

Arlington School District  
Family Information Guide  
2026-2027



Welcome to the Arlington School District:

The Arlington School District includes Arlington Memorial High School and Fisher Elementary School.

**Arlington Memorial High School:**

- Principal - Deanne Lacoste
- Assistant Principal - Alex Borsari
- Main Phone Number: 802-375-2589

Office of the Superintendent Contact Information

Address: 184 North St Suite 1, Bennington, Vermont 05201

Main Phone Number: 802-447-7501

Main Fax Number: 802-447-0475

**Superintendent Timothy Payner**

- Email: [timothy.payne@svsu.org](mailto:timothy.payne@svsu.org)
- Phone Number: 802-447-7501
- Phone Number: 802-447-7501

**Director of Human Resources Nick Gault**

- Email: [nick.gault@svsu.org](mailto:nick.gault@svsu.org)
- Phone Number: 802-447-7501

**Director of Student Support Services Kate Abbott**

- Email: [kate.abbott@svsu.org](mailto:kate.abbott@svsu.org)
- Phone Number: 802-447-7501

**Director of Finance Renee Gordon**

- Email: [renee.gordon@svsu.org](mailto:renee.gordon@svsu.org)
- Phone Number: 802-447-7501

**Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Melissa Senecal**

- Email: [melissa.senecal@svsu.org](mailto:melissa.senecal@svsu.org)
- Phone Number: 802-447-7501

**Director of Facilities, Management and Operations Holly Andersen**

- Email: [holly.andersen@svsu.org](mailto:holly.andersen@svsu.org)
- Phone Number: 802-447-7501

**Director of Early Childhood Education Meghan Meszkat**

- Email: [meghan.meszkat@svsu.org](mailto:meghan.meszkat@svsu.org)
- Phone Number: 802-447-7501

**Director of Technology Adam Suzor**

- Email: [adam.suzor@svsu.org](mailto:adam.suzor@svsu.org)
- Phone Number: 802-447-7501

ASD Board of Directors:

The school board is the board of trustees for education on behalf of the community, entrusted with assuring the young people of the community receive a high-quality education and taxpayers receive an excellent return on their investment.

### **Responsibilities**

1. Elect officers and representatives to the SVSU from its membership.
2. Create a vision for education in the community.
3. Establish policy parameters to carry out the vision.
4. Hire a superintendent to provide leadership and to manage the district.
5. Monitor progress toward the vision.
6. Develop and adopt a budget to support the vision, and assure sound financial oversight.
7. Engage the community in supporting the education of students.
8. Fulfill other legally mandated responsibilities.

*“The Essential Work of Vermont School Boards” by VT School Boards Association*

•

### **Teresa Sweet**

- Email: [teresa.sweet@svsu.org](mailto:teresa.sweet@svsu.org)
- Term Expires: March, 2026

### **Chelsea Thompson**

- Email: [chelsea.thompson@svsu.org](mailto:chelsea.thompson@svsu.org)
- Term expires: March, 2029

### **Nicol Whalen**

- Email: [nicol.whalen@svsu.org](mailto:nicol.whalen@svsu.org)
- Term Expires: March, 2028

### **Todd Wilkins (chair)**

- Email: [todd.wilkins@svsu.org](mailto:todd.wilkins@svsu.org)
- Term Expires: March, 2027

### **Dan Wood**

- Email: [dan.wood@svsu.org](mailto:dan.wood@svsu.org)
- Term Expires: March, 2027

For more information regarding school boards, please visit the SVSU website at [www.svsu.org](http://www.svsu.org).

## EDUCATIONAL CULTURE AT ARLINGTON MEMORIAL

An educational culture is a belief system that reflects the norms of a community, is incorporated into the school's mission, and is established through the consistent actions of a school system on behalf of its students. While this culture differs from town to town and district to district, there are several important qualities that remain constant in an educational setting regardless of the many individual or philosophical differences that exist from school to school.

At Arlington Memorial, our educational philosophy focuses on four important, interrelated and all-encompassing qualities that are key and necessary to ensure a student's success in school, and at the same time, establish a culture in which we want our students to thrive. Success is the goal we set and encourage all students to strive for and help them to achieve. As educators, it is in part our responsibility to assist students in accomplishing their goals by sharing our experiences and knowledge and by guiding students through what are sometimes difficult and complex decisions. The success of a student can be measured in a number of ways, but most importantly, we strive to develop well-prepared students who, as adults, contribute to society in a positive, meaningful way. It is imperative that our students possess the qualities necessary to realize their potential; and thus, be successful in whatever field of study or job they pursue. The personal qualities we believe all students must have to ensure this success are *Pride, Respect, Responsibility, and Accountability*.

These above-mentioned qualities are displayed in part on how students present themselves through their appearance, in the quality of their school work, in lessons they learn, in standards they achieve, and how students feel about themselves and their school. A school where students have a sense of pride and respect creates an atmosphere where these qualities become part of an everyday theme and become ingrained in a school's culture. Students learn to accept others and their differences, develop a respect for an individual's or school's property, assume responsibility for themselves, and become accountable for doing the very best they can.

There are many factors that contribute to a student experiencing success. The strong influence of the home, involvement in activities outside of the classroom through athletics, theater and music, as well as service on the student council, or being involved in other extra-curricular activities a school has to offer. As educators, we must ensure our time and energy meets the growing needs of our students with a sense of understanding and compassion, combined with a work ethic that underscores a commitment to excellence. That is the educational culture Arlington Memorial strives to achieve.

### Core Values and Beliefs

Arlington Memorial, in partnership with the community, believes in creating a safe, respectful and rigorous academic environment that will prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Students will pursue a course of study that fosters creativity, problem solving, personal responsibility, good decision-making, and respect for all members of our growing global community.

## **Student Expectations for Learning**

With support from the Arlington Memorial community, students will:

- read, write and communicate effectively.
- think critically and creatively to solve complex problems.
- utilize technology to access and use information in an appropriate way.
- interact and collaborate competently and respectfully with others.
- demonstrate an understanding of civic rights and responsibilities.

## **Expectations for School**

Arlington Memorial offers a curriculum which meets individual needs, abilities, and interests. It will also provide opportunities for students to develop critical-thinking skills to make responsible decisions. Arlington Memorial promotes cooperation between the school and the home, and strives for effective school-community relationships.

Dear Arlington Memorial Families:

Happy August! We are excited to welcome students and staff to Arlington Memorial for the 2026-2027 school year. This letter outlines important dates and information to begin the school year.

Arrival/Dismissal 7:45 am - School open for breakfast (**all students must report to the cafeteria**)

8:00 Arrival

\*buses arrive until 8:10

3:00 Dismissal

A bus schedule is enclosed.

### Student Schedules

Please review the schedule with your child. If you have questions, please contact our school counselor, Ms. Lederer-Barnes.

### New Staff:

We have a strong belief in the power of great teachers to impact a student's life and we look forward to working with the dynamic AMHS staff. Please join us in supporting our staff and welcoming our new staff members to our school community!

Errin Pickerin - RN

Jonathan Schiff - High School English

Chris Pendlebury - Custodian

Marisa Thomas - Guidance / Front Office

### 2026-2027 Arlington School District Handbook

The Arlington School District Handbook is available on the SVSU and Arlington Schools website. If you would like a paper copy please send in a note indicating so, and we will send one home with your child.

### 2026-2027 Arlington Memorial Family Information Guide

The Arlington Memorial Family Information Guide will provide families with important information for the 2024-2025 school year that is not included in the ASD Handbook. The Information Guide will be shared via email communication and posted on our website. Take the time to read through the guide as there are changes from previous years. It is the responsibility of each family to understand the school's procedures and policies.

### 2026-2027 Essential "Back to School" Paperwork

On Wednesday, August 26, 2026, your child will bring paperwork home from school. Please read, sign, and return the paperwork to school as soon as possible!

### Breakfast/Lunch

All students at public schools will receive free breakfast and lunch for the 2026-2027 school year. All families will receive Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility paperwork on the first day of school. It is imperative that ALL FAMILIES regardless of eligibility status complete this paperwork to support the funding and maintenance of the meals program.

## Communication

We strive to provide ongoing, effective and informative communication within our community. Our website, as well as our Twitter pages, are filled with news, announcements, celebrations and upcoming events. In addition, we use email communication to keep families informed of critical information, important updates, and our weekly newsletter. Our main communication tool for sharing student progress updates (grades) is our Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Information on accessing the portal will be sent home to all families on the first day of school. If you have questions regarding your child's progress, please reach out to a teacher directly.

At AMHS our educational culture is defined by pride, respect, responsibility, and accountability. These 4 attributes guide the work of students and staff, along with expectations of the greater community. We expect our learning community to exhibit these traits in their words and actions, and we will hold them accountable to do so. We believe in working with families to support the ongoing social-emotional, physical, and cognitive growth of all students, and we look forward to partnering with you this year.

We are very excited to begin the 2026-2027 school year, and we're honored to lead the Arlington learning community. As the school year begins, and throughout the year, please feel free to reach out to us with questions, concerns, and ideas. We hope you enjoy the final days of summer.

Respectfully,

Deanne Lacoste - Principal

Alex Borsari - Assistant Principal

[deanne.lacoste@svsu.org](mailto:deanne.lacoste@svsu.org) or [alex.borsari@svsu.org](mailto:alex.borsari@svsu.org)

802-375-2589 ext. 204

802-375-2589 ext. 112

## Arlington Memorial Staff

### ADMINISTRATORS

|                |                     |                                                                      |
|----------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Deanne Lacoste | Principal           | <a href="mailto:deanne.lacoste@svsu.org">deanne.lacoste@svsu.org</a> |
| Alex Borsari   | Assistant Principal | <a href="mailto:alex.borsari@svsu.org">alex.borsari@svsu.org</a>     |

### FACULTY & STAFF

|                       |                                     |                                                                                    |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aschmann, James       | English                             | <a href="mailto:james.aschmann@svsu.org">james.aschmann@svsu.org</a>               |
| Alex Borsari          | Athletic Director                   | <a href="mailto:alex.borsari@svsu.org">alex.borsari@svsu.org</a>                   |
| Brett ApRoberts       | Science - Middle School             | <a href="mailto:brett.aproberts@svsu.org">brett.aproberts@svsu.org</a>             |
| A. Fitzgerald-Matson  | Math                                | <a href="mailto:lee.fitzgerald-mason@svsu.org">lee.fitzgerald-mason@svsu.org</a>   |
| Kyle Callanan         | Physical Education/Health           | <a href="mailto:kyle.callanan@svsu.org">kyle.callanan@svsu.org</a>                 |
| Stephen Carknard      | Middle School Math                  | <a href="mailto:stephen.carknard@svsu.org">stephen.carknard@svsu.org</a>           |
| Christine Colella     | Science                             | <a href="mailto:christine.coella@svsu.org">christine.coella@svsu.org</a>           |
| Marshall Cross        | Math                                | <a href="mailto:marshall.cross@svsu.org">marshall.cross@svsu.org</a>               |
| Charlie Cummings      | Middle School Science               | <a href="mailto:charles.cummings@svsu.org">charles.cummings@svsu.org</a>           |
| Michelle Emery        | World Languages                     | <a href="mailto:michelle.emery@svsu.org">michelle.emery@svsu.org</a>               |
| Carol Farley          | English                             | <a href="mailto:carol.farley@svsu.org">carol.farley@svsu.org</a>                   |
| Dan Flanigan          | Learning Center                     | <a href="mailto:dan.flanagan@svsu.org">dan.flanagan@svsu.org</a>                   |
| Grabowski, Emily      | Counselor                           | <a href="mailto:emily.grabowski@svsu.org">emily.grabowski@svsu.org</a>             |
| Brian Howe            | Math/Science                        | <a href="mailto:brian.how@svsu.org">brian.how@svsu.org</a>                         |
| Kendell Jennings      | Assistant to Administration         | <a href="mailto:kendell.jennings@svsu.org">kendell.jennings@svsu.org</a>           |
| Julia Hayes           | Learning Center                     | <a href="mailto:julia.hayes@svsu.org">julia.hayes@svsu.org</a>                     |
| Gillian Calkins       | Learning Center                     | <a href="mailto:Gillian.Calkins@svsu.org">Gillian.Calkins@svsu.org</a>             |
| Steve Kruger          | Social Studies - Middle School      | <a href="mailto:steve.kruger@svsu.org">steve.kruger@svsu.org</a>                   |
| Joanna Lederer-Barnes | School Counselor                    | <a href="mailto:joanna.lederer-barnes@svsu.org">joanna.lederer-barnes@svsu.org</a> |
| Benjamin Leslie       | Technology Director                 | <a href="mailto:ben.leslie@svsu.org">ben.leslie@svsu.org</a>                       |
| Lei Liu               | Chinese                             | <a href="mailto:liu.lei@svsu.org">liu.lei@svsu.org</a>                             |
| Lynn McCloe           | English/Social Studies              | <a href="mailto:lynn.mccloe@svsu.org">lynn.mccloe@svsu.org</a>                     |
| Thomas Neeson         | Instrumental/Chorus/Technical Music | <a href="mailto:thomas.neeson@svsu.org">thomas.neeson@svsu.org</a>                 |
| Chris Pendelbury      | Custodial                           | <a href="mailto:chris.pendlebuty@svsu.org">chris.pendlebuty@svsu.org</a>           |
| Errin Pickering       | Nurse                               | <a href="mailto:errin.pickering@svsu.org">errin.pickering@svsu.org</a>             |
| Hooper Pickering      | History                             | <a href="mailto:hooper.pickering@svsu.org">hooper.pickering@svsu.org</a>           |
| Thomas Powers         | School Psychologist                 | <a href="mailto:thomas.powers@svsu.org">thomas.powers@svsu.org</a>                 |
| Jonathan Schiff       | English                             | <a href="mailto:schiff.jonathan@svsu.org">schiff.jonathan@svsu.org</a>             |
| Karen Schroeder       | Design & Technology                 | <a href="mailto:karen.schroeder@svsu.org">karen.schroeder@svsu.org</a>             |
| Marisa Thomas         | Front Office & Guidance Secretary   | <a href="mailto:marisa.thomas@svsu.org">marisa.thomas@svsu.org</a>                 |
| Vincent Thompson      | Custodial                           | <a href="mailto:vincent.thompson@svsu.org">vincent.thompson@svsu.org</a>           |
| Christine Wood        | Art                                 | <a href="mailto:christy.wood@svsu.org">christy.wood@svsu.org</a>                   |
| Seth Woodman          | Social Studies                      | <a href="mailto:seth.woodman@svsu.org">seth.woodman@svsu.org</a>                   |

| <b>AMHS Course Offerings 2026-27</b> |                            |                              |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>ENGLISH</b>                       | <b>SCIENCE</b>             | <b>MATH</b>                  |
| English 11/12 Honors                 | Earth Science              | Math 1                       |
| English 11/12 CP                     | Biology                    | Math 2                       |
| English 9/10 Honors                  | Bio Lab                    | Math 3                       |
| English 9/10 CP                      | Chemistry                  | Honors Math A                |
| English 11/12                        | Chem Lab                   | Honors Math B                |
| English 9/10                         | AP Biology                 | Honors Pre-Calculus          |
| AP English Lit. & Comp.              | Physics                    | AP Calculus                  |
| Creative Writing                     | Anatomy & Physiology       | AP Statistics                |
| Creative Writing 2                   | Engineering                | Foundations of Math          |
| Literature and Film                  | Forensic Science           | LC Math                      |
| LC English                           | Science and Art            | Financial Literacy           |
| Real World Writing                   | Food Science               |                              |
| Senior Project                       | One Health: Animal Science | <b>WORLD LANGUAGE</b>        |
|                                      |                            | Chinese 1                    |
|                                      |                            | Chinese 2                    |
| <b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>                |                            | Chinese 3                    |
| AP US History                        | <b>ARTS</b>                | Honors Chinese 4             |
| Civics                               | Drawing                    | AP Chinese                   |
| US History                           | Painting                   | Chinese Culture of Happiness |
| US Military History                  | 2D Marketing & Design      | French 1                     |
| Psychology                           | Ceramics                   | French 2                     |
| Controversial Moments in US History  | Advanced Art               | French 3                     |
| US History through Film              | Jewelry & Metalworking     | French Culture               |
| Philosophy                           | Jewelry & Metalwork 2      | French Cinema                |
| Geography                            | Wood                       |                              |
| Human Exploration                    | Wood 2                     | <b>SOUTHWEST TECH</b>        |
| Genocide                             | Fine Furniture             | Accounting & Finance         |
| Human Geography                      | Chorus                     | Auto Technology              |
| Law                                  | Band                       | Building Trades              |
| 20th Century World History           | Music Production           | Business Management          |
| 1960s                                | Rock Band                  | Cosmetology                  |
|                                      | Jazz Band                  | Culinary Arts                |
| <b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>            | Guitar                     | Forestry & Heavy Equip.      |
| HS Physical Education                | Music in Film              | Graphic Arts                 |
| Wellness                             |                            | Human Services               |

|                  |                             |                          |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Personal Fitness | <b>LIBRARY MEDIA</b>        | Law Enforcement          |
|                  | Books & Film                | Manufacturing Technology |
|                  | Media, Crime, & Credibility | Medical Professions      |
|                  |                             | Video Production         |

### **Lockers at AMHS**

Lockers will be assigned to students during the first week of school. Guidelines for use of school lockers are as follows:

1. Advisors will assign lockers to each student. Students may not use additional lockers without advisor permission.
2. Locks may be placed on lockers. Locks must be signed out for the year from the Principal's Office. Students may not bring their own lock.
3. Money, jewelry, and/or other valuable items should never be placed in lockers. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items from a locker.
4. The school is responsible for investigating any incidents of theft.
5. Supervised locker clean-outs are scheduled periodically throughout the year.
6. New students enrolling after the start of school will be assigned a locker by their advisor.
7. If a student has a locker problem, they should contact their advisor.
8. Material deemed inappropriate for a school setting is not permissible in/on lockers.

### **Extracurricular Activities at AMHS**

- The Arlington Memorial Academic Eligibility Procedure details participation in extracurricular activities.
- Students absent from school on a given day will not be allowed to represent the school in any capacity on the day of the absence, unless the absence is considered excused by the Principal. This is inclusive of a student's role as spectator or attendee at extra-curricular events. These rules also apply to weekend events when a student has an unexcused absence on Friday.
- A student must be in school by 11:30 a.m. to participate in after-school activities, unless the tardy is excused by the principal.
- Athletic Philosophy: The Arlington Memorial athletics program strives to promote the physical and mental well-being of student-athletes. We encourage all students to participate in at least one sport each year to complement their academic goals.

### **Parking for Students at AMHS**

Vehicles parked on school property are under the jurisdiction of the school. Students have full responsibility for the security of their vehicles and should make certain cars are locked and that keys are not given to others. Students will be held responsible for any prohibited objects or substances, such as alcohol, drugs, and weapons found in their cars and will be subject to disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to search any vehicle if reasonable cause exists to do so. The principal shall have the discretion to set eligibility for parking on campus.

Students who drive vehicles to school park at their own risk and must understand that the school or school board cannot be held responsible for the vehicles. Parking is a privilege, not a right. That privilege will be removed for violations of parking procedures. Parking will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Students are NOT allowed to go to their cars during school hours without permission. Tags, bumper stickers, signs, or flags that suggest profanity, advertise tobacco or drugs, are inflammatory, or degrade another person because of race, creed, or culture are prohibited. For the safety of all students, a 10 mph speed limit will be strictly observed on campus. Reckless driving will not be tolerated, and may result in the loss of parking privileges without warning. Students may not leave with other student drivers during school hours.

## **Report Cards and Grading**

Arlington Memorial's academic calendar is divided into four quarters. Report cards are issued after the close of each grading period. Some courses are offered by semester. Guardians have access to their child's grades throughout the school year via the online portal. Family members are encouraged to contact their child's teacher directly to address any questions or concerns regarding grade reporting.

AMHS recognizes academic excellence in a variety of ways:

- The National Honor Society, including students who qualify for academic membership
- Principal's Honors, including students with the highest GPA and no grade below 80
- High Honors, including students with a GPA of 90 or above and no grade below 80
- Honors, including students with a GPA of 80 or above and no grade below 80

To qualify for Principal's Honors a student must be taking five approved credits, which include a minimum of three core classes (English, Science, Math, Social Studies, World Language), that are graded numerically. Classes graded by Pass/Fail do not count toward honors recognition. Academic certificates are awarded for Principal's Honors, High Honors, and Honor Roll.

## **Course Requirements**

All students attending AMHS are required to register as full-time students.

- Freshman: Must enroll in a minimum of at least 6.5 credits including (1) English credit.
- Sophomore: Must have earned a minimum of at least 6.5 credits including (1) English credit.
- Junior: Must have earned a minimum of 13 credits including (2) English credits.
- Senior: Must have earned a minimum of at least 19.5 credits including (3) English credits.

Class standings are at the discretion of the Principal. Students may advance socially, however their academic rank is determined by credit completion.

## **Advisors**

An advisor is assigned to each student at Arlington Memorial. Advisors meet with their students daily. Advisors support students with a wide range of personal and school-related issues. The advisor may direct students to other sources of information, guidance, and support.

## **Grading System**

The grading system for AMHS consists of a numerical scale from 0-100. Grades which are incomplete will be indicated by the mark "I." The following numerical values are assigned to each respectively:

- 97-100, A+
- 93-96, A
- 90-92, A-
- 87-89, B+
- 83-86, B
- 80-82, B-
- 77-79, C+
- 73-76, C
- 70-72, C-
- 67-69, D+
- 63-66, D
- 60-62, D-
- below 60, F

## Academic Eligibility for Student Athletes

To support academic success, grade checks for student athletes will now be conducted every two weeks on **Wednesday**. If a student is found to be failing a class, they will be required to attend **Principal's Assistance PA** from **Wednesday-Friday** of that week. During this time, the student will be ineligible to participate in athletic competitions or practices. **Eligibility may be restored on Saturday**, provided the student is no longer failing and has attended the required PA.

## Principal Assistance

Principal Assistance is a required after-school program for students who need additional help meeting academic requirements. Students will be assigned to PA if they **are missing three or more homework assignments** in a class **or** have a **failing grade at the end of a quarter**. Students will remain in PA **until all missing work is completed and/or their grade improves to a passing level**. The goal of a PA is to provide a structured time to help students stay on track academically.

## Southwest Tech

Students are provided the opportunity to enroll in programs at Southwest Tech if the appropriate prerequisites are met. AMHS will issue the appropriate credits upon successful completion of a course at Southwest Tech. All students attending Southwest Tech are required to ride to and from the center on the school bus unless otherwise authorized by the Arlington Memorial principal and approved by Southwest Tech administration. Students attending Southwest Tech must maintain a passing grade in all coursework, and at AMHS, by the semester break. Programs include accounting and finance, automotive technologies, building trades, business management, cosmetology, culinary arts, forestry and heavy equipment, graphic arts, human services, law enforcement, manufacturing technology, medical professions, pre law, and tv and video production.

## Graduation Requirements

Twenty-six (26) academic credits are required to graduate from AMHS. That includes 4 credits in English, 3 credits in Social Studies, 3 credits in Math, 3 credits in Science, 1 credit in Art, 1.5 credit in Physical Education, .5 credits in Health, and 10 elective credits. Students must also complete 32 hours of community service during their high school years.

## Parent Teacher conferences

There are two scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Conferences are designed to support student learning. Student progress meetings may be scheduled at other times throughout the year. If you have a question regarding your child's academic progress, please contact the teacher directly.

## Class Elections

Students must be in good academic standing to be eligible to run for an elected office. In the event a child failed a course, they are not eligible to be a class officer. Once the school year begins and an elected officer fails a quarter, they will be on probation for the following quarter. In the event the grade remains failing, the student will lose the office and a new election will be held. Student representatives are expected to be in good academic and behavioral standing. If they do not follow the rules of the school, they may be removed from the office at the advisor's discretion.

## Family Vacations:

Family vacations during the school year are discouraged as the student will be forced to miss valuable class time. If a student is going to be absent, they are responsible for all missed work. Arrangements should be made in advance with the teacher, however it is not the expectation that all work will be provided prior to vacation. There is a large learning component based on the direct instruction and group work, which cannot be completed prior to a student's departure. All absences due to vacation are counted as an unexcused absence.

### **Emergency Removal**

Students may be removed from regular classes or district premises for disciplinary, health, welfare, and safety reasons when the principal determines that an emergency exists. Such removal must be for as short a time as is reasonable under the circumstances. Reasons constituting an emergency include, but are not limited to the student:

1. Being highly agitated: and/or
2. Engaging in serious or persistent misbehavior, which violated the previously communicated Code of Student Conduct.
3. Suffering from any other condition that temporarily threatens the student's welfare, another individual's welfare, or the efficient operation of the school.

The student shall be released to the parent, the parent's representative, or other proper authority, including, but not limited to, law enforcement officers. The administrator shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent prior to removal of the student from school. Failing that, the parent shall be notified as soon as possible of the circumstances of the emergency removal.

### **Immediate Removal**

It is the right and responsibility of school authorities to ensure a safe school environment. Under Vermont law, a superintendent or principal has the right to immediately remove a student "a student for up to 10 school days or, with the approval of the board of the school district, expel a student for up to the remainder of the school year or up to 90 school days, whichever is longer, for misconduct" (T.16 § 1162 (Vermont Education Law Book))

### **Advisory**

Advisory is a 25 minute period in which each student in the school is assigned a teacher who assists the student in achieving academic and personal goals. This daily support period is designed to facilitate the physical, academic, social/emotional needs of all students. Students will participate in the community building activities, Personal Learning Plan Development, and academic monitoring.

### **Theft and Damage to School Property**

The taxpayers of the Arlington School District have provided excellent support for the education of its students. The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility for the maintenance and security of this facility. All reasonable efforts are made on a continuing basis to fulfill this responsibility. Most of the school building is equipped with an electric security system (See Policy). Damage, destruction, and theft of school property will not be tolerated. Violators will be required to make full restitution and face the possible consequences of prosecution within the limits of the law.

### **Advanced Placement/PSAT/SAT Testing**

All Advanced Placement, PSAT, and SAT assessments offered at Arlington Memorial require a fee for taking the exam. *Please access the parent/guardian portal at [collegeboard.org](https://collegeboard.org) or contact the Director of Equity and School Culture for more information.*

### **Graduation Ranking**

Seniors will be ranked for graduation at the end of the first semester of the senior year. Arlington Memorial will use the Academic Honors/Class Rank Policy for ranking students. This policy takes into account the added rigor of Honors, Advanced Placement and college courses to calculate class rank using a point system. The top six students will be ranked. In case of a tie, the senior with the highest grade point average from a public or state approved independent school in required courses will be valedictorian. *For more detailed information about the calculation of class rank, please contact the School Counselor.*

### **Honored Students at Graduation**

Students who have attained an “honored position” such as valedictorian or salutatorian, have been selected as a member of the National Honor Society, the student council, or as a class officer, are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the position. If it is determined that a student holding one of these positions conducts themselves in an inappropriate manner and does not follow the AMHS Code of Conduct, the privileges of those positions may be removed at the discretion of the Principal.

### **Academic Counseling**

Students are encouraged to speak with our school counselors, teachers, advisor, or the principal to learn about Arlington Memorial’s curriculum, course offerings, and graduation requirements. Students interested in attending a college or technical school must work closely with the school counselor to ensure they take the high school courses that will best prepare them for further education.

### **Independent Studies**

An Independent Study may be an option if the student cannot fit a course offering into their schedule, due to extenuating circumstances. Approval of an Independent Study is at the discretion of the Principal.

### **Dances**

All dances must be scheduled through a school advisor, and have a minimum of three chaperones. Students who leave the vicinity of the event, will not be allowed back into the dance. Students' attendance must be in good standing and be academically eligible. Students who create a disciplinary situation at a dance may not be allowed to attend other dances during the school year. Students absent the day of the dance may be denied attendance at the dance.

### **Student Organizations**

Clubs within the school shall be open to all students who qualify under the rules of the school to fill the special aims of the organization. Students are not allowed to participate in illegal organizations such as a fraternity, sorority, secret society, gang or cult. A fraternity, sorority, secret society, gang or cult is any organization composed wholly, or in part, of members of the student body of the school which seeks to perpetuate itself by taking in additional members from the student body of the school on the basis of the decision of its membership rather than upon the free choice of any student in the school who is qualified by the rules of the school to fulfill the special aims of the organization. It violates the standard of the district to be or remain a member of, or to join or promise to join, to become a member of any such a fraternity, sorority, secret society, gang or cult. It is a violation of the standards of conduct of the district to wear any attire signifying membership in a fraternity, sorority, secret society, gang or cult. If wearing such attire materially and substantially disrupts the operation of the school, the administrator has reasonable cause to forecast that material and substantial disruption will occur.

### **Student Transportation to and from Activity Trips**

In all extra-curricular activity programs, students will be required to ride to and from the activity in school-provided vehicles. Students may be released to parents/guardians to travel from school sanctioned activities with permission from the principal, coach or advisor.

Approvals granted to students/parents requesting travel to an activity will be granted ONLY in extenuating circumstances. The final decision to grant or deny the request rests with the principal/activity advisor. The release will occur only if the request has been arranged in writing by the parent or legal guardian. The requests must have written approval from the principal. If any doubt exists as to who the legal guardian is, the administration will deny the request. Students will be released ONLY to their parents or legal guardians. Requests for students to ride home with other parents must be in writing.

### **Telephone Messages and Deliveries**

Classes will not be interrupted for messages or deliveries, except for the verified emergencies, during the school day. Deliveries sent to the school for students on special-occasions may be picked up in the front office after school.

### **Visitors**

Arlington Memorial High School is equipped to provide only for its students, not those from other schools or communities. Students not enrolled will not be allowed to visit during school hours. Students are expected to show courtesy to parents and special guests who are on campus. Visitors are required to sign in at the front entrance and conduct themselves according to school rules. The Principal may request identification from any person on school property and may ask any person not having legitimate business to leave. Visitors are required to remain in the office waiting area until an appointment has been confirmed. Parents are always welcome but must always report to the front office and state the reason(s) for their visit. Parent visits must be approved by the Principal.

### **Cyber Bullying**

Unlike traditional bullying, cyber bullying takes place via electronic means. Regardless of where the cyber bullying takes place, if the resulting behavior makes a “real threat” or causes a “substantial disruption” in the school climate or poses any interference with another student's right to access educational programs, the Principal will impose whatever disciplinary action that is necessary to stop cyber bullying. Cyber bullying falls under the Hazing, Harassment, and Bullying policy and procedures.

### **Personal Technology Procedure**

The use of personal technology (excluding personal laptops) at Arlington Memorial can be a serious disruption to the educational environment. Social media, gaming, and the availability of constant communication is a major distraction from teaching and learning. There is a direct connection between inappropriate student behaviors and the use of personal technology. In addition, headphones and earbuds distract from teaching and learning while presenting a safety risk.

**In an effort to establish a more positive school culture, personal technology use will not be allowed between 8:00 - 3:00.**

### **Consequences**

**First Offense:** Personal technology will be confiscated and given to Administration for the day. (Office Discipline Referral)

**Second Offense:** Personal technology will be confiscated, given to Administration for the day followed by a phone call home. (Office Discipline Referral)

**Third Offense:** Personal technology will be confiscated, given to the director of equity and school culture for the day followed by a phone call home. Parents must pick up the cell phone from the director's office. (Office Discipline Referral)

**Fourth Offense:** Personal technology will be confiscated, given to Administration for the day followed by a phone call home. Parents must pick up the personal technology from the administrative offices. A plan with the family is created by the administrative team to help facilitate a tech-free school day. (Office Discipline Referral)

If a student fails to give their personal technology to a staff member when asked to do so, they will immediately be sent to Administration. (Office Discipline Referral)

In the event additional devices become a growing issue, we reserve the right to include any, and all, in this procedure.

## **Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism**

**Academic integrity** is highly valued at Arlington Memorial and reflects a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in the academic process. Therefore plagiarism and cheating in any form, whether intentional or unintentional, are unacceptable at Arlington Memorial.

### **Plagiarism**

Intentional and unintentional use of another's intellectual property, including ideas or words without clearly acknowledging the source, thus representing the work as one's own:

- using words, ideas, sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or pattern of thought from a source without proper citation and documentation
- paraphrasing or summarizing the ideas or text of another without proper citation and documentation
- incomplete citations and documentation
- using graphics, visual images, video, or audio without permission or without acknowledgement of the source

**Academic misconduct** includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, falsification, and multi-submission.

### **Cheating**

Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in any academic work or examination. Unauthorized assistance includes, but is not limited to:

- copying
- allowing others to copy
- submitting another student's work as one's own
- giving or receiving test information
- using cheat sheets
- using electronic devices
- using Internet or other sources without teacher approval
- working on and/or completing an assignment collaboratively without teacher approval

### **Falsification**

Falsifying or inventing any information, data, or citation.

### **Multi-Submission**

Submitting substantial portions of any academic exercise more than once without prior authorization from the teacher.

### **Procedures for Academic Misconduct**

Grading and/or opportunity to recover credit for assignments in which academic integrity has been violated will be applied at the discretion of the teacher attached to the course and/or assignment. Further action will depend on the severity of the violation and the student may be subject to the school's disciplinary practices.

### **Extra Curricular & Co-Curricular Academic Eligibility**

Athletics are an integral part of our students' learning experience. We support our student-athletes in the pursuit of a balance of academic and athletic commitments.

### **Procedure**

All Arlington Memorial students (Grades 6-12) are eligible to play sports at the start of the fall season. The Athletic Director will check grades for all athletes (Grades 6-12) every other Friday, beginning the second Friday of the school year.

- If a student-athlete is failing a class at the check-in date, the student will not be allowed to participate in any games or practice until the grade is passing (60 or above).
- To regain eligibility, student athletes need to meet with the teacher to discuss the failing grade.
- When the grade is at 60 or above, it is the student's responsibility to return the Eligibility Form signed by the teacher to the AD or administration confirming the passing grade.

- If a student fails two bi-weekly grade checks during any single sporting season, a meeting between the parents, coaches and teacher(s) will be required prior to returning to play.
- If a student drops a class prior to the end of a quarter, eligibility will be determined by the student's average at the time in which the class is dropped. In the event a student is failing when the class is dropped, there will be a one game suspension.

### **Mandated Reporting**

As educators and mandated reporters, it is our duty to help protect students from abuse and neglect. Act 60 of 2015 provides that any mandated reporter who reasonably suspects abuse or neglect of a child shall report in accordance with the provisions of Section 4914 of this Title within 24 hours of the time information regarding the suspected abuse or neglect was first received or observed. 33 V.S.A. § 4913(c). Review the joint memo from VDH and AOE regarding Mandated Reporting.

### **Prohibition Against Suspension or Expulsion of Students Younger Than Eight**

Act 35 of 2021 prohibits suspension and expulsion of students under eight years old, except in cases of imminent harm or danger to others. 16 V.S.A. § 1162 SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION OF STUDENTS (d) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this chapter, a student enrolled in a The Vermont School Administrator Handbook (Revised: August 23, 2022) Page 5 of 9 public school who is under eight years of age shall not be suspended or expelled from the school; provided, however, that the school may suspend or expel the student if the student poses an imminent threat of harm or danger to others in the school. In the 2022 legislative session, this prohibition was extended to approved independent schools and pre qualified prekindergarten programs. For more information see the recently issued memo Determining the Appropriateness of Suspension or Expulsion for Under Age Eight.

### **Technical Center Offerings**

16 V.S.A. §1541a(b) provides that high schools are to give technical centers the names and addresses of students and their parents so that they may be contacted and notified of technical center offerings.

### **Seclusion and Restraint**

State Board Rule 4500 defines the appropriate use of seclusion and restraint. Rule 4500 also sets forth the reporting requirements relative to any use of seclusion or restraint in school (e.g. – teacher to administrator, administrator to superintendent, and school to parent/guardian of affected student)

### **Community Service Policy**

Thirty-two hours of community service are required for graduation. Participation in community service beyond the required hours is encouraged. Required hours will be prorated for students entering after their ninth grade year.

Arlington Memorial defines community service as the **“donation of a student’s free time in the service of others.”**

Extracurricular activities or any activities for which a student receives credit or school-wide recognition such as a varsity letter or certificate of participation will not constitute community service. In addition, students may not receive community service hours for any activity that exempts them from their daily responsibilities as a student.

- All community service hours submitted by a student must be verified by the signature of an adult supervisor. The adult supervisor may not be a relative of the student, and the service must not be performed for a relative.
- Community service requirements must be completed by the mid-term of a student’s senior year.
- Community service hours for the 32-hour graduation requirement cannot be accrued until after the completion of 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Students with questions regarding whether their particular service work will count as community service should contact the Guidance Office.

### **Eighteen Year-Old Students**

Students who are 18 years of age may choose to assume full responsibility for their schooling. The school district's discipline policy, rules of conduct, academic eligibility standards and attendance requirements shall apply to all students at Arlington Memorial regardless of age. Report cards, discipline reports and other communications from the school will be provided to parents/guardians of all students regardless of the age of those students.

### **Request for a Waiver - Graduation Requirements**

This policy refers only to those requirements that the School Board has established beyond those required by the State of Vermont. State requirements cannot be waived.

**Philosophy:** Graduation requirements are stated in the Program of Studies and the Student Handbook. Students consult with the Guidance Director and plan their yearly schedules according to the need to complete these requirements in four years of high school.

**Procedure:** Courses are scheduled with these requirements as guidelines, and every attempt is made to facilitate each student's ability to meet the requirements. If, due to a documented scheduling complication, a student cannot be scheduled into a required course, the following process may be used by a student to request a waiver:

1. The student writes a letter to the School Counselor stating the reason for the request of a waiver.
2. The School Counselor meets with the student and parent and reviews the student's records and reason for the request. The Guidance Director may decide that an opportunity exists for the student to schedule a course, which will meet the requirement; or the Guidance Director may decide to forward the student's request to the principal.
3. After reviewing the request with the superintendent, the request is presented to the school board for action. The board's decision will be final.

### **Graduation Ceremony Preparation**

Students must meet these criteria to participate in awards and graduation ceremonies:

1. Earn sufficient credits;
2. Be in compliance with the student code of conduct and be in good standing with the requirements of the code;
3. Be in compliance with the grooming code as well as any additional dress requirements established by the principal for the graduation ceremonies.

The commencement programs (awards and graduation ceremonies) for the district shall be conducted according to the following guidelines:

1. Students will be grouped, recognized, and permitted to participate in these categories:
  - a. students who have satisfied all requirements for graduation with honors
  - b. students who have satisfied all requirements for graduation
2. Meetings with students shall be held to ensure understanding of the requirements for graduation and for participation in the commencement program.

### **Home Schooling/Part-Time School**

Arlington Memorial recognizes a student's right to home study.. Home study students who wish to attend school may take classes subject to available space. No home-schooled student in grades 6-12 will displace a full-time student in a class or activity. Part-time and home-schooled students are ineligible for all school-related awards and recognition other than a certificate of participation or "letter" for the activity. Arlington Memorial will allow students from Arlington the free use of textbooks subject to availability. If a home-schooled student attends and participates in an extracurricular activity, the principal shall have an opportunity to review the home-schooled student's work to determine if it is acceptable in meeting school standards.

### **Physical Restraint**

Any district employee may, within the scope of the employee's duties, use and apply restraint to a student when a student's behavior poses an imminent and substantial risk of physical injury to the student or others.

### **Publications**

All student publications and other written material intended for distribution shall be submitted to the Principal and/or the Advisor for review and approval.

## **School Records**

Schools in the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union may disclose designated directory information on students and eligible students without the prior consent of the parent of eligible students, and without any record of such disclosure. The following types of personally identifiable information have been designated directory information.

## **Emergency Removal**

Students may be removed from regular classes or district premises for dis

## **Athletic Philosophy & Goals**

The Arlington Memorial athletics program strives to promote the physical and mental well-being of student athletes. We encourage all students to participate in at least one sport year to complement their academic goals.

The goals of the Arlington Memorial athletes are:

- Promote athletes in a source of physical fitness and mental well-being.
- Promote good sportsmanship among players and coaches.
- Encourage teamwork and the principles of competition.
- Instill a sense of pride in one's work ethic as both an individual and a team player.
- Instill the importance of attending practice as a way to show dedication to the sport and respect to the teammates.
- Promote a sense of personal pride and team spirit at the end of each competition.

## **Fundraising**

Fundraising activities by student groups and/or for school sponsored projects shall be allowed "with prior administrative approval and under the supervision of the project sponsor" for students in all grades.

## **Early Dismissal/Checking Out**

Students must bring a note to the front office BEFORE homeroom which should include the teacher's name, reason for dismissal, and the time of the dismissal. The note must be signed by a parent/guardian and must have a phone number where the parent/guardian can be reached for verification.

## **Senior Privileges**

To be eligible for senior privileges, a senior student must have earned a minimum average final grade of 70 in all classes from the previous quarter, and carry fewer than three Office Discipline Referrals per quarter. Seniors who wish to access their privileges must complete an application with the Director of Equity and School Culture.

- Seniors are allowed to leave once during the day (must sign out/sign in), leave early if they have study halls at the end of the day and be exempt from structured study halls while remaining on campus.
- To keep this privilege, a student must remain in good standing, academically and behaviorally. The administration may revoke participation in the Senior Privilege Program at any time for reasons determined by the administrative team.
- Students may not leave with other students in their vehicle during school hours.

## **Off Limit Areas**

Areas outside the school building are off limits to students during the day without adult supervision or permission of the principal.

## **Lost & Found**

All items lost or found should be reported or brought to the front office. Students should not bring large sums of money or valuables to the school. The school does not assume the responsibility for personal loss.

## **Student Behavior at Arlington Memorial High School**

Families, students, and district personnel share responsibility for providing an environment conducive to teaching and learning, which includes the responsibility to maintain social order.

The student has the responsibility to:

1. Conduct themselves in a safe and responsible way;
2. Seek help from school personnel when having school or personal problems;
3. Demonstrate an attitude of respect towards individuals and property.
4. Use appropriate language when speaking to others;
5. Be familiar with and obey school rules and regulations;
6. Attend school, be punctual, and be prepared for class;
7. Follow teachers' directions and stay on task during instruction;
8. Be familiar with and meet state and district curriculum requirements;
9. Be familiar with and use district support services as needed;
10. Cooperate with school staff in all matters; and
11. Adhere to all policies and procedures.

The family has the responsibility to:

1. Establish and maintain a positive attitude toward education;
2. Participate in identifying and responding to school-related concerns;
3. Demonstrate an attitude of respect toward others and their property;
4. Keep the student from school when they are ill;
5. Communicate with a teacher following a report of lack of progress, and/or a significant change in the student's achievement or behavior;
6. Maintain current home, work and emergency information in the school records;
7. Send the student to school on each scheduled day and on time;
8. Report each unavoidable absence or tardy to the school;
9. Communicate with the school staff regarding conditions which affect the child;
10. Be knowledgeable of state, district, and school policies, regulations, and requirements.

## **Grade/Course Transfers**

When a student transfers from another district, grade points will be given only for classes in which credit was received. Any letter grade will be equated to the middle of the grade point scale for that class.

## *General Information*

### **Attendance and Absence**

Vermont State Law requires that guardians ensure that their children attend school. Accurate records of attendance will be kept for all pupils. In situations of excessive absence, the administration will establish procedures as deemed necessary to assure compliance with State statutes. Regular daily attendance and punctuality are essential for the continuous progress of your child in school.

Consistent attendance is a prerequisite for the academic, social and emotional growth of students. It is very important that all children be in school on time each day. If they are not, valuable learning time is lost. If your child is going to be absent or tardy, please call the school first thing in the morning. Also inform the school if your child needs to leave for an appointment during the day, or has any other changes in their schedule. *Please review our Attendance Policy #5030, accepted definitions of absences are provided.*

If a student receives a medical note excusing them from participation in sports or physical education they will be required to be cleared by a medical provider in order to return to participation in sports and physical education.

Please notify your school office if your student will be absent or tardy for any reason. Please do the same if your child will need to be dismissed from school early. *As required by the state, if a pattern of absenteeism develops, the school is responsible for adhering to the SVSU Attendance Policy #5030.*

### **School Choice**

High school students in the state of Vermont have the right to Public School Choice. The application to request public high school choice must be submitted by March 1 of the preceding academic year the student wishes to attend. For more information, please contact the school front office.

### **Bicycles**

Students in grades 4 and up may ride their bicycles to and from school; those in younger grades must have written permission on file at school. Students must follow these bike rules:

- Walk the bike on the grass bordering the parking lot.
- Park the bike in the bike rack provided.
- Wear a safety helmet while riding.
- Provide a chain and lock for the bike.

In addition, skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, and Heelys are not to be used on school property.

Bicycle parking at AMHS is in the front of the school by the flagpole area. Students who ride bicycles must obey bicycle safety rules. The school district is not responsible for loss or damage to bicycles. Bicycles must be parked correctly and left only in specified areas. Each student may provide his/her own chain and lock for the bicycle.

# AMHS

## QUARTER/SEMESTER DATES

### 2026-2027

#### First Quarter

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| August 26, 2026  | Quarter 1 begins    |
| November 2, 2026 | Marking Period Ends |

#### Second Quarter

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| November 3, 2026 | Quarter 2 begins    |
| January 21, 2027 | Marking Period Ends |
|                  | Semester 1 Ends     |

#### Third Quarter

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| January 25, 2027 | Quarter 3 begins    |
| April 2, 2027    | Marking Period Ends |

#### Fourth Quarter

|               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|
| April 5, 2027 | Quarter 4 Begins    |
| June 10, 2027 | Marking Period Ends |
|               | Semester 2 Ends     |

## Daily Bell Schedule

| <b>MASTER BELL</b> |             | <b>A</b>       | <b>B</b>       | <b>C</b>       | <b>D</b>       |
|--------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Homeroom           | 8:00-8:10   | Homeroom       | Homeroom       | Homeroom       | Homeroom       |
| Period 1           | 8:13-8:58   | Period 1       | Period 1       | Period 1       | Period 1       |
| Period 2           | 9:01-9:46   | Period 2       | Period 2       | Period 2       | Period 2       |
| Advisory           | 9:49-10:09  | Advisory       | Advisory       | Advisory       | Advisory       |
| Period 3           | 10:12-10:57 | Period 3       | Period 3       | Period 3       | Period 3       |
| Period 4*          | 11-12:15    | Lunch/Period 4 | Lunch/Period 4 | Lunch/Period 4 | Lunch/Period 4 |
| Block 1            | 12:18-1:10  | Period 5       | Period 8       | Period 7       | Period 6       |
| Block 2            | 1:13-2:05   | Period 6       | Period 5       | Period 8       | Period 7       |
| Block 3            | 2:08-3:00   | Period 7       | Period 6       | Period 5       | Period 8       |

### Homework

Students are expected to complete their homework on time. If a homework assignment is incomplete or returned to the student for quality reasons, the student is required to complete the assignment as directed by the teacher.

### Make-Up Work

Students are expected to make up all work issued due to absences. *It is the students responsibility to check with each teacher after an absence.* The number of consecutive school days equal to the number of days absent will be permitted to make up the work.

### Withdrawals

If you should move out of the district, it is important that you inform the school office of the date on which you will be leaving. Families must inform the school office and complete appropriate paperwork. Upon written request, copies of records including achievement reports, attendance records, standardized test scores, samples of schoolwork, anecdotal reports and school health records will be sent directly to the school of transfer.

### School Closings

Emergency closings can occur before school opens or during the school day due to inclement weather or heating or water problems. Fisher families can receive a text or phone call alerting them of school closings/delays and other emergency information. To receive these alerts, families must complete the PHONE ALERT SYSTEM FORM and return it to the Fisher Main Office. Arlington Memorial accesses the Infinite Campus Alert System to call and/or text families in the event of a school closure. Please complete the back to school forms to ensure the correct phone numbers are in the system. Please make sure your student knows where to go and what to do if you are not home in an emergency.

### Delayed School Openings

If opening schools at the regular time is inadvisable due to weather conditions, but it appears that we may safely transport students later in the day, all bus schedules and school openings will be delayed by two hours. Schools will close at the regular time. Notification will be made through the Infinite Campus Alert System as well as over the radio stations listed, local TV networks and posting on the SVSU website at [www.svsu.org](http://www.svsu.org).

**Early School Closings**

Should schools be canceled after the start of the day, all families will be notified by the Infinite Campus Alert System. This system will contact families as designated by the Primary Household phone number and email address on Infinite Campus. Please make sure that your contact information is up to date by contacting the office at your child's school.

**Food Service**

Our schools offer a daily food program that includes breakfast and lunch offerings. Our goal is to promote wellness and good nutrition. All students will receive a free breakfast and lunch. However, all families, regardless of eligibility must fill out a free and reduced application each year to have on file.

**Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

To comply with Vermont State law, all individuals employed by the school district are mandated reporters and must make a report to the Department for Children and Families (DCF) at 1-800-649-5285 within 24 hours of the time information about suspected abuse or neglect was first received or observed. Notifying law enforcement is not the same as reporting suspected abuse or neglect to DCF.

**Schedule changes**

A request form for a student's schedule may be picked up in the guidance office. The form must be filled out, signed by the student, parents and teacher, then returned to the Guidance Office. Any significant changes may be approved by the Principal.

**Student Incomplete Grades**

A student will receive an incomplete grade if they are reasonably able make up the work within one (1) week of the absence. An extension to complete work may be increased for medical reasons approved by the Principal. If a student fails to complete the required work, they will not receive a credit or a grade for the class.

**Transcripts**

When applying to colleges (or for employment) a copy of the student's transcript (record of grade) is usually required. Parents must make the request to the Guidance Office in order to have a transcript sent to a specific place. Seniors may request transcripts if a signed parent form is on file in the guidance office.

**Dress Code**

Please refer to these administrative regulations from SVSU Policy #5080 Dress Code:

*Basic Principle:* Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times. Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, breasts, and nipples are fully covered with non-see through fabric. All items listed in the "must wear" and "may wear" categories below must meet this basic principle.

**Students Must Wear:**

- A shirt with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms AND \*must meet the waistline of pants/shorts/skirts/leggings\* (at Arlington Memorial only)
- Pants/jeans or the equivalent (for example, skirt, sweatpants, leggings, dress, or shorts),
- Shoes (safe and appropriate for indoor and outdoor activity)

#### Students May Wear:

- Hats and hoods are at the discretion of the individual school
- Ripped jeans must adhere to the basic principle of the administrative regulation
- Tank tops
- Visible waistbands on undergarments or visible straps on undergarments worn under other clothing

#### Students Cannot Wear

- Violent language or images
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity)
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups
- Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments (visible waistbands and visible straps are allowed)
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon
- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance)

*Dress Code Enforcement:* To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below.

Students will only be removed from spaces, hallways, or classrooms as a result of a dress code violation as outlined above. Students in violation of the Dress Code and/or are in violation of the “Students Cannot Wear” section will be provided three (3) options to be dressed more to code during the school day

1. Students will be asked to put on their own alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
2. Students will be provided with temporary school clothing to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
3. If necessary, students’ parents or guardians may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.

These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days, summer school days, in person and remote instruction, as well as any school-related events and activities, such as graduation ceremonies, dances, and prom, unless otherwise approved by administration.

#### **Idling of Vehicles**

Vermont State Law prohibits a person from causing or permitting the idling of motor vehicles for more than five minutes in any 60-minute period while the vehicle is stationary [Chapter 23 V.S.A. §1110].

#### **New Americans**

We have a responsibility to ensure that all of our students feel safe and supported. This occurs when we create school cultures that are responsive to the needs of the children in our care, and our families. Under Federal law, undocumented children and young adults have the same right to attend public primary and secondary schools as do U.S. citizens and permanent residents (*Plyler vs. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982.)). And, under state law, all Vermont children, including undocumented children are required to attend school until the mandated age of 16. Meeting this obligation means going beyond telling families to enroll their student(s). It includes working proactively to ensure they feel safe, supported and welcomed. Public schools may not:

- Deny or terminate a student’s enrollment on the basis of actual or perceived immigration status.
- Treat a student differently to verify legal residency in the United States.
- Engage in any practices that have the effect of discouraging students from enrolling or attending school based on their immigration status.

- Require students or their parents/guardians to disclose their immigration status or inquire of students or parents/guardians in ways that may expose their undocumented status.
- Deny or terminate a student's enrollment due to failure to provide a social security number

### **Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students**

The SVSU is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. It is the policy of the District to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Harassment may also constitute a violation of Vermont's Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and/or Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972. *Please see SVSU Policy #5004 for more complete information.*

### **Wellness Programs**

The SVSU offers Health and Wellness programs to all students. For more information about our health curriculum, please go to the curriculum section of svsu.org. The SVSU also has a Health and Wellness Coach to support students and staff. *Please refer to Policy #5156 for more information.*

### **Non-Discrimination**

It is the policy of the SVSU to assure that no one discriminates on the basis of age, race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities, as and to the extent prohibited by law, including but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act, all federal regulations promulgated therein, the Vermont Fair Employment Practices Act ("FEPA"), 21 V.S.A. §495. *Please see SVSU Policy #2200 for more complete information.*

### **Title IX Grievance Procedures - Prevention of Sexual Harassment as Prohibited by Title IX**

Per Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 ("Title IX") the SVSU does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities, including employment and admissions. All forms of sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, are prohibited in the District. *Please see SVSU Policy #5003 for more complete information.*

### **Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students**

The SVSU is dedicated to being an equitable community for all students. Policy #5520 is in place to provide direction for administrators, staff, students, and families to address issues that may arise concerning the needs of transgender and gender nonconforming students. If you need support or would like to talk further, please reach out to your building administrator or school counselor.

### **Title Information**

*What is Title I?*

Title I is a federally funded program that provides financial assistance to states and school districts to meet the needs of educationally at risk students beyond the regular classroom. All of our schools offer schoolwide programs which are available to all students.

### *What do Title I programs offer?*

Supports offered through Title I include:

- small group instruction in or outside the classroom to supplement and support practices to increase classroom learning
- extra time for teaching students the skills they need
- a variety of teaching methods to reach academic goals
- additional teaching materials which supplement a student's regular instruction
- instructional goals targeted to your student's needs
- opportunities for professional learning for school staff

### *What is Title II?*

Title II funds can be used to provide supplemental activities that strengthen the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders. The purpose of Title II is to:

- Increase student achievement consistent with state standards;
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders;
- Increase the number of teachers, principals, and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools; and
- Provide low-income and minority students greater access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

### **What is Title IV?**

The purpose of Title IV funds is to improve students' academic achievement by increasing the capacity of the states, local educational agencies, schools, and local communities to:

- provide all students with access to a well-rounded education,
- improve school conditions for student learning, and
- promote the effective use of technology in supporting academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.

### *How can I get involved?*

We want to hear from you. Please review the district Continuous Improvement Plan. If you have any questions or program ideas, please reach out to your building principal or SVSU Title Coordinator, or the Assistant Superintendent of the SVSU.

### *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Complaint Procedures*

The procedure sets forth the process for resolving a complaint presented by any individual or organization that: (1) a school, school district, supervisory union, other agency authorized by the Local Educational Agency (LEA) or the State Education Agency (SEA), and/or (2) the State Education Agency violated the administration of education programs required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

### *Annual Meetings*

Title I schools hold an annual Title meeting at the beginning of each school year. You have the right to request additional meetings at any time. To schedule, please contact your building administrator from the chart above or SVSU Title Coordinator, or the Assistant Superintendent of the SVSU.

### **General Illness or Injury**

Children who come to school ill or become ill throughout the school day will be referred to the school nurse or designated school personnel. The nurse will assess the child's condition and call a family member to come to school and take the child home if necessary. Please refer to the SVSU Communicable Disease Policy - # 5140.

Family members are required to provide transportation for their child when ill or injured. Current contact information and emergency contact information is required. Please provide two (2) names and phone numbers of family or friends who will take responsibility when the guardian is unavailable.

Any child attending school must participate in physical education and outside activity. Their medical provider may excuse a child from these expected activities. Non-participation for an extended period will be permitted only with a written doctor's excusing participation in an activity.

### **Giving Medication in School**

Prescription medication can be given in school with written permission from both the guardian and physician.

Non-prescription medication (over the counter) can be given with written permission from the guardian. *See Medication in School, Policy #5176.* The school nurse or trained designee will administer medications.

All medications (prescription and non-prescription) must come to school in the original bottle from the pharmacy and labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, medication, dose, and directions. Medication will not be given if it is received in an envelope or baggie. This includes non-prescription drugs. All medication must be brought into school by an adult (18+), students are not allowed to bring in medications to school. All medication must be signed in with the nurse or trained designee. All medications on school premises are securely locked within the school.

No aspirin will be given at school (unless prescribed by a physician) given the association with Reye's syndrome. We advise that you contact your physician before giving aspirin at home.

If your student has a severe allergy or asthma please notify your school nurse. Students with severe allergies or asthma are required to have an action plan from their physician. This action plan will include any emergency medication required for the student. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the prescribed medication and written physician's directions for the administration of medication.

### **Vision & Hearing Screenings**

16 V.S.A. 1422 Testing Sight and Hearing requires that all Vermont students undergo periodic vision and hearing screenings. *The Health Department in collaboration with the Secretary of Education has developed the following schedule for required screenings, see Screening Policy #5100:*

- Hearing: Grades PK, K, 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9 & 12
- Visual Acuity: Grades PK, K, 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9 & 12

Well-Child exams are recommended annually for all students by their primary care physician.

### **Immunization**

The Vermont Department of Health requires that all schools collect and assess immunization records and follow up with students who do not meet the immunization requirements listed below. *As of 2017, the State of Vermont School Immunization Law requires the following, see Immunization Policy #5110.*

Students entering any SVSU school must provide documentation of the following:

- 5 doses of DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis) vaccine
- 4 doses of polio vaccine
- 2 doses of MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine
- 3 doses of hepatitis B vaccine
- 2 doses of chickenpox (varicella) vaccine. If the student has previously had chickenpox disease no vaccine or exemption is needed. Guardians must submit documentation or sign the health department form.

### **Communicable Diseases**

The transmission of communicable diseases must be limited in order to protect the rights of all students and employees. *Please refer to Communicable Diseases Policy #5140.*

### **Concussions and Other Head Injuries**

If your child suffers a head injury or a suspected head injury, please contact your school nurse for further information.

### **Student Substance Use Policy**

It is the policy of the SVSU schools that no student shall knowingly possess, use, transfer, or be under the influence of any drug, alcohol, or other regulated substance at school or at any school-sponsored activity. Purchase, use or transfer of drugs or alcohol by minors is against Vermont State Law. *Students in violation of the Substance Use Policy #5175 will be subject to disciplinary procedures.* As with all law violations, the administration works cooperatively with the local or state police departments.

### **General Transportation Information**

Transportation is provided on bus routes as published. Routes are created with our transportation coordinator.

### **Student Behavior Expectations and the Bus Referral Process**

The bus referral procedure will be as follows:

- The bus driver identifies a challenge related to the bus behavior matrix (bus safety rules, disrespectful and harmful behavior to themselves and other students as well as the bus driver, etc.)
- The bus driver fills out the bus referral form with specifics on the type of behavior that has been identified and needs to be addressed.
- The bus driver provides form to the building principal and or the administrative assistant. Afternoon bus referrals will be reported the following morning.
- The bus driver and administration will then communicate about the incident.

#### **First Offense**

- A warning by phone, email or letter, will be sent to the parent/guardian by the school principal. This notice, verbal or written, will include the type of observed and exhibited behavior by the student. At this meeting, it will also be noted that a second offense will result in a meeting with bus driver, transportation coordinator, administration, and student.

#### **Second Offense**

- Upon receiving a second bus referral, administration will facilitate a meeting between the student, bus driver, and transportation coordinator.

#### **Third Offense**

- Upon receiving a third bus referral, a meeting with parent/guardian, administration, bus driver, transportation coordinator and student will take place to determine further actions.

#### **Fourth Offense**

- Upon receiving a fourth bus referral, notification to the parent/guardian will be made, informing them their students' bus riding privileges have been revoked for THREE (3) school days.

*At AMHS, upon receipt of an Office Discipline Referral, Administration will address the behavior by working with the students, bus driver and families.*

## **Family Engagement and Communication**

### **School Forms**

On the first day of school, a packet of forms is given to each student or their family member. It is very important that this information is filled out, and returned to the school. The school must have current information regarding addresses, home phone, work phone and family information. Any changes during the year should be given to the school to update their student's records. This should also include after school information in case of early closings due to weather, etc.

If parents/guardians are separated, divorced or any other situation arises where someone cannot have contact with a child, the school must have a copy of the legal documents citing the restriction, in order for the school to honor the directive.

### **Problem Solving Chain of Command**

Students or families who have a concern, problem or complaint should first bring up the matter with the teacher who is directly involved. If the outcome of that discussion is not satisfactory, the student and/or parents/guardians who have a complaint should contact the Principal. If the outcome of this next discussion remains unsatisfactory, the student and/or parents/guardians have the right to contact the superintendent directly.

### *Instructional Programs*

#### **Assessment**

Summative assessments found in the SVSU Comprehensive Assessment Chart are part of the instructional practices. In addition to the Vermont Agency of Education Comprehensive Assessment Program educators also conduct benchmarks in the area of Reading, Language Arts, Math, Social and Emotional competencies. Assessment names and window of dates can be found in the Assessments tab under the Curriculum Department on [svsu.org](http://svsu.org).

### **Field Trips**

As part of the educational program of the school, occasional field trips to various points of interest may be taken to enrich the experience of the students. Such trips are carefully planned and supervised by teachers. Please refer to Policy #6230, Curriculum-Based Field Trips, for more information.

### **Technology Use**

The use of Information Technology (IT) resources by students is a privilege, not a right. However, with the privilege of access comes the responsibility to exercise responsible and ethical use of these resources. The same rules and expectations govern student use of IT resources as apply to other student conduct and communications, including but not limited to the SVSU Harassment, Hazing and Bullying Policy #5004. The SVSU computer and network resources are the property of the supervisory union. *For more information, see SVSU Policy #6141 - Computer, Network and Internet Acceptable Use.*

The use of personal technology can be a serious disruption to the educational environment. In an effort to establish a more positive culture, personal technology use will not be allowed between 8am and 2:55pm, unless for a school related purpose under the direct approval and supervision of an adult.

### **Educational Records and FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) has afforded students the right and protection of confidentiality. Parents and legal guardians have the right to inspect and review any and all of the official records, files, and data related to their children, but may not take them out of the school's office. If requested, copies will be made and given. The request should be made in writing to the office and it will be handled as expeditiously as possible. For more details, see Educational Files and Records Policy #5265.

## **English Learners**

The program provides extra support for students who either speak another language or grew up in a household where English was not the only language spoken. The goal is to bring students to a level of English usage that helps them be successful in mainstream classrooms. Foreign exchange students are not eligible for this program. Our current program reflects that change at the federal level. The SVSU currently has three EL teaching professionals and one translator. The SVSU also uses several digital tools for communication, one example is Reach My Teach. Staff can access the platform and coaching from Nick Charest, Technology Integrationist, at [nick.charest@svsu.org](mailto:nick.charest@svsu.org).

When guardians register students to attend public school in Vermont, they fill out a Home Language Survey. This is a federal requirement of all public schools in the United States. In the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union, the Home Language Survey is part of the registration process. If a guardian answers a question with any language other than English, the district is required to either seek additional information and/or test the student to determine eligibility for the program.

## *Student Services*

### **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act makes special education and related services a federal entitlement for students with disabilities. It requires that these students be offered a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and focuses on family participation, procedural safeguards, and confidentiality. Amendments have extended the entitlement for education to students three to five, and addressed the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. States receiving federal education funds are required to identify and evaluate students with disabilities and offer them an individualized education plan (IEP) or, in the case of infants and toddlers, an individual family service plan (IFSP) of special education and related services.

### **Section 504 Grievance Procedures**

Guardians of students with disabilities have certain rights regarding mediation and due process or administrative complaint. To read more about these rights, or to find information on how to file a grievance, please refer to the State of Vermont's Notice of Procedural Safeguards: Rights of Parents/Guardians of Students with Disabilities. *For more information, please see SVSU Policy #5300 - Section 504 and ADA Grievance Protocol for Students.*

### **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**

The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) can help your child if they are having difficulty in school. Guardians may refer their students to the team or the student may be referred to the team by school staff. If guardians have concerns, they may refer the student to the MTSS Team by contacting the principal or school psychologist.

The MTSS Team may develop a plan to assist the student. Guardians are considered active partners with the school and may attend an MTSS meeting to discuss any concerns they have. At the meeting, the team will discuss services or accommodations designed to assist the student in the school setting. If guardians or the team believes it would be helpful, a referral may be made for a comprehensive evaluation which is part of the special education process. The MTSS team may also work with the principal to develop plans to assist students in alternative ways.

### **Child Find Notice**

The Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union (SVSU) is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to locate, evaluate, and identify persons with disabilities from birth through age 21, who may be in need of special education, related services, or accommodations in order to access a free appropriate public education; and to provide such needed services for those ages 3 through 21.

Services for eligible children ages birth through 3 years are provided through the Children's Integrated Services-Early Intervention program. Services for eligible children ages 3 to 21 are provided by your local supervisory union.

If you know a child residing in the towns within the SVSU that you believe may have such needs but are not currently receiving services please contact the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union.

Information obtained during Child Find remains confidential as required by Vermont Special Education Regulations and the Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act.

### **Pupil Privacy Rights**

SVSU Policy #5500 dictates that the SVSU will comply with the provisions of the federal Pupil Privacy Rights Amendment (PPRA) governing the administration of certain student surveys, analyses or evaluations funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education. Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a guardian's prior written consent. Guardians have the right to opt-out of sharing directory information with prior written consent. In addition, two federal laws require local education agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless guardians have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed to military recruiters without their prior written consent.

### **Title I Interventions**

It is the policy of the SVSU to provide equal educational opportunities for all children in the district, including those students with special educational needs. Such interventions include a system for appropriate referral of eligible students into the intervention and development of Individual Education Programs (IEP) that address each student's particular needs. Regular communication and consultation with the guardians(s) are an essential part of student programming.

Specialized interventions may require the addition of appropriate specialists such as speech therapists and paraprofessionals to the instructional team, as well as equipment and special materials.

Title I is school-wide. This means that teachers who receive special training with interventions in math and reading skills and strategies can assist all children individually or in small groups

Information on *Responding to Student Misbehavior*

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is highly valued in ASD schools. Plagiarism and cheating in any form, whether intentional or unintentional, are unacceptable. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, falsification, and multi-submission.

### **Students with disabilities**

If a student with a disability under the IDEA or Section 504 violates the discipline policy, the Administration shall refer to the following regulations prior to the imposition of long-term suspension or expulsion:

*Vermont Department of Education Special Education Regulations Section 4312 – Long-term Suspension or Expulsion of Students with a Disability or Students who are disabled According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.*

### **Adult Code of Conduct**

Schools in the SVSU are committed to maintaining learning environments that are physically and emotionally safe for all children and adults. There are expectations for behavior while on school premises, and when communicating with other adults involved in the care and education of the children in our school communities. *See Disruptive Persons Policy #1015.*

Adults who are not able to meet our expectations for conduct will be asked to leave the premises immediately, and to schedule a time to meet with school administration when they are able to conduct themselves in a safe manner. The school administration, and/or the Superintendent reserves the right to deny future access to the school and school activities if the adult continues to be disruptive or threatening to any staff member.

### **Behavioral Intervention**

The SVSU staff work to create and maintain a positive and safe learning environment in schools. Students should not be subjected to the unreasonable use of restrictive behavior interventions. There is a common understanding of appropriate interventions by staff. This includes the use of seclusion and restraint in schools. *Please see SVSU Policy #5405 for more complete information.*

### **In-School Suspension at AMHS**

In-school suspension is an alternative setting in school. Students are provided the opportunity to complete regular class work.

### **Suspension or Expulsion of Students**

Corrective action may be imposed on a student in response to misconduct by the student, including but not limited to actions laid out in Policy #5050. Note that, via Vermont Act 35 section (d) as part of 16 V.S.A. § 1162, suspension and expulsion of students under eight years old is banned, except in cases of imminent harm or danger to others. *Please see Policy #5050 for more information.*

### **Smoking, Vaping/Tobacco Prohibition**

The SVSU complies with state law thereby prohibiting smoking, vaping and/or tobacco use on all school district property, including all buildings and vehicles. Smoking is not allowed during any school sponsored activity, including those held off campus. Students must not be in possession of tobacco products, including electronic nicotine delivery systems (vaping), while on campus. Purchase, use or transfer of tobacco products and electronic nicotine systems by minors is against Vermont State Law. Students in violation of the Tobacco Prohibition Policy #5180 will be subject to disciplinary procedures. As with all law violations, the administration works cooperatively with the local law enforcement agencies.

### *Emergency Drills and Procedures*

#### **Emergency Drills**

Students will participate in a fire and lockdown drill beginning in September, and alternate drills each month starting in October with a fire drill as per state requirements. Students will be instructed in proper fire egress procedures and lockdown protocol on the first day of school. Upon activation of the fire alarm system, all students, faculty, staff, and visitors are required to exit the building immediately through the nearest exit.

#### **Safety Procedures**

The principals in our schools have worked with the Superintendent and the School Safety Officer to establish procedures for all schools. In our determination to protect your children, only staff and students will be allowed access to the building in the morning during arrival times. Dismissal will follow the same procedure and students will meet families outside the building in the designated area. All guests *must* sign in at the front office.

#### **School Closings Due to Emergency**

In case of emergency, schools may close or close early. Notice of such events will be made in the same way as school closings or early release due to inclement weather. Please make sure that your contact information is up to date by contacting the office at your child's school.

## **Emergency Policies**

### **Policy #5085 - Search and Seizure**

It is the policy of the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union and its member districts to permit and conduct reasonable searches of school property, students, and their personal property, and the seizure of such property as provided below.

1. For purposes of this policy, the phrase "Loaned Property" shall mean desks, lockers, textbooks and other materials, equipment or supplies owned by the school district which are assigned or loaned to, or possessed or used by, an individual student for his/her appropriate use.
2. Students have no expectation of privacy with respect to Loaned Property. Loaned Property may be opened, inspected or otherwise accessed by school employees for purposes of cleaning or maintenance, in an emergency or under exigent or other circumstances, without prior notice to the student to whom the Loaned Property is assigned. Loaned Property may be searched by an agent of the school district on school grounds or at school activities/functions (including field trips), upon reasonable suspicion by school personnel that (i) a law or school policy or rule is being or has been violated (ii) evidence thereof may be found within the Loaned Property. School property other than Loaned Property may be searched at will by school administrator/his or her designee.
3. Items or evidence of activity prohibited by school policies or rules found in the course of the school's access to or search of Loaned Property, or as a result of a search of other school property, will be confiscated and turned over to the principal for further investigation and, where appropriate, disciplinary action. Items found which school personnel reasonably believe to be illegal and any evidence of unlawful activity found in the course of the school access to or search of Loaned Property, or a search of other school property, shall be reported and turned over to law enforcement authorities.
4. Searches of students' outer clothing, personal property belonging to a student, and/or vehicles parked on school property may be undertaken when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that a violation of law and/or school policy or rules is occurring or has occurred and that evidence thereof may be found in the course of such a search. Searches should not be intrusive. Unless an emergency situation (drugs, alcohol and safety concerns) exists, a good faith effort will be made to contact the parent/legal guardian prior to a search of a student's outer clothing or personal belongings. The search will be conducted by a school administrator with an employee of the same gender as the student and in an area of the school or under conditions intended to reasonably protect the privacy interests and dignity of the student.
5. Information and data entered, copied or scanned into, downloaded to, accessed by or stored on a computer (including any computer media) belonging to the school district, whether or not that computer is assigned to a particular student, a group of students, or is generally available for student use, shall be the property of the school district fully available to and accessible by the school district, and no student shall have an expectation of privacy with respect thereto. All files and documents maintained on such computers may be reviewed, searched, printed, copied, downloaded or otherwise reproduced by school personnel at will and without the consent of any student. Access to computer equipment is provided to students with the understanding and expectation that the equipment will be used exclusively for schoolwork and assignments, and school personnel shall have unlimited and unrestricted access thereto.
6. School employees are not agents of law enforcement officials. Search and/or seizure by law enforcement officials on school property, including searches using animals or technological systems may occur when a properly issued search warrant is presented or other legal basis exists authorizing such searches and/or seizures, and when the requirements of the Board's policy on interrogations by law enforcement officers have been met.
7. The superintendent, the principal, or an assistant principal may, when he/she has reasonable cause to believe that illegal activities have occurred or are occurring within the school, or that contraband materials, including drugs or weapons, are

present on school grounds, request that law enforcement personnel conduct a search of school property aided by specially trained animals and/or technological devices. Items or evidence of activity prohibited by school policies or rules found in the course of the school's access to or search of Loaned Property, or as a result of a search of other school property, will be confiscated and turned over to the principal for further investigation and, where appropriate, disciplinary action. Items, which reasonably appear to be illegal, and any evidence of unlawful activity found in the course of the school's access to or search of Loaned Property, or a search of other school property, shall be reported and turned over to law enforcement authorities.

8. Copies of this policy will be distributed to students when they enroll in school, and/or this policy will be included in the student handbook given to students at the beginning of each school year.

### **Policy #5087 - Threats and Disruptions to School Operations**

*I Policy:* It is the policy of the Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union, Southwest Vermont Union Elementary School District, Mount Anthony Union School District, North Bennington Graded School District, Arlington School District and Sandgate School District to respond quickly and effectively to any threat to the safety of its students and staff. As a result, it has adopted the following provisions that its personnel are directed to follow in order to prepare for, respond to, and follow up on the communication of any threat that a destructive device or any unauthorized toxic or hazardous substance or material has been or will be placed on school grounds.

*II Conduct Prohibited:* It is a violation of this policy for any person to make, issue, or otherwise communicate by any means, a threat that a destructive device (bomb threat) has been or will be placed on school grounds or property. The issuance or communication by any means of a threat that any unauthorized toxic or hazardous substance or material has been placed or will be placed on school grounds with the intent to endanger the welfare and safety of students and school personnel and/or to disrupt the operations of the school district is strictly prohibited. It is a violation of this policy for any person to knowingly place or install a hoax device on school grounds or property.

### *III Definitions:*

1. "Destructive device" means any (a) explosive, incendiary or poison gas bomb; or (b) explosive, incendiary or poison gas grenade; or (c) explosive, incendiary or poison gas rocket having a propellant charge of more than 4 ounces; or (d) explosive, incendiary or poison gas missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one quarter (1/4 ounce); or (e) explosive, incendiary or poison gas mine; or (f) device which consists of or includes a breakable container including a flammable or liquid compound, and a wick composed of any material which, when ignited, is capable of igniting the flammable liquid or compound, and can be carried or thrown by one individual acting alone; or (g) device similar to those devices enumerated in paragraphs (a) through (e) of this section.

2. "Hoax device" means any device so designed, assembled, fabricated or manufactured as to convey the physical appearance of an explosive or incendiary bomb or the physical appearance of any of the devices enumerated in subdivisions (a)-(f) of division 1, of this section, which is lacking an explosive or incendiary charge.

3. "Toxic or hazardous substance or material" means: any substance or material designated as a toxic or hazardous substance or material under the following laws and implementing regulations: the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976, 15 U.S.C. § 2604 et seq; the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, 49 App. U.S. C. § 1801 et seq; any substance in a gaseous, liquid, or solid state listed pursuant to Title III Section 313 of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986; any material or substance, or biomedical material, substance, or organism regulated by the state or federal government because it presents or will present an unreasonable risk of injury to health or the environment.

4. "School grounds or property" means: facilities, buildings, fields, and grounds areas; vehicles owned, leased or used by the District to transport students to and from school or school activities; parking lots (including vehicles in the parking lots); or any other setting which is under the permanent or temporary supervision and/or control of the School District.

*IV Investigations:* The Superintendent and principal, and all other school personnel, shall cooperate with law enforcement personnel involved in investigating a bomb threat or other threats covered by this policy. School personnel shall not conduct any investigation independently but rather in conjunction with law enforcement authorities.

*V Sanctions:* Recognizing that a threat to the safety of students and staff or the intent to disrupt school operations by the conduct prohibited in this policy is to commensurate with the threat to student and staff safety posed by guns or weapons prohibited by school policy and State and federal law, violations of this policy shall be treated accordingly.

*A Discipline:*

1. A student violating this policy, in addition to any penalty imposed by law, shall be subject to disciplinary action by the school.
2. If the suspension may exceed 10 school days, a school board hearing must be conducted within the 10 school days from the precipitating action.
3. A student found by the Board after a hearing to have violated the provisions of this policy shall be expelled for at least one (1) calendar year. However, the Board may modify the expulsion on a case-by-case basis when it finds circumstances such as, but not limited to:
  - (a) the student was unaware of their conduct;
  - (b) the student is disabled and the conduct is related to the disability; or
  - (c) a lengthy expulsion would not serve the best interests of the student.
4. A staff member found to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Disciplinary action taken in accordance with this subsection shall be consistent with collective bargaining agreements, applicable employment agreements, and/or school district policies.

*B Aiding Other Students:* A student who in any way encourages another student to bring weapons to school also endangers the safety of others. The School District expressly prohibits any such action. No student shall knowingly or willfully cause, encourage, or aid any other student to possess, handle, or transmit any of the weapons or facsimiles of weapons listed above. No student shall knowingly or willfully cause, encourage, or aid any other student to make, issue, or otherwise communicate by any means, a threat that a dangerous or deadly weapon has been or will be placed or used on school grounds or property. A student found to have violated this provision of the policy by causing, encouraging, aiding, etc. another student, shall be expelled for at least one (1) calendar year and treated in accordance with the provisions of section A., Sanctions.

*C Civil Liability:* The School District reserves the right to bring a suit against any individual responsible for a violation of this policy and to seek restitution and other damages as permitted by law.

*VI Notification and Training:*

*A Policy Dissemination:* A copy of this policy shall be included in all school handbooks. In

addition, handbooks for faculty, staff, parents/guardians, and students shall contain the following

Provision: District representatives (Non-Law Enforcement) may search personal property, school lockers, etc. consistent with the legal authority granted to schools under State and federal law. Personnel and students may also be subject to searches by law enforcement personnel as determined by law enforcement. All members of the school community are

advised that any academic time lost as a result of a bomb threat, or other threats intended to disrupt school operations, will be rescheduled, either on a weekend, vacation day, extended length of day, or following what would otherwise be the end of the school year.

Under State law, the making of a bomb threat is a very serious criminal offense, punishable to even a first offense by as much as 2 years in prison and a \$5,000 fine. The making of such a threat may also lead to civil liability.

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

*VII Procedures:*

The Superintendent shall develop comprehensive procedures designed to inform staff of appropriate responses, procedures and protocols to follow up on the receipt of a bomb threat or other threats intended to disrupt school operations; the coordination of responses with local safety and law enforcement agencies; building searches; and communications with the school community and the media.