

Student-Parent Handbook

Booth Free School ▪ Burnham School ▪ Washington Primary School



2011-2012

Shepaug Valley Regional School District #12

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SHEPAUG REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT #12 CONTACTS

CENTRAL OFFICE

Office of the Superintendent
Regional District No. 12
11A School St., P.O. Box 386
Washington Depot, CT 06794
Phone: 860-868-6100
Fax: 860-868-6103
Website: region-12.org

Superintendent of Schools
Director of Finance and Operations
Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Director of Curriculum
Facilities Coordinator

Dr. Bruce Storm
Robert Giesen
Alison O'Hara
Dr. Anne Stuhlman
Donald O'Leary

Secretary to Superintendent of Schools
Bookkeeper/Payroll
Secretary for Finance and Office Manager
Secretary to Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Secretary to Facilities Coordinator
Accounts Payable Coordinator

Lillian Winter
Peggy Swanberg Johnson
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BOARD OF EDUCATION

Valerie Andersen, Treasurer
Anthony Bedini
Alan Brown, Vice Chair
Frannie Caco
Gregory Cava
Laird Davis

Mardie Ford, Secretary
Michelle Gorra
Emily Hibbard
James Hirschfield, Chair
Kelly Lott
Michael Sinatra

THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Booth Free School
South Street
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Principal: Cathy Colella
Head Teacher: Keri Snowden
Head Teacher: Pam Lucchesi
Secretary: Margaret McQuillan

Burnham School
80 Main Street. South
Bridgewater, CT 06752
Phone: 860-354-5559
Fax: 860-350-1597

Principal: Cathy Colella
Head Teacher: Susan Niesobecki
Secretary: Claire Cavalea

Washington Primary School
11 School Street.
Washington Depot, CT 06794
Phone: 860-868-7331
Fax: 860-868-2975

Principal: TBD
Interim Principal/Head Teacher: Susan Ubaldi
Secretary: Laura Horrigan
Secretary: Susan Haverly

BOOTH FREE SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS

Cathy Colella	Principal	colellac@region-12.org
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Janet Steinman	Tutor	steinmanj@region-12.org
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John Lavaway	Head Custodian	lavawayj@region-12.org
Tom Dingee	Part-time Custodian	

BURNHAM SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS

Cathy Colella	Principal	colellac@region-12.org
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WASHINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS

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Steve Crowley	Head Custodian	
Charles 'Chip' Calabrese	Custodian	calabresec@region-12.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please mark these special dates on your calendar. The days will be coordinated with events of grades 6 - 12.

August 30	Kindergarten Orientation 1:30 PM		
First day of school August 31			
September 13	OPEN HOUSE	Booth Free	Evening
September 15	OPEN HOUSE	Burnham School	Evening
September 15	OPEN HOUSE	Washington Primary	Evening
September 13	OPEN HOUSE	Middle School	Evening
September 21	OPEN HOUSE	High School	Evening
October 19	Parent/Teacher Conferences – Early Dismissal at 1:15 PM. Booth Free School, Burnham School & Washington Primary Afternoon/Evening Conferences		
October 20	Parent/Teacher Conferences – Early Dismissal at 1:15 PM Booth Free School, Burnham School & Washington Primary Afternoon/Evening Conferences		
October 21	Parent/Teacher Conferences – Early Dismissal at 1:15 PM Booth Free School, Burnham School & Washington Primary Afternoon Conferences.		
November 9	OPEN HOUSE/PARENT VISITATION DAY Booth Free School, Burnham School & Washington Primary School 9:15 AM. to 11:15 AM and 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM while school is in session.		
December 6	Winter Concert 1:30 PM.	Booth Free School	
December 7	Winter Concert 1:30 PM	Washington Primary	
December 8	Winter Concert 1:30 PM	Burnham School	
December 9	Report Cards Sent Home		
January 25	Kindergarten Registration	Washington Primary	
January 26	Kindergarten Registration	Burnham School	
January 26	Kindergarten Registration	Booth Free School	
February 6-10	Parent Conferences If Needed		
March 1-23	Connecticut Mastery Tests for Grades 3, 4, 5		
March 23	Report Cards Sent Home		
April 23-27	Parent Conferences If Needed		
May 1	Spring Concert/Art Show K-2	Washington Primary	
May 8	Spring Concert/Art Show 3-5	Washington Primary	
May 17	Spring Concert/Art Show K-5	Booth Free School	
May 24	Spring Concert/Art Show K-5	Burnham School	

Grade 5 Recognition Program – Date to be published in the Spring after snow season

****Last day of school June 13 - Early Dismissal - 1:15 PM****
(Note: 1 school day is added to the calendar for each snow day)

**STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK FOR THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS
SHEPAUG VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 12**

**Bridgewater - Burnham School
Roxbury - Booth Free School
Washington - Washington Primary School**

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the new school year! Each staff of Booth, Burnham, and Washington Primary School is looking forward to making this an exciting, challenging and rewarding year. We are dedicated to meeting the academic, social and emotional needs of your child(ren). You are integral members of our learning community and together we can reach for excellence in education to make a difference!

We hope this handbook will provide families with an easy reference of important information. Included is the school year calendar, calendar of events as well as procedures, policies, and expectations. We highly encourage you to familiarize yourself with this handbook. Please also review pertinent sections with your child(ren); especially on dress code, discipline, and character education.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. Please sign and return the short form on page 32 that acknowledges your receipt and review of this handbook. We thank you for your assistance in the review of our book and look forward to working together in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Cathy G. Colella, Principal
Booth Free School
Burnham School

860-354-9391
860-354-5559

Gail E. Prelli, Principal
Washington Primary School

860-868-7331

ORGANIZATION OF THE REGION NO. 12 PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The primary schools of Regional School District No. 12 are located in the towns of Bridgewater, Roxbury, and Washington. These schools serve children in kindergarten through the fifth grade. Students in grades six through eight attend the Shepaug Valley Middle School, with students in grades nine through twelve attending Shepaug High School.

The information in this handbook is pertinent to all three primary schools. For more specific details regarding school staffing, calendars, programs, etc., please contact the school office in the town of your residence.

Booth Free School in Roxbury	860-354-9391
Burnham School in Bridgewater	860-354-5559
Washington Primary School in Washington	860-868-7331

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION - SHEPAUG VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT NO. 12

We believe that educated persons know how to learn, question constantly, and strive to improve. They are self-motivated and hold themselves accountable for their own actions. They recognize and respect the dignity of each individual.

We believe that education is a lifelong process which takes place within the home, within the school, and beyond. The school is but one of many institutions which prepare an individual to live in, participate in, and contribute to society. We view the world that the school operates in as pluralistic, complex, and continually changing, demanding from people varied skills and attitudes. The school must, therefore, prepare students to deal effectively with such a world.

We believe that individuals are unique and have different needs, abilities, interests, backgrounds, and motivations. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the school to recognize the worth of each individual and, in the pursuit of excellence, to teach each student to the fullest extent of his abilities. To this end, the school should take into consideration the different rates and styles of learning and teaching most beneficial to each student.

We recognize that the school is part of a larger society and that maximum success in reaching educational goals depends on the cooperation of dedicated students, staff, parents, and the community.

In order to implement our philosophy, we are committed to the following goals:

1. Students will accept the challenge to strive toward excellence in the pursuit of learning.
2. Students will learn to communicate effectively in speech and writing, to read with understanding, and to demonstrate knowledge and ability in mathematics.
3. Students will develop decision-making, listening, learning, critical thinking, interpersonal, manual, and physical skills.
4. Students will acquire knowledge of science, mathematics, social studies, the arts, literature and languages which leads to an understanding and appreciation of the values and the intellectual and artistic achievements of their culture and other cultures.
5. Students will take full advantage of opportunities to explore, develop, and demonstrate their own uniqueness, creativity; and self-discipline.
6. Students will acquire skills, knowledge, and competence to enable them to function successfully as citizens, family members, parents, producers, and consumers.
7. Students will develop an understanding of their own personal values and the values of others and of the impact of their actions based upon these values.
8. Students will develop an appreciation of our natural resources and the need for their proper management.
9. The school will provide a wide range of methods and materials to facilitate the education of students who have different styles and rates of learning.
10. The school will evaluate each student to determine the most appropriate program for the individual.
11. The school will provide a climate in which students can develop a positive self-concept.
12. The school will provide a coordinated curriculum for grades K - 12.
13. The school will stimulate communication among students, staff, the Board of Education, parents, and the community.
14. The school will promote its use of the varied resources in and around the Region.
15. The school will maintain high academic standards.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

As a matter of policy Regional School District No. 12 does not knowingly condone discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, physical handicaps or age in employment matters or assignment in programs or services provided and operated by the Regional School District Board of Education.

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
33 Arch Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02110-1491
OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Equity/Title IX Policy

The Shepaug Valley Regional District No. 12, as a matter of policy, prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, marital status, sexual preference, national origin, physical disability or sex. This policy also encompasses the realm of sexual harassment which consists of verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, imposed on the basis of sex (See Sexual Harassment). This policy includes, but is not limited to, course offerings, athletic programs, guidance and counseling, and tests and procedures. Title IX is the federal machinery designed to enforce the prohibition of sex discrimination in public schools. In compliance with all anti-discrimination laws, we have established the following procedure for anyone who alleges to have suffered discrimination.

The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to problems which may arise concerning claims of discrimination. Evidence of reprisal against a complainant or witness shall be viewed as an infraction of this policy.

Any individual who wishes to inquire about or to register a complaint concerning alleged discrimination in the Region #12 Public Schools, shall have an opportunity to bring such concerns to the attention of the Equity/Title IX Officer or superintendent, who has the authority to resolve such complaints. The following grievance procedure shall be utilized by any student, parent or employee in making a complaint or inquiry. Officials shall be governed by this procedure. (See Grievance Form on page 53.)

LEVEL I: The complainant shall discuss the alleged discriminatory act or practice with the Equity/Title IX Officer or the individual closest to the daily decision making level. This will normally be a principal, teacher, counselor, department chairperson, head custodian, or cafeteria manager. If satisfaction cannot be achieved through informal discussion, the following procedure must be initiated.

LEVEL II: The complainant shall, within forty calendar days of the alleged incident, on forms provided, put the complaint in writing and file it with the Equity/Title IX Officer. Within five working days, a conference must be held. Within five working days following the conference, the complaint must be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties or referred to the Superintendent of Schools. Within five working days, the Equity Officer shall notify the Superintendent and must notify the complainant of this notification. The Board will be apprised by the Superintendent of any grievance reaching Level II.

LEVEL III: Within ten working days after receipt of such complaint, the Superintendent must hold a hearing, and within five working days of the hearing, resolve the complaint, negotiate a long-term solution or refer the matter to the Board of Education for consideration.

LEVEL IV: The Board of Education, Superintendent and Equity Officer shall proceed in accordance with appropriate state statutes.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS/EMPLOYEES

Any sexual harassment of employees by other employees or students, or of students by other students or employees is strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated regardless of the working or personal relationship between the parties.

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain a learning and working environment for students that is free from sexual harassment.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any staff member or any individual subject to the control of the Board of Education to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined below.

Unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's education/employment;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic/employment decisions affecting that individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic/work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic environment.

Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Verbal harassment of abuse;
2. Pressure for sexual activity;
3. Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications;
4. Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, etc.

Any person who alleges sexual harassment occurring in the District may use the District's complaint procedure or may complain directly to the Building Principal, Guidance Counselor or other individual designated to receive such complaints. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future grades or academic assignments.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the Board's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

A substantiated charge against a staff member of the Board shall subject such staff member to disciplinary action, including discharge.

A substantiated charge against a student in the school district shall subject that student to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion, consistent with the Student Discipline Code.

PROMOTION/ACCELERATION/RETENTION

In general, children shall be placed at the grade level to which they are best adjusted academically, socially, and emotionally. The education program shall provide for the continuous progress of children from grade to grade, with children spending one year in each grade. Acceleration may be considered for the exceptional child who is academically, socially, and emotionally capable of being advanced. Some children, however, may benefit from remaining another year in the same grade. Retention may be considered within the following guidelines:

- a. Retention has a reasonable chance of benefiting the child.
- b. No student will be retained more than once in a given grade.

Whenever such retention is being considered, but no later than February 15th, the teacher shall confer with the principal, parent, and child study team to discuss specific areas of concern. The parents shall then be invited to a meeting with the teacher, and/or principal, and other staff members no later than April 15 for an updated discussion of the matter. This discussion shall consist of an explanation to the parent of their child's current academic standing in relationship to program objectives and individual ability. No later than June 15th, a subsequent meeting will be held to review the student's progress. At this time, the final decision of retention shall be made at the elementary level and no later than June 30th at the middle school level. School authorities (principal, classroom teacher and child study team) shall make the final decision with parental consultation.

Guidelines for Promotion/Retention

These guidelines have been prepared to provide an overall direction to staff in the Regional District No. 12 schools regarding the efficacy of student retention. There is not a definitive formula designed to make these decisions easier

and less cumbersome. However, there are criteria listed that should be seriously considered in making retention decisions. This checklist is for school authority's reference only.

Check whether criteria are a factor for retention or for promotion. The purpose of these guidelines is not to come up with a total number of checks, but rather to help organize items for discussion at the parent conference.

SCHOOL HOURS

The official school day of instruction begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. Children enter the classroom at 8:45 a.m.

STUDENT SAFETY

The school is responsible for its students once they have boarded the school buses or arrived on the school grounds. Students may not leave school, without proper arrangements, until school is dismissed.

Arrival

Students should not arrive at school before 8:45 a.m. In order to help you plan for the proper safety of your child/children, we want you to be aware that the school cannot provide for early morning child care. We do not employ anyone for this purpose and therefore cannot assume such responsibility.

Supervision by school personnel begins when the first school bus arrives at approximately 8:45 a.m. Per policy noted in our student handbook, children who do not ride a school bus should arrive at school between 8:45 a.m. and 8:55 a.m. Students arriving very early would be expected to wait outside of the school, unsupervised, and under the parents' responsibility until an assigned staff member begins regular supervisory responsibilities.

Dismissal

The school district is legally responsible for the safety of its students during the school day. Therefore, each building Principal will establish procedures to validate requests for dismissal to assure that students are released only for proper reasons, and only to authorized person(s).

Staff members shall not excuse any student from school prior to the end of the school day, or into any person's custody without the direct prior approval and knowledge of the building Principal, or his or her designee.

In keeping with these precautions, the following procedures will be adhered to:

The building Principal or designee shall not excuse a student before the end of the school day without a request for dismissal by the student's parent or guardian.

Telephone requests for dismissal of a student shall be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent or guardian. Otherwise, the parent or legal guardian must present a written request to the school office for such release.

Children of single-parent families will be released only upon the request of the custodial parent; i.e., the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child, and who is identified as such on the school record.

In case of joint custodian, the school will presume that either parent has the right to release their child from school. Court documentation would have to be supplied to the principal if this was not the case. Additional precautions may be taken by the school administration, appropriate to the age of students, and as needs arise. Parents shall provide documentation and restraining orders if any.

Parents picking up students for dismissal must come to the office (or designated area) to sign the student out. In the case of an early dismissal, the student will be paged by the secretary to meet the parent in the office. The parent should not go to the classroom to meet the child as this may be disruptive to the educational program.

ATTENDANCE

Connecticut state law requires parents to cause their child to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. Learning experiences that occur in the classroom are considered to be meaningful and essential components of the learning process. Time lost from class tends to be irretrievable in terms of opportunity for instructional interaction. The Board of Education requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child. A student should not be absent from school without the parents' knowledge and consent. Verification of absence should be written by parent or guardian.

Board policy with respect to unexcused absences stresses prevention and inquiry leading to remediation of absences rather than imposition of punitive measures. Only when all local resources are exhausted is referral to legal authorities recommended.

An absence shall be considered "excused" when a child does not attend school due to illness or injury, death in the immediate family, religious obligation, an emergency, or other exceptional circumstances. A phone call on the morning of, or a written excuse for such absences should be submitted to school officials by the child's parent or guardian. All other absences without explanation shall be considered unexcused.

Students absent from school are not eligible for participation in after school activities.

Parents may request school work missed during an absence, providing the request has been made on the morning of the absence. Missed school work may be picked up in the school office after 1:00 PM.

EXTENDED VACATIONS

We strongly urge you to plan your vacations around the school vacation calendar. Your child must attend school regularly to achieve. No matter what make-up work is done, one cannot duplicate the classroom time that is lost by going on vacation for a week or more. Some students in particular have a very difficult time catching up with their class or readjusting when they return. If you find you have no option but to take your child out of school for an extended period, please contact the teacher well in advance. Only general assignments may be provided for absence due to vacations.

CALL-BACK SYSTEM - IF YOUR CHILD DOES NOT ARRIVE AT SCHOOL

The callback system is an effective method of improving security for school age children and is being implemented in communities throughout the country as part of a national effort to protect children.

We are requesting that each time your child is absent from school you notify the school office anytime before 9:00 AM. Prior to 8:00 AM, please leave a message on the school answering machine. **Please call Burnham School at 860-354-5559, Booth Free School at 860-354-9391 and Washington Primary School at 860-868-7331.** If your child is absent from school and we do not receive a call from you, we will attempt to give you prompt notification that your child did not come to school. Be sure that the school has a phone number where you can be reached at home or at work.

Due to the number of children we care for, the callback system can be managed successfully only if you remember to call the school before 9:00 AM on days when your child will not be in school.

TARDINESS - ARRIVING AT SCHOOL ON TIME

It is important for children to arrive at school on time. Please consider the following points and help your child develop the important life skill of being punctual for commitments. First, in order for children to maximize their learning at school, they must 'feel' that learning at school is important. Second, time lost from class tends to be irretrievable in terms of opportunities for instructional interaction. Third, your child is at a big disadvantage when he/she arrives after the teacher has finished outlining the activities for the day (like arriving after the rules of the game

have been explained). Fourth, children must develop respect for others (interrupting 20 other students and the teacher creates a significant negative effect on learning). When a child comes to school after 9:00 AM she/he must first report to the office prior to going to class. This allows the school to keep accurate records of your child's attendance and ensure your child's security.

TRUANCY

The Connecticut Legislature has adopted a new and stronger policy on truancy. The Public Act 90-240 as amended by PA91-303 requires public schools to report annually to the State Department of Education the number of children who are truant in kindergarten through grade 8. Additionally, this information must be given to the Juvenile Matters Court.

The State defines truancy as four (4) unexcused absences in one month or ten (10) unexcused in a school year. Habitual truancy is defined as twenty (20) unexcused absences in a school year.

Procedures:

1. Annually in writing, each parent will be notified of their obligations to cause their child (grades kindergarten to eight) to go to school.
2. Reasonable effort will be made to contact parents to ascertain the reasons for each absence so that unexcused absences can be monitored.
3. Annually the school district will collect from the parents of students in kindergarten to grades eight, a telephone number for contact during the school day.
4. A meeting will be held with the parent of each child that is truant to review and evaluate the reasons for the child being a truant. The meeting will be held no later than ten school days after the child's fourth unexcused absence in a month or tenth in a school year.

CHANGES IN STUDENT INFORMATION

Please report to the school any major changes in the family which pertain to the child:

1. New telephone number
2. Emergency telephone numbers
3. New immunizations
4. Family doctor
5. Allergies or other new health information
6. Any residency change
7. Marital status change

RESIDENCY

Education is provided by taxpayers in the district to students who are residents. Nonresidents may attend local schools only with tuition payment. The Superintendent may approve nonresident student attendance with tuition if class size and other considerations permit. Nonresident approval with tuition shall be for one school year or less although renewal of approval is very possible. Tuition rates are established by the Board of Education annually.

An affidavit may be required and/or documentation may be required to prove that there is a bona fide student residence in the district, that the residence is provided without pay, and that it is not for the sole purpose of obtaining school accommodations.

It should be noted that if a student has been registered as a resident under false circumstances and is not entitled, under the law, to education in the district, the Board of Education is entitled to tuition reimbursement and the student may be removed from the district. For further information and to obtain appropriate forms, contact the Superintendent's office.

ALERTNOW Rapid Notification Service

The Regional School District #12 Schools have chosen to adopt the ALERTNOW Rapid Notification Service to enhance parental communication. This service will allow us to send a voice message to ALL of our student's parents on ALL of their contact numbers within minutes, if an emergency occurs at a school. The

ALERTNOW service will also assist the schools in reducing the resources needed to pass along key information regarding school events or reminders.

The district will be utilizing ALERTNOW for:

Emergency Notification

Inclement weather - early dismissals due to inclement weather

Rumor Control

Early-release Reminders

Your child's school may be utilizing ALERTNOW for:

Attendance

Report card reminders

Grade level information, i.e. field trip reminders

Notification of Open House/Parent Teacher Conferences/Parent Visitation Day

Art Shows and Concerts

The ability to deliver a message is only as successful as the contact information we have for our families, so please make certain we have the most up-to-date direct dial numbers. If this information changes, please let your child's school know immediately.

Important:

1. Your caller ID will display your school's or the district's main number when a non-emergency call is generated. Caller ID will not display a name with the number.
2. Your caller ID will display 411 when an emergency call is being sent from the district. Examples of an emergency include evacuation or lockdown.
3. **ALERTNOW** will leave a message on your voicemail or answering machine.
4. If you have such things as Telemarketer Zapper or Privacy Director on your telephone lines, you may not receive the call.
5. **ALERTNOW** does NOT call extensions. If you have a direct dial number at work, you should provide your child's school with the direct dial number not a main number plus an extension.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION, DELAYS, EMERGENCY AND EARLY DISMISSAL TIMES

The following plan has been developed in order to serve all students, parents, and staff members when weather conditions warrant the early dismissal, closing or delayed opening of schools in the Shepaug Valley Regional School District No. 12.

1. The Superintendent of Schools, after consulting with local town officials responsible for maintaining the roads, will make a decision regarding either an early dismissal of school, delaying the opening of school, or canceling school. (While we expect to operate on the regular opening schedule whenever possible, we are prepared to delay opening school when such action is deemed necessary).
2. In the event of a delayed opening, school will begin at 11:00 AM and end at its regular time.
3. The **ALERTNOW** Rapid Notification System will be activated when the decision to dismiss school early is made. Please refer to above information on **ALERTNOW**.
4. The decision to close schools, delay the opening, or dismiss early will be announced by the following stations:

WTIC	(Hartford)	1080 AM	96.5 FM
WINE	(Brookfield)	940 AM	95.1 FM
WLAD	(Danbury)	800 AM	98.3 FM
WHCN	(Hartford)		105.9 FM
WREF	(Ridgefield)	850 AM	
WKSS	(Hartford)		95.7 FM
WZBG	(Litchfield)		97.3 FM
WVIT-TV 30	West Hartford		
WTNH-TV 8	New Haven		
WFSB-TV 3	Hartford		
5. During inclement weather, we suggest parents/guardians check our website, **region-12.org** for the most accurate announcement regarding delays, dismissals or closings. The Superintendent will continue to use the radio and television broadcasts as in the past, but the most accurate statement can be found through **region-**

- 12.org.** Dismissal time will be determined by the emergency condition. Stay tuned to the radio or television. **In most cases, emergency early dismissal will be at 12:45 p.m.**
6. **The announcement to close school, delay opening, or dismiss early will make reference to Shepaug Valley Regional District No. 12. Individual schools will not be mentioned.**
 7. Buses traveling outside the district will not run on days schools have been closed due to weather.
 8. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOLS, BOARD OF EDUCATION, POLICE DEPARTMENT, OR RADIO STATIONS AS THESE LINES MUST BE KEPT OPEN FOR EMERGENCY BUSINESS.**
 9. Schools in session will be closed early if severe and threatening weather conditions warrant such action. Parents **MUST** develop an alternate plan for the safety of children in the event school is dismissed early without prior warning.
 - a. Make arrangements with a neighbor to receive your child if you are away from home during the day.
 - b. Give your child specific instructions so that she/he will know what arrangements you have made.
 - c. **When weather is threatening, keep your radio turned on, as stations will carry announcements of early dismissals.**
 - d. **PLEASE DO NOT RELY ON CALLING THE SCHOOL.**

Although we try to make sure that parents/guardians are aware of changes in a regular schedule, it is imperative that parents/guardians develop an alternate plan for their child(ren) in the event of an early dismissal or late opening. Alternate plans may include making arrangements with a neighbor, giving the child specific instructions so that she/he will know what arrangements have been made, or having a back-up day care provider on call. Although we do have a notification service, this does not take the place of the need for an emergency plan.

Please use the weather center site or the media for information. The school phones are handling changes in bus schedules and changes in dismissal plans. Most importantly, please make sure your child(ren) have and know an emergency plan. Weather related closings are somewhat predictable, but no one can anticipate an unexpected emergency.

It is our hope that this plan and these suggestions will enable us to handle school closings efficiently. Your cooperation is appreciated.

GUIDELINES FOR AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

We want you to know that the school will cooperate in every reasonable way to support the efforts of your non-profit organization in providing important after school activities for our children. It is important that you understand both the capabilities and limitations of the school's role so that we may plan together to accommodate your group with minimum interruption in the operation of the school.

Guidelines have been developed to support your efforts, avoid conflicts and confusion for our youngsters, and further insure their safety. We want to make sure that no one gets lost, misses the bus, or ends up out in the cold due to a misunderstanding and/or miscommunication. We trust you appreciate our concern and will let the following information guide future decisions.

1. The school will make short announcements to students in emergencies...cancellation of your group's events, etc. Any notification of parents must be the group leader's responsibility. In early closing situations, children will be sent home on their regular bus.
2. While we cannot make up notices, collect things, or call parents for you, we will hand out notices that you bring to us already prepared. To assure such notices go out on time, please bring them in a day in advance of distribution. This will also avoid last minute confusion.
3. Please understand that we discourage use of school phones. You should not count on children being able to call home with messages to Mom and Dad.
4. Inquiries about transportation changes should be made to the Director of Finance and Operations, well in advance of finalizing your plans.
5. When picking up students, please park in the parking lot and walk in to the school so we know the children are dismissed safely and so you can supervise the gathering of your group.

We hope you will be able to work productively within these guidelines as our outside organizations play an important part in the lives of our youngsters. Please feel free to call if you have any questions.

CONFERENCES - PROGRESS REPORTS

Clear communication between parent, child, and teacher can contribute greatly to your child's success at school. It is important that children see parents and teachers working together in the child's interest.

Parent-teacher conferences are very helpful. They are formally scheduled for October. In addition, conferences will be scheduled as needed at the end of January and April and parents are encouraged to meet with teachers at any time during the school year. If you ever have any questions about school matters, please contact the teacher and make arrangements for an appointment.

Student evaluation and reporting to parents are routine school functions. Report cards are issued during the months of December, March, and June for all grade levels.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRAL

The school has a responsibility to both identify and provide a program for children with special needs of a handicapping nature. Further, it requires that we identify children who may be gifted or talented. To institute a formal special education referral you may write to the principal describing your child's exceptional abilities and/or special needs.

STUDENT RECORDS; CONFIDENTIALITY

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access.

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

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent the FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (Note: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)

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

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

RELATIONS WITH NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

The Board of Education, unless informed otherwise, assumes that there are no restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent's right to be kept informed of the student's school progress and activities. If restrictions are made relative to these rights, the custodial parent will be required to submit a certified copy of the court order, to the principal, which curtails these specific rights.

Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, such as a final divorce decree which includes specific denial of visitation rights or a restraining order denying such rights, the non-custodial parent, upon written request may view the student's educational, medical, or similar records maintained in such student's cumulative record, receive school progress reports, visit the child briefly at school and have an opportunity to conference with the student's teacher(s).

The Board of Education presumes that the person who enrolls a student in school is the student's custodial parent. Further, the parent with whom the student resides is known as the custodial parent unless a legal document or signed parental agreement indicates otherwise. Verification may be required from the custodial parent.

While both parents can visit the student at school, only the custodial parent has the right to remove the student from school property. Only a verified note from the custodial parent will be cause for exception to this provision. If school personnel anticipate a possible student abduction, law enforcement personnel are to be notified immediately.

The custodial parent has the responsibility to keep the school office informed as to the address of residence, in a manner determined by the school, and how he/she may be contacted at all times. Any legal documents which restrict the rights of the non-custodial parent must be provided by the custodial parent.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR- CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

In addition to ongoing efforts to improve our academic program, we give special attention to the development of positive student behaviors to prepare our students to be successful now, in their middle years and beyond. Our philosophy is based upon the belief that children are responsible for their own actions.

Region # 12 is dedicated to strengthen the character of our students by encouraging a consistent set of ethical values that direct and guide our behavioral choices. These universal values, which transcend political, religious, cultural and economic differences, are encompassed by the Golden Rule:

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

We have safe schools and they will remain safe if we continue to work together. It is our hope that the power and influence of the school-family partnership will provide consistent messages to our students regarding the development of positive student behaviors and thus, improve student learning.

Character Traits:

1. HONESTY

Adherence to facts; the capacity or condition of being trustworthy, fair, truthful and sincere to self and others with the absence of deceit; integrity.

- Do tell the truth, be sincere, keep your word and honor your commitments.

2. RESPECT

Due regard for all people, other living things, and property – additionally for those in honorable, esteemed, and proper authority; and at a higher level, something that should be earned and maintained. Respect is the realization that each of us is a small part of larger realities that we hold in high esteem and honor.

- Do judge all people on their merits, be courteous and polite, tolerant, appreciative and accepting individual differences.

3. COURAGE

The quality of mind that enables one to face danger and difficulties with firmness and resolution; a willingness to take risks in situations from the commonplace to the heroic; valor.

- Do the right thing on your behalf and on the behalf of others; stand up for your beliefs and show self-discipline.

4. CARING

Feeling concern, interest, sensitivity to the needs, feelings, and well being of others; kindness that compels us to help others; empathy, compassion.

- Do show you care about others through kindness, caring, sharing and compassion; live by ‘The Golden Rule’ and help others.

5. CITIZENSHIP

Knowing and acting on the needs of your community; being part of a group larger than self; taking responsibility for the greater good.

- Do play by the rules, obey laws, do your share, respect authority, stay informed, vote, protect your neighbors, pay your taxes, be charitable, help your community by volunteering service, protect the environment and conserve natural resources.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

Being morally accountable for actions; being of good credit and repute; being trustworthy and fair.

- Do think before you act, consider the consequences on all the stakeholders affected, think for the long term, be reliable; be accountable, accept responsibility for the consequences of your choices, set a good example for those who look up to you, do your best and keep trying; be committed and keep your promises.

Good conduct is synonymous with good citizenship. Students are expected to exercise good citizenship at all times while in school, attending school- related activities and after school activities conducted at the school. This includes showing respect for the rights of others and regard for personal and school property. Students should strive to contribute to the climate of the school by being courteous and well mannered.

Students should understand that the most serious infractions of school policies are those that detract from the learning of the group and/or infringe on the rights of others (such as hurting other people, damaging property or being discourteous).

Each primary school has established playground, assembly and cafeteria rules which are posted and reviewed with students. Policies and processes regarding expectations for student behavior have been adopted and shared with all school personnel and children.

Choices that violate school rules and other inappropriate behaviors are cause for disciplinary actions including referral to the office and, in the most severe cases, referral to the police.

POOR CHOICES

- Possession of “nuisance devices” such as balloons, water pistols, Walkman and other such objects
- Disruptive behavior
- Disrespect to, or failure to follow the directions of a staff member
- Running, pushing or shoving
- Using profane language or gestures

STOP THE WORLD BEHAVIOR

- Threatening, intimidating, harassing another person
- Fighting
- Theft
- Destruction of, or defacing of school or personal property – whether accidental or not
- Possession of firecrackers, matches, lighters, etc. or other explosive devices
- Smoking or having cigarettes in school
- The use of, sale of, distribution of, possession of, or being under the influence of narcotics, dangerous drugs, controlled substances or alcoholic beverages
- Possession of a weapon/ weapon-like or dangerous object

Disciplinary guidelines are required to establish and maintain order, safety and an atmosphere conducive to learning. Effective discipline is a positive, continuing process of understanding students' needs, acknowledging good behavior and discouraging inappropriate behavior. Caring and understanding are the keys to promoting a safe and productive environment. Positive self-directed behaviors, problem solving, thinking, acting and reacting responsibly will be encouraged, praised and rewarded.

**IF A CHILD MAKES A POOR CHOICE OR INFRINGES ON THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS,
THEN APPROPRIATE ACTION WILL BE TAKEN such as:**

- Time out, conflict resolution activities, removal of privileges, notification of parents, arrangement of at-home consequences, guided writing about behaviors, temporary removal from activities including In-School Suspension (Seclusion), Out-of-School Suspension/Expulsion (Removal from School), reimbursement for damaged property.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (Seclusion—Parent/Guardian will be notified)

- An In-School Suspension is the temporary removal of a student from classes and all other scheduled activities while under proper educational supervision.
- Students are removed from the normal classroom atmosphere and expected to accomplish prescribe assignments. While on suspension, students are expected to adhere to all school rules.
- Parents may be required to provide transportation. Our normal suspension area is part of our office. Students on In-School Suspension will not disturb office personnel and will be respectful to them at all times.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION/EXPULSION (Removal from school)

Out-of-School Suspension from school will occur for incidents of a more serious nature, such as the use of or possession or distribution of drugs, gross misbehavior, possession of weapons/knives/matches/lighters/other related items, failing to show improved behavior after a number of In-School-Suspension referrals, and other causes deemed necessary by the administration. A student found to be in possession of a firearm or dangerous weapon, as defined by law, shall be subject to an expulsion of up to one calendar year.

BULLYING POLICY

Our Board of Education, in accordance with state law, adopted a policy expressly forbidding bullying behavior in the schools. The policy includes regulations that prohibit bullying behavior, articulation of the process for reporting and investigating alleged bullying behavior, and the promotion of an educational program promoting appropriate social behavior that is positive and respectful, establishing an atmosphere in which bullying will not be tolerated.

The Board of Education's policy is as follows: *Bullying behavior by any student in the Shepaug Regional School District is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. 'Bullying' means any overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. Students and parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.*

The Board of Education's policy will be reviewed and revised to reflect Connecticut legislative House Bill No. 5826. The bill eliminates the requirement that the acts be repeated against the same student over time and instead requires only that the acts be committed more than once against any student during the school year.

Our present character education program very nicely begins the educational process of establishing appropriate social behavior to create an atmosphere that discourages bullying behavior. Our health curriculum also contains units targeted to promote communication, friendship, assertiveness skills and helps students recognize behavior that may constitute bullying.

All forms of inappropriate behavior are taken seriously and addressed immediately. Any questions or concerns regarding the policy should be directed to your child's teacher or the school principal.

GUIDELINES REGARDING SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Students possess the right to be free of unreasonable searches and seizures. Balanced against this right is the school officials' responsibility to create and maintain an environment consistent with the school's educational mission. School officials have the duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of all students under their authority.

Desk and school closets/lockers are the property of the schools. The right to inspect desks and storage areas may be exercised by the school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property.

Parents should monitor what children bring to school so that inappropriate items do not appear on the bus or on the school grounds.

STUDENT DRESS

Students should wear clothing that is clean, does not disrupt the learning process, and does not present a safety hazard, i.e. wooden soled shoes that slip easily and fall off frequently. Parents can encourage a productive attitude toward school by providing clothing that is more appropriate for the child's age and the formal task of learning.

Certain school activities may require special attention regarding student dress such as:

- Physical Education – Sneakers are required for each physical education class session. In winter, an extra pair of sneakers should be brought to school or left in school so that the child will have clean safe footwear for physical education classes.
- Recess- Children should wear clothing appropriate for seasonal changes.

TOYS/SPORTING GOODS/ANIMALS

Students are not permitted to bring any toys, dolls, trading cards, radios, CD players, Ipods, Gameboys, control cars, etc. to school unless specifically requested or approved by the teacher.

Animals may be brought to school by parents for educational purposes if permission has been secured from the administration and classroom teacher beforehand.

HOMEWORK

Homework is introduced in the elementary school years to encourage responsibility, as well as good habits and study skills. Homework is an integral part of the instructional program and learning process, which allows students to follow through on their personal commitment to academic work. It is meaningful and helps students develop constructive attitudes and sharpen useful skills.

The regular practice of homework requires self-discipline and enables students to function as individuals. Homework is fundamental to the individual's learning and development; yet, it is recognized that some time be allotted for physical and social recreation. It is expected that each student will accept the responsibility in balancing homework and outside activities.

It is understood that each grade level serves as the foundation for the next. We recognize that activities may need to accommodate students with different learning and organizational difficulties or those with special needs.

Homework:

- Reinforces skills and material learned in class.
- Prepares students for upcoming class topics.
- Teaches students to work independently.
- Aids in evaluating student progress.
- Teaches students to assume responsibility for their own work.
- Teaches students organizational and time-management skills.

Grade Level Guidelines:

Kindergarten: Homework teaches children to be responsible and dependable. Teachers may ask students to count articles at home or collect items to bring to school. Parents are encouraged to read regularly to their children.

Grade One: There may be daily and or/weekly homework assignments. Parents should review homework assignments. In addition, children are expected to read, practice math facts and do spelling word activities at home.

Grade Two: There may be daily and/or weekly homework assignments. Parents should review homework assignments. In addition, children are expected to read, practice math facts and do spelling word activities at home.

Grade Three: There are two or three short assignments a night on Mondays through Thursdays. Usually work is not assigned over the weekend or holidays, unless students have incomplete work or long-term project work. Students are expected to read and practice math facts on a daily basis.

Grade Four: There is approximately 30 to 45 minutes of homework every night, in addition to long term projects, such as book reports. Usually work is not assigned over the weekend or holidays, unless students have incomplete work or long-term project work. Unfinished work will extend that time, and recess time may be lost to complete assignments. Students are expected to read and practice math facts at home on a daily basis.

Grade Five: There is approximately 45 to 60 minutes of homework every night, in addition to long term projects, such as book reports. Usually work is not assigned over the weekend or holidays, unless students have incomplete work or long-term project work. Unfinished work will extend that time, and recess time may be lost to complete assignments. Students are expected to read, practice math facts and review class work at home on a daily basis.

COOPERATIVE TEAM LEARNING

Regional School District #12 defines Cooperative Team Learning in the following way: interactive group assignments where assessments are focused primarily on the individual's contribution to the overall group's success. Skills reinforced include problem solving, effective communication, sharing knowledge, ethical behavior, commitment, exploration and discovery. Cooperative learning enhances individual responsibility and education as well as addresses the various multiple intelligences. Carefully designed Cooperative Team Learning lessons foster opportunities for students to engage thoroughly in active learning, master key academic concepts, and ultimately, to stimulate life-long learning skills.

RULES OF BEHAVIOR ON SCHOOL BUSES

School transportation services are provided exclusively for the benefit and safety of students. The following rules are devised for these reasons.

Parents should periodically review the rules with their children. The following rules of behavior on school buses shall prevail in all instances:

1. Students shall remain off the roadway while awaiting the arrival of the bus. They should refrain from throwing things or playing at a bus stop. They should respect the property rights of others when waiting on or near private property for the school bus.
2. Students shall respect and obey the bus driver, whose job it is to transport students safely. Directions given by the driver are to be obeyed in all instances in regard to behavior, boarding, or discharging points, vulgar language, movement about the bus, etc.
3. Students shall enter the bus in an orderly fashion and proceed immediately to a seat, and remain seated until their destination is reached. Buses are not to move until all students are seated. Standing is not permitted at any time. The bus driver or the principal may assign students specific seats at any time.
4. Younger students should be permitted to enter first.
5. Students shall keep all appendages of their body inside the bus when seated near an open window.
6. Windows may be opened to the second catch with permission of the driver.
7. All articles such as athletic equipment, books, musical instruments, etc. shall be kept out of the aisles.
8. Eating is not permitted on the bus at any time.
9. Use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol, in any form, is prohibited. Matches, lighters, and weapons are prohibited.
10. Marking, destroying, or mutilating school buses is prohibited.
11. Unnecessary conversation with the driver is prohibited.
12. Any form of obscene language or gesture is prohibited.
13. Students are required to keep their hands and feet to themselves, and off the seat backs and cushions.
14. After leaving the bus, the student will step away from the bus. If crossing the roadway is necessary, the student must cross in front of the bus and in sight of the driver while all traffic is stopped.
15. Students should be on time at their regular bus stop.

16. Students shall not touch or handle safety equipment on the bus.

Students are expected to be at their regularly assigned bus stop on time. If a student is not present at the bus stop at the time of the bus arrival, and does not arrive within a reasonable amount of time (no more than one minute), the bus driver will continue on her/his route. It shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the student to arrange for the student's transportation to school.

Your cooperation in these very important matters will be greatly appreciated.

PASS SYSTEM FOR TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

The following pass system for transportation changes has been instituted to efficiently provide for student security.

Students are assigned a specific means of transportation to move children from their home or pick-up point to school and back again. On occasion, permission may be granted to change the regular means of transportation. Changes must not cause a bus to be overloaded nor cause changing of an established bus route.

One Time Change for a Specific Time and Event

Example: Getting off regular bus at a different stop.
 Riding a different bus for a specific event - such as a birthday party.
 Getting picked up at the end of the day by a parent.
 Walking or bicycling on a particular day.

The student must bring in one parent permission note each time. The office will retain the note and issue a pass for that day. The student will present the pass to the bus driver, or, the teacher in the case of a parent pick-up, walking, or bicycling.

PARENT PERMISSION NOTES SHOULD BE PROPERLY DATED, SIGNED BY THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN AND CLEARLY STATE DETAILS OF THE REQUEST, INCLUDING THE NUMBER OF THE BUS YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO RIDE.

Long Term and Permanent Transportation Change

Example: Pick-up or drop-off at daycare.
 Riding a different bus or getting off a regular bus at a different stop for activities such as scouts, a library program, choir practice, etc.
 Staying at school for activities such as events listed above.

A Special Transportation Request form must be completed, signed and submitted to the Business Manager, Shepaug Valley Regional District No. 12, P.O. Box 386, Washington Depot, CT 06794. Transportation Request Forms are available in the school offices as well as on the region's website. A parent permission note is required for long term programs taking place at your child's school.

ONCE A LONG-TERM CHANGE IS MADE, A PARENT CONTACT IS REQUIRED TO ALTER THE ORIGINAL REQUEST.

Example: If a child who attends choir practice every Wednesday tells us that she/he does not want to go on a particular day, but does not bring in a note to that effect from you, she/he is sent to choir practice.

Any and all special arrangements for bus pick-up and/or drop-off of students which were made during the past school year are not valid for the present school year. Any request for a special arrangement must be made in writing to the Business Manager. Such requests will be evaluated to determine if a case of hardship exists, to determine if an overload will be created on the bus, and to determine if route-riding time will be increased.

IF AN EVENT IS CANCELLED, THE GROUP LEADER MUST NOTIFY THE SCHOOL. ANY NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GROUP LEADER. IN SUCH INSTANCES, INCLUDING ANY EARLY DISMISSAL DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS, CHILDREN WILL BE SENT HOME ON THEIR REGULAR BUS.

Group leaders should provide the school office with the following information well in advance of activities:

1. Name of organization.
2. Leader's name, address, and phone number where leader can be reached during the day.
3. Date, time, and day of meeting.
4. Name and grade of all students participating in the activity.

We need your help in these matters. We want to make sure your child does not end up standing in the cold outside your house while you are away thinking your child is at an after school program.

TECHNOLOGY

Computer Instruction

The Board recognizes that our nation is moving from an industrial society to an informational society. An integral part of that society is what is now new technology. We believe that computers, video, and other technical advances need to become part of the educational program for students in our schools and for adults in our community education programs.

Both computer technology and video technology can enhance the educational process. They are applicable across grade levels and can be used in every curriculum area. However, the study of technological advances and the various applications are only a part of the educational program. Technology is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. The focus must be on what is best for the student and how best to meet the student's educational needs.

The district will provide opportunities for students to go beyond the state of awareness of these technologies to a state of direct application. To accomplish this, the Board is committed to provide in-service training for teachers and the necessary personnel and equipment within its available resources.

The development and updating of the technology plan will be carried out by the Board with the involvement of the administration, staff, community-parent advisory committees, and students.

Classroom teachers will teach classes with support from our Educational Technology Specialists (one full time at Washington Primary School and one shared between Booth Free School and Burnham School). All students will receive instruction in the computer lab each week; and we aim to have the use of technology integrated into the classrooms for projects and lessons as a tool rather than as a separate subject.

Acceptable Use of Computers and the Internet

Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that staff members are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on the district servers will be private.

The following behaviors are not permitted on district networks:

- Sharing confidential information on students or employees;
- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures;
- Assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office, external to the school, or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition as is consistent with state statute;
- Using obscene language;
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others;
- Engaging in practices that threaten the network (e.g., loading files that may introduce a virus);
- Violating copyright laws;
- Using others' passwords;
- Trespassing in others' folders, documents, or files;
- Intentionally wasting limited resources;
- Employing the network for commercial purposes, financial gain, or fraud;
- Violating regulations prescribed by the network provider; and
- Promoting, supporting or celebrating religion or religious institutions.

All technology resources are provided solely for legitimate and authorized academic, instructional, research, administrative and public service purposes consistent with the educational objectives of the Region 12 Board of Education.

The Regional School District #12 mission statement about the web...

Any pages or links posted on the school and/or district servers must follow the guidelines and responsibilities pertaining to content standards, student records, copyright and technical standards.

Content Guidelines

1. All subject matter on school district web pages and their links must relate to curriculum and instruction, school-authorized activities, or information about the district or its mission. Staff or student work may be published only as it relates to a class project, course, or other school-related activity.
2. All materials posted to the web and or district server by teachers will be the responsibility of the individual teacher. There will be a periodic review of all content by the respective administrators and superintendent. In either situation, the superintendent has overall responsibility for monitoring the appropriateness of web publishing.
3. Quality: All work should be free of any spelling or grammatical errors. On the rare occasion student work may justifiably contain spelling or grammatical errors; it should carry an explanation, such as, "These authentic samples of student work may contain spelling and/or grammar errors consistent with the development levels of the students."
4. Documents may not contain objectionable material or point directional to objectionable material.

Right of Access and Review:

Users of the District's computer-based systems and electronic information resources should not have any expectation of privacy in any use of these resources. The Region reserves the right to access user's accounts, data, and programs for management purposes, such as making backup copies and to ensure system integrity, and for monitoring purposes to assure appropriate use of these resources. Further, the District reserves the rights to access, review, edit, and delete all user files and any material stored on any system provided by the District. This includes, but is not limited to, bypassing individual passwords and monitoring the use of systems including e-mail.

The Region also reserves the right to monitor and maintain electronic records of internet usage, time spent on the Internet, and material downloaded from the internet.

Students Records & Confidentiality

1. Web publishing must follow all pertinent statutes, policies and regulations. At the elementary and middle school levels, it is expected that an annual generic parental sign-off will encompass print, and web publishing.
2. Generally, web pages should include only the first name of the student, especially at the elementary level. Documents should never include a student's home phone number, email address, address, or the names of other family members or friends.
3. Student photographs should not be individual or contain names.
4. Student grades may not be posted until such time as the district approves of a password-protected software program.

Copyright

1. Web publishing must follow all pertinent statutes, policies and regulations.
2. For each republishing (on a website or file server) of a graphic or text file which was produced externally, there must be a notice at the bottom of the page crediting the original producer. In many cases, that notice should also include the URL (web address) of the original source.
3. While the "fair use" rules governing student reports in classrooms are less stringent and permit limited use of graphics and text, staff members and students with questions regarding these guidelines are advised to check with the library media specialist at the high school/middle school before proceeding with the collection of images and/or text.
4. Purchased clip art collections usually contain some form of agreement outlining any requirements about printing credit lines on any documents which include graphics from the collection. The best advice is to read and follow the stipulations within the agreement.

Source for copyright guidelines: Bellingham (MA) Public Schools, Greenwich (CT) Public Schools.

Technical Standards

1. Technical standards have been established in the interest of maintaining a consistent identity, professional appearance, and ease of use and maintenance.
2. Each web page added to the district web site must coordinate with the district format.
3. Standard formatting should be used: browser friendly HTML editors or word processor programs that save files at HTML may be used.
4. All web page links must be tested for accuracy and operability.
5. Web pages may not contain links to other pages that are not yet completed (e.g., “under construction”). If further pages are anticipated but not yet developed, the text that will provide the link may be included but should not be made “hot” until the new page is actually in place.

Access Passwords

1. Should be kept secure and should be known by only a few key people—the teacher in charge of the web site, the Principal, the school secretary.
2. Should not be given to students as content managers. All content managers assume responsibility for all content, security, copyright and technical standards.

Roles & Responsibilities

District Webmaster: The district webmaster is responsible for (a) maintaining the district webserver and (b) providing access passwords to building webmasters and authorized sponsors.

Webmaster: The building webmasters, working closely with building principals, are responsible for developing and implementing procedures for (a) uploading material to the district web server and (b) insuring building representation on the district Web Steering Committee.

District Website Committee: The steering committee is made up of representatives from all schools. The group meets quarterly to develop and revise guidelines, share new learning, and discuss the overall status of the district web site.

The following are not permitted:

1. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures.
2. Using obscene language.
3. Giving personal information when using the system, such as complete name, address, phone number and identifiable photo without permission from teacher and parent or guardian.
4. Harassing, insulting or attacking others.
5. Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks.
6. Violating copyright laws.
7. Using others’ passwords.
8. Trespassing in others’ folders, work or files.
9. Intentionally wasting limiting resources
10. Employing the network for commercial purposes, financial gain, or fraud.

Sanctions

1. Violations may result in a loss of access.
2. Additional disciplinary action may be determined at the building level in line with existing practice regarding inappropriate language or behavior.
3. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

OPENING EXERCISES

The Pledge of Allegiance is to be part of each day’s opening exercises. Those children who have religious or conscientious objections may be tactfully excused from participating.

A moment of silent meditation, during which students may think about what is important to them, shall also be part of the opening exercises.

LUNCH AND MILK

Students must bring their lunch and snacks from home. The cost of milk is .35¢ per day. Milk may be purchased on a weekly, monthly, or yearly basis. Free and reduced milk is available based on eligibility. Forms will be sent home at the onset of the school year or upon request.

LOST AND FOUND

All articles found should be turned into the school office. A box of lost and found articles will be placed in an appropriate place within the school.

Placing your child's name on clothing will help identify misplaced articles. Clothing that is unclaimed on the last day of school will be given to the needy.

FIELD TRIPS/EXCURSIONS

Field trips are scheduled when they are considered important and relevant to a unit of study. A form will be sent home prior to the trip and will contain an itinerary of the event. **Each student must submit a form signed by a parent or guardian prior to attending any field trip or excursion. Failure to return a signed slip may result in the student remaining in school, rather than accompanying the class on the field trip.**

Parent chaperones are often requested to assist the teacher supervising children on class trips. For reasons of student security and program continuity, younger siblings should not attend field trips and only designated chaperones should accompany the class on the trip.

Soliciting Funds from and by Students

Fundraising activities may be approved by the Superintendent of schools consistent with the following guidelines:

1. Fundraising is in connection with school-sponsored projects. Requests for approval of fundraisers shall be made and approved, in writing, on the form provided.
2. There are sufficient educational or financial benefits which will accrue to the school and/or students either directly or indirectly, from the activity.
3. The mechanics or procedures of fundraising will neither be an unacceptable burden to teachers or other school staff members nor subject to the school to inappropriate risks of responsibilities in handling funds.

Upon approval by the Superintendent, information from recognized charitable and other organizations which could eventually result in voluntary student and/or parental activities, contributions, or memberships of benefit to the organization may be distributed through the schools. In these instances, the distribution of material would be the only school involvement on behalf of the organizations.

There shall be no direct solicitation of funds by outside organizations from students except on specific approval of the Board of Education.

VISITORS/OBSERVATIONS

Parents and interested citizens are welcomed and encouraged to visit our schools. All non-staff/student members entering the primary schools are asked to use the main lobby doors. Please report to the office immediately upon arrival. You will be asked to register in and out when visiting and to observe the procedure for school visitors established for that school. This procedure is to ensure the safety of our students.

Parents wishing to observe their child's class are welcome guests. Please call in advance to arrange a special appointment. This will allow you to work with the classroom teacher in arranging a time that is most beneficial to all involved. During the classroom visit, please allow the teacher to conduct the lesson. If observers have any questions or comments, it is requested that they save them until after the class is over and a time for consultation can be scheduled.

In an effort to make the most productive use of the school day and protect the educational rights of all children, we ask that visitors do not stop at classrooms unannounced to deliver a message to the teacher or child, to drop off homework or lunch, to pick up a child at dismissal time, etc. Such matters are handled most efficiently by the school office.

VOLUNTEERS

Parents are very important partners in the school's learning process. Teachers are anxious to have volunteers assist in the classroom or in some way where extra help is needed. If you are interested in being a school volunteer, please contact your child's teacher or the school office.

STUDENT VISITORS

Occasionally a parent will request that their child be allowed to bring a family visitor to school. In such cases the following guidelines will apply:

1. The parent must make the request directly to the teacher and the principal in writing.
2. Approved visits will be limited to one day in length and cannot be a disruption to the learning environment. The visit cannot be a child care arrangement. Our first responsibility is to our students. The visitor must be of an appropriate age.
3. Visitors must be properly immunized and parents must be responsible in the event of an injury occurring during the normal course of student activities.

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES BY COMMUNITY GROUPS

Community groups may request the use of school facilities for meetings, special programs, and events. Appropriate request forms are available on Region #12's website as well as at each school office and must be approved by the principal and the superintendent.

SUICIDE PREVENTION/INTERVENTION

When a staff member in the public school system is confronted with a situation in which a student makes a statement of suicidal thinking, or it appears that an attempt at suicide is possible, the following actions will take place:

1. The staff member immediately will refer the student to the appropriate guidance counselor or school psychologist.
2. In the event the staff member perceives that a student has taken action which creates a medical emergency, the school nurse will be notified immediately and emergency medical procedures will be followed.
3. The counselor will notify the Principal and the school nurse and seek the intervention of the Department of Pupil Personnel Services – either the school psychologist or the school social worker.
4. The counselor and/or Department of Student Services worker will meet with the student immediately for the purpose of establishing sequential facts or events leading to the crisis. At no time during this process is the student to be left alone.
5. The parents will be notified of the referral and of all preliminary conclusions reached.

During the conference, the parent or guardian will be advised that an immediate psychiatric evaluation is needed.

Under no circumstances is a student allowed to go home alone. The student must be released only to a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult.

If reasonable attempts to reach the parent, guardian, or other responsible adult in whose custody the student may be released are not successful, the case will be treated as a medical emergency and arrangements will be made to transport the student to an area hospital emergency room or mental health facility.

If the student requires medical attention, he/she will be transported immediately to an area hospital. The school nurse will arrange to have the parents meet the student at the hospital.

A detailed report will be written within twenty-four hours by the department worker who assumes responsibility for the case. The report shall include:

- Name of the student.
- Name of the staff member(s) involved.
- Time and date of all conferences.
- Summary of all conferences.
- Recommendations made to parents, student, and building staff.

Follow-up contact will be in accordance with the recommendations. A report will be written indicating those activities performed to follow through and ensure the safety and well-being of the student.

A copy of all reports will be submitted to the parents, the Principal, and the Director of Student Services.

Failure on the part of the family to take seriously and provide for the safety of the student in case of potential suicide will be considered emotional neglect and reported to the Department of Children and Family. (cf. 5141.4 – Child Abuse/Neglect).

If as a result of suicidal activity a need exists for changes in the student’s program, the school’s planning and placement team will convene and consult with the student’s mental health professional, the parent(s) or guardian, appropriate outside facility staff members and, if feasible, the student to plan the student’s educational program.

The school social worker or Department of Pupil Personnel Services worker who assumes responsibility for the case will maintain contact with the student’s mental health professionals to support programming needs and follow-up procedures.

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME (AIDS) INSTRUCTION

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a serious health problem in the United States. Currently there is no cure for AIDS. The Shepaug Region #12 Board of Education advocates that education about AIDS should be provided to students and that it be presented in a societal context. Specifically, students should be encouraged and instructed in how to make decisions to protect their own health as well as their responsibility to minimize the transmission of the disease. Further, the Board supports the public health community’s position that sexual abstinence is the best way to prevent the spread of AIDS. In addition, the Board believes that sexual abstinence protects the student psychologically from the stress of adult decision making during adolescence.

Parents are in a partnership with the schools in conveying health information and sound decision making to the children of Regional School District #12. For those parents who wish to handle these topics without the involvement of the schools, the administration will inform parent(s) or guardian(s) of their right to have their child(ren) excluded from AIDS instruction. The request must be presented to the principal in writing.

Currently, there is no cure for those infected with AIDS, but the Board believes that education is the best way to prevent the spread of AIDS. By learning the facts about AIDS, students will be able to make decisions that will keep them healthy and perhaps save their lives.

STUDENT HEALTH

Each school has a full time nurse.

Immunizations - As required by state law, each child shall be protected by adequate immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, mumps, hepatitis B, varicella and HIB. **Students must have these immunizations before being permitted to attend public school.**

Physical Examinations - A complete physical examination must be done within one year prior to entering kindergarten. This physical requires a CBC, immunization update, hearing and vision, along with regular requirements of a physical examination. The school will provide a form to be completed by both the parent and the physician. Students transferring into Region 12 must have a current physical exam (within the last year).

Vision and Hearing Screenings - Vision and hearing screenings will be done each year by the school nurse. Parents will be notified of any problems.

Exclusion Due to Illness - Students who have a temperature of 99.6 or higher are considered ill and will be sent home. Students must be fever free for 24 hours before reentering school. In addition, any child who is checked by the nurse and is deemed to need further attention will be sent home after conferring with the parent.

Absence Due to Illness - Regular school attendance is important. Children should be kept home when ill, but unnecessary absences should be avoided. The nurse has the responsibility to follow-up on children absent from school due to illness. A student who has been absent because of a communicable disease will be seen by the nurse upon reentering school. Students returning to school after an absence must bring an explanatory note from the parent or guardian.

Transporting and Administering Medication - Under Connecticut State Law the nurse may not administer any medication, either prescribed or over the counter, without the written authorization of the physician and parent. The parent or other authorized adult must transport the medication to school with the proper form completed and given directly to the principal, nurse, or head teacher. The medication must be in the original pharmacy container. The amount of medication is limited to a 45-day supply. **Under no circumstances may a child transport medication to school.** (The only exception to this would be for students who have a doctor's authorization to carry an inhaler or injectable adrenalin for severe allergy reaction.) For your convenience, there is a copy of the Physician's Authorization Form attached to the back of this handbook. If you have any further questions, please call your local school.

Accidents - All school personnel are constantly aware of the need to keep alert to the possibility of accidents. We try constantly to prevent mishaps and dangerous situations, but on occasion accidents occur. When a student is involved in an accident during school time, the nurse will contact the parents, if necessary. The head teacher and/or principal will be made aware of serious accidents and of planned procedure for care. Should referral to a doctor for treatment be necessary, the school will attempt to contact the parent immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, persons listed by the parent as emergency contacts will be called in an attempt to locate the parent. If the parent/guardian is unable to be contacted, the school nurse and/or doctor will be asked to recommend the course of action to be taken. Parents and teachers should instruct young children to report school accidents to school personnel. Parents must report all school-related accidents to the school nurse.

Transportation in the Event of Illness or Accident - If a child is ill or injured and should be sent home, the school will make every effort to contact the parent or those persons designated by the parent as being responsible to care for the child. It is the parent's responsibility, under these conditions, to arrange transportation for taking the child home. The school will not provide transportation for children under these circumstances.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of a disability in any program or activity which receives Federal financial assistance. The person who is responsible for assuring that the district complies with Section 504 is Joseph Boyle, Pupil Personnel Director, 868-6100.

PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE

In order to properly implement the Board policy prohibiting school personnel from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any child, the following administrative regulations are hereby established:

1. Psychotropic drugs are defined as prescription medications for behavioral or social-emotional concerns, such as attention deficits, impulsivity, anxiety, depression and thought disorders.
2. All school personnel, including school nursing and mental health professionals, school psychologists, guidance counselors, social workers, teachers and administrators are prohibited from any communications, both oral and written, to the parents and/or guardians of a child in which the use of psychotropic drugs is recommended.
3. School medical staff, which includes school nurses and the District Medical Advisor, is permitted to discuss with parents and/or guardians of a child the advisability of a medical evaluation by an appropriate medical practitioner when there are behaviors or concerns that may be indicative of medication considerations.
4. School personnel, through the Planning and Placement Team referral process, shall communicate to the school medical staff about a child's behavior that may indicate the need for an evaluation.
5. The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) has the authority and responsibility to recommend a medical evaluation as part of an initial evaluation or reevaluation as needed to determine a child's eligibility for special education and related services, or educational needs for a child's individualized education program (IEP).

6. As required, the District may seek remedy through the due process provisions allowed under the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA) if a parent and/or guardian refuses consent for a reevaluation.
7. Appropriate medical practitioners, such as psychiatric consultant or physician, with whom the District contracts for services to students or to whom the District makes a referral for an evaluation may recommend such medications.
8. School personnel may consult with the medical practitioner performing the evaluation with the informed consent of the parent or guardian of the child or the child if eighteen or older. The purposes of such communication include the following:
 - a. Conveying concerns or observations of a child, both prior to and following a medical evaluation;
 - b. Requesting health records and other educationally relevant medical evaluations;
 - c. Providing school records to medical practitioners upon request;
 - d. Providing information on school performance to help a medical practitioner monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of psychotropic drugs and/or other medical interventions and/or treatment;
 - e. Discussing with medical practitioners appropriate and necessary nursing or health care in schools to ensure student safety;
 - f. Disclosure of educationally relevant information by the medical practitioner to school personnel.
9. A referral to DCF (Department of Children and Families) for consideration of abuse or neglect may not be made solely on the basis of a parent's refusal to administer psychotropic drugs.

PESTICIDE POLICY

Section 1.0 -General

Public Act No. 99-165 requires that local or regional boards of education operating with or without an integrated pest management plan for schools provide a system for notification of application of pesticides. Under this Act, a "pesticide" is defined as a "fungicide used on plants, an insecticide, a herbicide or a rodenticide but does not mean a sanitizer, disinfectant, antimicrobial agent or a pesticide bait."

Section 2.0 - Statement of Policy

Application of pesticides in buildings and on grounds of schools under the control of the Shepaug Valley Regional District No. 12 is governed by the procedures outlined in the integrated pest management plan (**Section 5.0**). Additionally, the timing of pesticide applications will be such that proper notification, as detailed in **Section 3.0**, may be accomplished. Further, the restrictions placed on pesticide application by Public Act 99-165, as detailed in **Section 4.0**, will be honored.

Section 3.0 - Notification

In accordance with Public Act 99-165, certain notifications must be made to parents and guardians of enrolled students of Region 12 schools, as well as to staff. On or after July 1, 2000 a letter stating the policy of the Regional District No. 12 will be sent to the staff of each school and to the parents or guardians of each child. This notification must be sent every year at the beginning of school. Additionally, this letter must be sent to the parents or guardians of any child who transfers to the school during the school year. The letter shall contain the following information (A model letter is included as **Appendix I**)

- Any staff, parent, or guardian who would like prior notice of pesticide applications at the school may register at the school for this notice.
- Procedures for notification in the event of emergency application of pesticides shall be included.
- Any modification to the pesticide application policy shall be included in this letter.

Notification of planned applications of pesticides must be mailed to parents, guardians, and Board of Education Members if they have requested such notification so that they may be received 24 hours prior to the application. Notice shall be given by any means practicable to school staff who have registered for such notice. In the event of emergency pesticide application, notification shall be made to registered individuals on or before the day of application.

All notifications shall include the following information:

- Name of the active ingredient of the pesticide being applied.
- The target pest.
- The location of the application on the school property.
- The date of the application.
- The name of the school administrator, or a designee, who may be contacted for further information.

Forms for notification of pesticide application are available in all Region 12 school offices.

ASBESTOS INSPECTION/REMOVAL

As a result of Federal Law and State of Connecticut regulation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), school districts throughout the STATE of Connecticut are required to inspect all buildings in order to:

1. Identify friable and no-friable asbestos present
2. Develop asbestos management plans.
3. Implement any necessary actions.

Shepaug Region #12 employs a safety consultant who is an accredited Asbestos Inspector and Asbestos Management Planner. This inspector has surveyed all of our school buildings. A management plan, including the inspection report, is available in each school office.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

All teachers, principals, guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, school nurses and school doctors, and paraprofessionals such as teachers' assistants are required by law to report to the state if they suspect that a child:

- has non-accidental injuries which appear to have been caused by the person responsible for his or her care;

- has physical injuries inconsistent with an explanation of the injuries; or

- has a condition resulting from maltreatment, such as malnutrition, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, deliberate failure to provide necessities like food, clothing or shelter, and emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

PUBLIC RELATIONS/PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASES

Throughout the course of the school year, there will be many opportunities for newspaper photographs to be taken of the students at school.

If you **DO NOT** want the school to use a picture of your child in public relations or public information releases, please notify the school office in writing.

NAMES, ADDRESSES, PHONE NUMBERS

The P.T.O., parents of your child's classmates, and room mothers often request the names, addresses and phone numbers to facilitate communication about school activities as well as birthday gatherings, playdates, etc. The school regularly complies with such requests.

If you **DO NOT** want the school to share the information, please notify the school office in writing.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

SHEPAUG VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT #12

Booth Free School * Burnham School * Washington Primary School

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Elementary School Student/Parent Handbook and that I have reviewed it with my child(ren).

Child's Name

Teacher

Child's Name

Teacher

Child's Name

Teacher

Child's Name

Teacher

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date