat Serious physical altercation Drug and/or alcohol possession or use Weapons possession, threat to use, or actual use
Teacher Interventions Supportive guidance back to task Redirection Interaction (eye contact, proximity) “What are you doing? What are you supposed to be doing?” Give choices Reflective/empathic listening Use of “I” statements Teacher shifts from supportive to directives	Teacher and Support Staff Interventions All teacher interventions for Level 1 Referral out of classroom space Working with school supports including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collegial support • Time out • Other school wide supports Referred to Benson Educational Support Team (BEST)	Teacher Interventions Referral to administration Seek help of behavior support team and other school wide support Provide work for in-school suspension Participate in parent conferences and re-entry meetings
Consequences Failure of lesson or activity In-class time-out Restitution/Apology Work completed during free time Loss of privileges Parent notification by teacher for parent involvement	Consequences Create individual plan Loss of privileges Parent notification by teacher or support staff for parent involvement Restitution/Apology Reevaluate existing behavior plan Consultation from outside resources	Consequences Short-term suspension Restitution/Apology Home/school coordination and support Interagency referral and planning Long term suspension Expulsion Consideration of placement in alternative program School failure

Dismissal Guidelines

- Dismissal for students who walk or ride their bikes to school is immediately following the loading of buses and car riders.
- Students who will be going to any other destination other than home directly after school must bring a note from a parent or guardian giving permission to go elsewhere. If a child goes to a regularly scheduled event/activity after school (Girl Scouts, 4-H, sports, dance, etc.) one permission note for the year will be kept in the office as a record for that child. You do not need to send a note each time.

3. Students are not permitted to leave the building or school grounds during school hours unless the following procedures are followed:
 - a. Parents and guardians provide a note explaining the reason for dismissal.
 - b. Teachers are notified when the child is to leave the school grounds.
 - c. The student checks in and out at the office.

Handheld Devices

Electronic devices including Ipods, cell phones, tablets, and other similar devices are allowed for educational purposes only at the discretion of each teacher. Student cell phones are to be kept off or on silent mode in student backpacks during school hours. Any unauthorized use will result in confiscation of the device, which may be picked up by a parent/guardian in the main office.

Home & School Communication

It is important for teachers, students, and parents to establish open lines of communication from the very beginning of the school year to ensure that the most productive and affable relationships can be maintained throughout the year.

When concerns arise regarding a child in the classroom, whether it is regarding grades, homework, teacher/student relationships, etc., the following procedure is recommended:

1. The parent should contact the teacher directly.
2. The parent and teacher should discuss the concern and work together toward a resolution.
3. If after a reasonable time the issue is not resolved, the parent should contact the principal to file the concern in writing. A complaint form will be provided.
4. A meeting involving the parent, teacher, and principal and/or superintendent will be required.
5. The board will only consider hearing complaints when the complaints cannot be resolved by the administrator and the teacher.

At each step the parent should allow time for change to take place.

COVID-19 Slate Valley Student Handbook Addendum

Health and Safety

1. What happens if there is a COVID-19 positive case in my classroom or school?

Any suspicion of COVID-19 diagnosis will be sent home immediately, recommended for COVID testing, and School Nurse Leader or Superintendent informed.

The classroom will be closed and cleansed.

Testing will be decided by the medical provider. When they are sent to their provider, this does not guarantee a test will be performed.

The school nurse or designee will continue to follow up on student's symptoms and return to school will be determined by no fever (less than 100.4) without fever reducing medication) for 24 hours (or according to updated recommendations by the VDH) prior to re-admittance and has felt good (meaning zero other symptoms) for 10 days.

If a COVID test comes back positive, The School Nurse Leader or Superintendent needs to be called immediately. They in turn, will contact the VDH (the doctor's office and the lab are to do this, but it needs to be done by the school as well).

No symptomatic or COVID-19 positive workers are allowed on site and any worker(s) who have close contact for more than 15 minutes with a worker or any other person who is diagnosed with COVID-19 are required to quarantine for 14 days.

2. How is a decision made to close a school due to COVID?

Assessment of the number of cases and action to be taken will be guided by the VDH and Superintendent in regard to school closure.

3. Is there adequate ventilation in all of the school buildings?

The district has hired an engineer to provide recommendations in terms of the ventilation in each of the buildings. The ventilation for each room should be between 15-30 cfm. All of our rooms meet that requirement. One of the benefits in having largely out of date inefficient heating systems throughout the district is that ventilation is not an issue.

4. Are all students and staff required to wear facial coverings?

PreK-12 students and staff will be required to wear facial coverings with the exception of when they are eating or drinking. (This is a state requirement.) We are not providing face coverings unless needed. We recognize that each student may have their own preference in terms of facial coverings and want them to be as comfortable as possible.

Mask Parameters (As of August 24, 2020)

1. Masks are required for all Students and Staff in the building.
2. Masks are required outside when physical distancing as mandated (as this can change) is not able to be maintained (students should follow the direction of their teacher who will provide updates).

Acceptable forms of masks are:

- Cloth face covering 2 ply that cover the nose and go securely below the chin with ear loops, not ties.
 - Surgical mask that cover the nose and go securely below the chin pinching the metal insert to form fit over the bridge of the nose
 - KN95 masks that cover the nose and go securely below the chin pinching the metal insert to form fit over the bridge of the nose
 - N95 masks-mostly for the nurses, but you may use them if you prefer, but they are not necessary unless you are in the presence of someone with COVID like symptoms receiving an aerosolized treatment such as a nebulizer treatment. (Hartford Healthcare, 2020)
3. Parents should be introducing masks and teaching children how to safely put them on and off prior to the start of school so they are independent to the extent possible.
 4. Masks must follow the dress code procedure (no inappropriate words, design, or pictures).

Unacceptable forms of Masks:

- Knitted mask
- One layer cloth mask
- Bandanas

- Neck gaiters
 - Masks with vents-CDC does not recommend use of masks or cloth masks for source control if they have an exhalation valve or vent (CDC, August, 2020)
5. Face Shields can be added to anyone who would like to add extra protection, but they do not replace wearing a mask and face shields are not necessary if maintaining 6 feet of distance.
 6. Exceptions for removing a mask while wearing a face shield:
 - Those who have physician orders to not wear a mask in school with documented diagnosis.
 - For students who are deaf, hard of hearing or struggle with communication while wearing a mask can remove their mask during direct services with their teacher or speech language pathologist (SLP). Masks with clear panels are recommended for educators providing services to the students. The student will keep on the face shield and as much distance as possible between them while services are provided.
 - Students requiring interventions under rule 4500. See the specific guidelines for care during and after interventions for both students and staff.
 - Masks need to be washed after every use at the end of the day. Having several on hand will be more convenient.
 7. Wearing a mask correctly:
 - Wash your hands before putting on your mask
 - Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
 - Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
 - Make sure you can breathe easily (CDC, August, 2020)
 8. Students' cloth face coverings should be clearly identified with their names or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping.
 9. Students' face coverings may also be labeled to indicate top/bottom and front/back to help them put it on correctly.
 10. When not in use, facial coverings should be stored in individually labeled containers or paper bags. Breakaway lanyards can also be utilized for students to wear and clip their mask onto it.
 11. Face coverings should be washed:
 - every evening (hand washing with soap water and hanging to dry overnight or washing machine)
 - before being used again if a weekend
 - or if visibly soiled
 12. KN95 and N95 masks can be reused after sitting for 3 days in a paper bag. Having three will provide for 1 to always be available for use. If visibly soiled, it should be discarded.
 13. Please consult with the District COVID Coordinator, Deborah Hanson, M.Ed., BSN, RN, School Nurse Leader with any questions or concerns. dhanson@svuvt.org

References

Agency of Education and Department of Health (August, 2020). A Strong and Healthy Start, Safety and Health Guidance for Reopening Schools, Fall 2020. Retrieved from: <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-vdh-guidance-strong-healthy-start-school-health-updated-8-1.pdf>

CDC (August, 2020) How to Wear Masks. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wear-cloth-face-coverings.html>

5. Are parents required to wear face coverings when dropping off or picking up their child?

Yes

6. If a student has a fever do they need a COVID-19 test?

Not necessarily, that would be a conversation between the parent and child's healthcare provider.

7. What is the "return to school" policy when a student has been out sick?

If a student is COVID positive, the school nurse or designee will continue to follow up on student's symptoms and return to school will be determined by no fever (less than 100.4) without fever reducing medication) for 24 hours (or according to updated recommendations by the VDH) prior to re-admittance **and** has felt good (meaning zero other symptoms) for 10 days.

If a student is not COVID positive, they may return after being fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours and symptom free for 24 hours.

8. What happens if my child travels out of state to a county that is on the quarantine list?

You need to monitor this website frequently if you are considering any leisure travel out of state. <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel> This is updated on Fridays and changes each week. In some cases, it may change while you are on vacation. If you have traveled to one of these areas you should not be reporting to work in person. You need to let your supervisor know, contact the VDH and contact Jennifer Book in Human Resources.

Educational Expectations/School Day

1. What is the first day of school?

As of August 3, 2020 the first day of school will be September 8th for all students.

2. What are the attendance expectations for students?

During distance & in-person learning, it is expected that students will be working on schoolwork **daily and attend any scheduled online and in-person learning sessions**. If a student is not able to complete work on any given day, contact should be made with the school reporting the students as absent from learning on that day.

On each day, **and for each class**, for which attendance is recorded, an educator must make contact with a student by video chat, or email, or "seeing" the student log into a Learning Management System (LMS) and **engaging in learning activities** (e.g., completes asynchronous assignments, assessments, artifact, etc.).

If a student is not accounted for on a school day the following will take place:

- Your child's teacher will speak to a parent/guardian or email the student.
- The child's teacher will email or call the parent/guardian.

- Your child's administrator or guidance counselor will call to check in via phone or email with the parent/guardian.
- A parent/guardian will be required to attend a virtual meeting EST meeting to problem solve ways to help your student. [Student Retention Procedures](#)
- A School Resource Officer/Home to School Liaison/School Counselor, will visit the student's home.
- A Department of Children and Families referral for truancy will be made.

3. How much shorter will the school day be?

1 hour and 15 minutes across all buildings in the district to allow for staggered arrivals and dismissals. Please check with your school for an arrival and dismissal schedule.

4. What is the grading policy for the school year?

Teachers are carefully designing assessments that can be done in person and in a distance learning environment to track student progress and assess their learning. It is important that students do everything possible to complete and turn in assignments on time. It is important that each student completes teacher assignments as directed, as these are specially designed to assess student's skills and proficiencies focused at a specific grade level. **Assessments are designed to inform instruction as much as (more than) to "grade."** K-12 educators will use PowerSchool to monitor student progress.

5. What is the expectation concerning homework?

[Copy of ARSU Homework Expectations 8.15.16](#)

6. How will parent meetings occur?

Parent meetings will need to take place remotely as we are not permitted to have any visitors in the building. We will continue to hold IEP, 504 and EST meetings virtually, by phone or google meets.

7. Will state assessments occur this school year?

We have not received guidance on this to date.

8. Where will breakfast and lunch be served?

Cafeterias will be closed to large groups. Students will eat breakfast and lunch in classrooms, outdoors or in alternative spaces as necessary and in accordance with the Health and Safety Guidelines.

9. Will high school students be switching classes?

Yes, but it will be reduced greatly from previous years. We are moving to a block schedule for the 2020-2021 school year. We are also developing a one way flow of traffic on either side of the hallways and students will need to maintain 6 feet distance between them.

10. Will students be allowed to use their lockers?

Yes, with proper 6 feet physical distancing. Schedules are being developed in each school to adhere to the VT Guidelines. Students are highly encouraged only to bring with them necessary materials.

11. Will recess still be part of the student day?

Yes, masks will not need to be worn if the students are outside and adhering to proper social distancing.

12. Will playgrounds be open?

Students may use playground equipment only under the following conditions:

- Students need to wash their hands before and after playground use.
- They will need to wear facial coverings if proper social distancing cannot be maintained.

13. Will students be outside more than in previous years?

Yes, the intention is to have students outside much more than in previous years.

14. If students are going to be outside more will there be more of a law enforcement presence?

We are working closely with both Fair Haven and Castleton Police Departments and there will be an increased presence. Furthermore, we will continue to be practicing safety drills and all other safety procedures will continue to be in place.

15. How will my child's teacher and school communicate with families?

To the largest extent possible communication will be electronic. We want to limit the amount of paper that is traveling back and forth between households and around the schools each day. Please make sure that you have an email on file with the school district. In the case, where a family does not have internet access and/or email the school will make other arrangements.

Educators will post learning materials and lessons in Google Classroom, Sites, or Seesaw for their classes every Monday by 8:00 am for a [Learning Chunk](#) (Updated 7/6/20). A Learning Chunk provides a checklist, a broad "brushstroke", for the work that must be completed over the course of 1-2 weeks of learning.

Check your email at least once a week for teacher communications.

Review the [Google Classroom](#) and/or [Seesaw](#) (K-2) parent/guardian guides.

Arrival/Dismissal/Transportation

1. What will the start and end times be for each school (siblings in different buildings)?

Buildings are coordinating their release times between buildings to give ample time for student drop off and pick-up.

2. Why are there staggered arrivals and dismissals?

To allow for proper social distancing and screening of students.

3. How will bussing run?

Bussing will be door to door to the greatest extent possible. Students will need to wear facial coverings, be screened prior to boarding the bus and maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible. Bus windows will be open. There will be a bus monitor on all buses to reinforce the guidelines. Parents will need to remain at bus stops in case the health screening results prohibit their boarding of the bus.

Sports/Field Trips

1. What is the status of sports/extra-curriculars?

We just received the fall sports guidance. We are in the process of putting together a high school and middle school plan for both sports as well as all extra-curriculars.

2. Will field trips and assemblies be allowed?

Field trips are only allowed if the program is able to maintain all health guidance, as well as guidance from the [Agency of Commerce and Community Development](#), as it relates to public outdoor spaces and pools.

Virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings and spirit nights will be pursued whenever possible.

Facilities/Visitors

1. Will community building use be allowed?

Per the Agency of Education Reopening Guidelines school buildings are not available for community use at this time, including bathrooms. However, the school grounds are available for use.

2. Will visitors/volunteers be allowed in schools?

At this time, we are not permitted to have volunteers in the schools. No outside visitors and volunteers except for employees or contracted service providers for the purpose of special education or required support services, as authorized by the school or district.

Remote Option/Homeschooling

1. Is there a remote option for families that are not comfortable sending their child back to school for in-person instruction?

At this time Slate Valley is not offering this option with the exception of students with specific documented medical concerns.

2. What is homeschooling and what is the district's role in homeschooling, if any?

The Vermont Agency of Education is the entity responsible for approving home study applications in Vermont. The [Guidelines for Home Study in Vermont](#) contains information necessary to prepare and submit an enrollment notice for homeschooling. Excerpts from relevant statutes and rules are also provided. You can also find information pertaining to Special Education and home study [here](#).

Slate Valley's proficiency based scoring guides, content area topics/themes, and specific literacy and math tools and objectives, can be found on the [under curriculum](#) on the Slate Valley website.

3. What is home study and how do I apply?

Home study is completely independent of the public school. Parents may contact the Agency of Education for more information. [Home Study](#)

4. Should Slate Valley have to move into Remote Learning, the following roles and responsibilities apply to students:

- Establish a daily routine to support your learning.
- **Check your Slate Valley Gmail and Google Classroom/Seesaw (K-2) daily.**
- Complete tasks/activities on which you can receive feedback (either online or during the next class meeting, as indicated in instructions).
- Participate in online learning activities with your peers.
- **Work on classwork daily and attend any online learning sessions scheduled. If you are not able to complete work on any given day, you must contact the school to report an absence from learning on that day.**
- Complete assessment tasks.
- Take breaks, play, rest, be active.
- Communicate proactively with your teachers. Ask questions, timely responses will be made by your teacher. If a teacher emails you, respond in a timely manner. Timely is generally defined as within 24 hours. You can use email or, if permitted by your teacher, Google Hangouts/Meet, or Google Chat.
- Communicate with your friends, classmates, and groups (if needed).
- Be mindful of your workload and wellbeing. If you have any concerns, contact your teacher or counselor.
- Keep your Chromebook charged.

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined for Slate Valley parent(s)/guardian(s)/families for Remote Learning:

- Help your child develop daily routines. **During distance learning, it is expected that your child will be working on classwork daily and attending any online learning sessions scheduled. If your child is not able to complete work on any given day, you should contact the school to report them as absent from learning on that day.**
- Encourage your child to take study breaks and to take part in physical exercise.
- Be mindful of your child's wellbeing; speak to them regularly about concerns or challenges.
- Create opportunities for your child to interact with peers to maintain connections with their school community. **Be sure to follow state guidelines if meeting in person.**
- Ensure your children are dressed appropriately when using video tools.
- If there are siblings simultaneously online, or in the same room, choose locations that do not cause noise interference when recording learning or video conferencing.
- Communicate any concerns to your child's teacher, or counselor via email or phone. You should feel comfortable contacting teachers for any of the following reasons:
 - You or your child need help or further explanation on a task
 - Your child is struggling emotionally and you'd like support
 - You have questions about any part of classroom assignments or expectations
 - Your child is ill or will be missing school
 - Your child had some special success in distance learning
 - You are having trouble accessing a program or platform for online learning

Here is a list of who to contact with frequent problems in distance learning. Email is usually the easiest contact method. Phone calls are always welcome as well.

- My child doesn't understand the assignment- **teacher**
- My child lost the password for a learning platform- **teacher in some cases, sometimes the platform's help desk**
- My child's computer isn't working- **school administrative assistant**
- My child will be absent - **school administrative assistant**
- I found unkind emails back and forth between my child and another classmate- **teacher or administrator**
- My child's online live sessions keep freezing- **your Internet utility company**
- My child is struggling, anxious or upset a lot- **teacher, administrator or school counselor**
- I need help with food access or finding support from local agencies- **your administrator**
- I am feeling upset, anxious or overwhelmed as a parent or in general- **administrator, guidance counselor or local agencies**