

Rock Ledge Primary Center

Seymour Community School District



Student-Family Handbook 2023-2024

330 W Hickory Street

Seymour, WI 54165

Phone: (920) 833-5155

Fax: (920) 833-5144

Website: www.seymour.k12.wi.us/rockledgek2/

OFFICE HOURS: 7:15 am to 3:45 pm

SCHOOL HOURS: 7:55 am to 3:05 pm

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We are so happy you are part of the Seymour Community School District. It is our mission to ensure that all students achieve at or above grade level. The purpose of this handbook is to give you information concerning policies and other routine matters for the successful operation of Rock Ledge Primary School. Parents may also refer to the school district website for access to all School Board policies and expectations at <https://go.boarddocs.com/wi/seymour/Board.nsf/Public>.

It is going to be a wonderful year! ~Mrs. Inman, Principal

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Arrival Time: Students should not arrive at school before 7:45 am. This includes students who walk to school and those who are dropped off. **All students, 4K-2nd grade, will enter through Door #1 (main entrance).** Please try and have students exit the vehicle on the side closest to the curb. Students will NOT be playing on the playground before school. Staff supervision starts at 7:45 am.

Dismissal Time: students will be dismissed at staggered times.

- 2:55- students being picked up will be dismissed by parent arrival (We use Pick Up Patrol to track student dismissal)
- 3:03- students walking home will be dismissed (students walking with siblings should decide on a meeting spot in front of the school)
- 3:05- students will be dismissed to walk to busses

Parent Pick Up Procedures

- All 4K-2nd grade families will pick up and drop off via carline this year.
- As you pick up your Primary student, please pull forward so others can advance through the line.
- Parents should remain in their vehicles for drop off or pick up while next to the curb.
- Staff will be present to escort students to and from their assigned door.
 - 4K, 5K, 1st & 2nd grade students will enter and exit out Door #1 (RLP main entrance)
- RLP will be using a web based software program to monitor student dismissal called **Pick Up Patrol**. 4K-2 parents picking up will be provided with a **Pick Up Patrol (PUP)** car tag to be displayed upon arrival. This will prompt the staff member to have your student sent out to be picked up. Students will only be released upon parent arrival.

Bus Procedures

- 4K-2nd grade will enter and exit through Door #12.
- Staff will be present to escort students from the bus to their assigned door.

“Walker” Procedures

- Students will be dismissed out the same door as “parent pick up” students.
- Students will be expected to proceed home upon dismissal.
- Crossing Guards are located at the following intersections:
 - Hickory and Lee Street
 - Hickory and Lincoln Street
 - Hickory and Main Street

Early Dismissals

Please call the school office for any late arrivals or early pickups. If your student is going to be picked up before the regular dismissal time, parents should enter the change in the Pick Up Patrol program, using the Early Dismissal option and select the time you will be picking up your student. If someone else will be picking up your student please indicate that in the comments. If your student needs to be picked up early, parents can come to the office to sign your student out when you arrive at school.

Late Arrivals

Late arrivals should be dropped off at the Door #1 (Main Entrance).

Change at the end of the day

If students will be changing their regular end of day plan, parents should enter the change in the Pick Up Patrol program prior to 2:30pm. A change in bus, pick up person, walk or ride, or any other event should be indicated. If a parent is going to be late in picking up a student after school, please call the office. Sometimes students become frightened if parents are not here on time. Any changes pertaining to bus switches parents need to call Kobussen.

ATTENDANCE

In case of illness, parents are asked to call school (833-5155, ext. 1) prior to 9:00 a.m. to report their student's absence. The attendance line can be called 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If an absence is going to be planned, parents are encouraged to complete the pre planned absence form found on our district website under the Rock Ledge Primary Center School. If the absence is not called in, it will be considered unexcused. A doctor's excuse may be provided in the event a student is absent due to an appointment. For more information regarding SCSD attendance expectations, please refer to Board Policy 431: Student Attendance.

Student attendance at school is required by state law. Regular attendance is critical for academic success. When a student has an accumulation of absences, school staff will begin implementing various interventions to improve their attendance. The interventions will look as follows:

5 days= Bright arrow notification will be sent informing the parent that their student has met the 5 day mark.

5-10 days= School counselor will meet with the student and make a connection with a parent/guardian.

10 days=An attendance letter will be sent home if the absences accumulate to 10 days. If a student's absence exceeds 10 days, a doctor's excuse will be required for any medical absence.

10-15 days=School district social worker will set up a home visit and school intervention plan.

15 days=A second attendance letter will be sent home.

15-20 days= The principal will request an attendance meeting. A home visit will be set up with the principal and with a social worker or school resource officer.

20 days= A third attendance letter a final review for Truancy Referral

BEHAVIOR CONDUCT, INTERVENTION, & SUPPORTS

Rock Ledge Primary Center is responsible for helping all students learn, practice self-discipline and understand that all of us must be responsible for our own actions. We at RLP strongly believe that students want to and can meet expectations. We value partnering with parents to help students do well in school and feel good about going to school. Rock Ledge Primary Center uses the ***Responsive Classroom Approach & The Thunder Way***.

Our school uses the Responsive Classroom Discipline approach. The goals of this approach are to ensure that students:

- ❖ Feel physically and emotionally safe in school so that they can learn at their best.
- ❖ Learn the skills for working and learning cooperatively with others.

Our Thunder Way School-wide expectations :

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

Be Safe

Rock Ledge Primary Center uses the Responsive Classroom Approach and the Thunder Way expectations to support positive behavior in all students. At the beginning of the year, we introduce rules and behavior expectations and guide students in practicing them. When students behave positively, we let them know that we noticed. We use positive praise and acknowledgements to reinforce the positive behaviors.

We acknowledge and celebrate positive student behavior through:

- ❖ Verbal praise
- ❖ Student Showcase
- ❖ School-wide celebrations

Students are expected to be respectful, responsible and safe. When students misbehave, the staff will handle the misbehavior firmly while preserving the child's dignity. Our first step is to stop the misbehavior quickly and simply (for example, a brief reminder, redirection or request). If needed, we take further steps to help the child regain self-control, fix any problems caused by his or her mistake, and get back to productive learning. In deciding how to handle student' misbehavior, we take into account the frequency and severity of the behavior in addition to working with parents/guardians for problem solving. In consideration of the severity of the behaviors, we refer to the misbehavior as major or minor.

Examples of *minor* behaviors include, but are not limited to, disruptions (yelling, making noises), refusal, non-compliance, disrespect, rough horseplay, leaving classroom without permission, and name calling.

We handle *minor* behaviors in some of the following ways:

- ❖ Give a reminder or tell the child to do something different
- ❖ Have the child sit closer to the teacher or other adult
- ❖ Use "take-a-break" in the classroom or office, allowing the child a chance to regain self-control
- ❖ Limit the child's choice of activities for a set amount of time
- ❖ Guide the child in fixing problems caused by his or her mistake

Examples of *major* behaviors include, but are not limited to, stealing, violence/aggression (hitting, punching, kicking, spitting, scratching, choking, biting), threats to harm, leaving school without permission, and bullying.

When students continue to exhibit *major* behaviors staff response may include:

- ❖ Have student go to the school office or other non-classroom place to regain self-control
- ❖ Have the child stay for a longer period of time in the supervised space
- ❖ Contact or meet with the child and/or parents to find other solutions
- ❖ Request the parent to come to school to speak with the child or to pick the child up for the remainder of the day.
- ❖ Have the child spend a period of time at home (out-of-school suspension)

When a student is suspended from school, a parent may be required to accompany the student to school the next day for a re-entry meeting with the teacher and the principal. This meeting is typically held before the school day.

Voice Volumes: Throughout the school, the students are taught that we use different voice volumes throughout different locations in the building. For example, when we are in the library, we use a whisper voice (level 1). In the lunchroom students would be using a voice volume 2, as they talk with each other. This universal cuing system is very effective with quieting students down quickly or redirecting their noise level.

BREAKFAST & LUNCH/MILK BREAK

Breakfast and lunch are very important parts of the day. The school meal program is designed to give students balanced and nutritious meals. The U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition waiver has been discontinued resulting in the school district charging for all meals.

The Meal program and the Milk program have different requirements. As a result of these requirements, parents/guardians will still need to pay for the daily milk break. Parents can deposit money into their student's accounts by bringing their money in an envelope to the office.

Families will need to complete the Free/Reduced lunch paperwork if you meet qualifications. The names of families who qualify for free and reduced lunch is extremely confidential. Families who qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch will also qualify for free milk break. If you are interested in applying, forms are available on the District website under the Food Service Program and in our school office.

Unpaid Meal Policy: [this would apply towards unpaid milk or prior meal fees]

Students that have a negative balance of \$8 or more will not be allowed to receive hot lunch or breakfast until a full deposit has been made to the account bringing it above \$0. Parents will receive messages from the school if their student's account is negative. Once the student's account is negative -\$8 the school will directly call parents to discuss the negative account and next steps. Students will be offered a sandwich (cooks choice) and milk for lunch until their account has adequate funds.

BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR BUS RIDERS

Please keep in mind that riding the school bus is a privilege, this privilege can be taken away if your student is not willing to follow the regulations necessary to insure the safety and comfort of all passengers. Video camera monitors may be used on any bus to document student behavior problems and may be used to assist the school administrators in determining the proper disciplinary action.

In regards to health and safety measures, all riders will understand and agree that the District has implemented safety measures to the greatest extent practicable, and that when riding District transportation there are inherent risks of physical injury or illness, including the risk of exposure to or contraction of the coronavirus (COVID-19) or other infectious diseases. Parents and guardians further acknowledge that their student's use of District transportation is completely voluntary, and understand the risk of potential exposure

to or contraction of the coronavirus (COVID-19) or other infectious disease or injury, and the consequences of such illness.

BUS RULES

The Bus Rider:

1. shall conform to the same standards of conduct that are expected of them at school.
2. is expected to obey the driver the same as other school staff and be respectful of other students.
3. or his/her parent or guardian shall be financially responsible for damage done to the seats or other bus equipment.
4. shall remain in the assigned seat and not engage in horseplay on or around the bus.
5. shall not put any part of their body out of a window.
6. shall be absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad crossing stop.
7. shall not throw anything in the bus or out the window.

BUS SAFETY PROCEDURES

1. The bus rider is expected to be on time at the designated bus stop. The bus cannot wait for students.
2. The bus rider should wait at the end of the driveway until the bus comes to a complete stop.
3. If the bus rider crosses the road, he or she shall do so in front of the bus, after making sure that the highway is clear and after receiving a signal from the bus driver. The student shall stay at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus while crossing the road.
4. The bus rider is expected to get on and off the bus at the regular stop unless a parent or guardian sends a written request to the building principal.
5. When stepping off the bus students are to proceed directly to their driveway. Do not go to the mailbox, paper box, etc. Unnecessary distractions may cause confusion and divert the driver's attention, which may result in a serious accident.
6. Unnecessary distractions may cause confusion and divert the driver's attention which may result in a serious accident.
7. The bus rider will not be able to use the last two seats at the rear of the bus unless the bus is at capacity.

DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES:

If a violation of the above rules occurs, the driver will fill out a conduct report and return it to the building principal within 24 hours of the offense. The report will state the date of the offense, student name, offense committed and driver's signature and route number. The following disciplinary actions will be taken by the school's administration, depending on the nature of the report.

1. The School official will inform the parent/guardian of the offense and discuss possible disciplinary measures to correct the situation, or
2. The School official could recommend that the Board of Education expel the student from bus service for the remainder of the school year.

In conclusion: Parents/guardians and students are to be aware that in any of the preceding actions, they have the right to due process.

Drivers may refuse to transport a student only if an immediate report of the circumstances is made to the school principal on the next trip to school. No students shall be put off the bus except at the school or at his/her home. The driver may not put a student off the bus unless authorized by the building principal or school official. The bus driver or school official has the authority to assign riders to designated seats. If you have questions or concerns about your student's bus route (ex: pick up/drop off times, behavior, etc) call Kobussen Buses as 920-221-1029.

CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

SCSD Curriculum: curriculum is aligned to the WI Model Academic Standards. A complete list of the Academic Standards can be viewed at <https://dpi.wi.gov/standards>. We use the following Curriculum resources for daily instruction:

Literacy-Benchmark Advance and Heggerty Phonics

Math-Math Expressions

Science- Next Generation Science Standard cross-curricular in Benchmark

Social Studies- Social Studies Standard cross-curricular in Benchmark

SCSD Assessment: we assess student progress by using informal and formal assessment tools. We use the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment to assess and monitor student reading skills. We also use i-Ready computer-based assessment for reading and math in 1st and 2nd grade. 4K & 5K use a reading readiness screening tool. If you have any questions about curriculum or our assessment measures please feel free to contact your student's teacher.

FEES

Parents are able to pay the following fees in the school office using cash or check. If you are going to send the fees with your student, please make sure the payment is in a sealed envelope with his/her name on it. Parents can also pay the following fees using the e~Funds For Schools payment option. This option can be accessed by clicking on the district website and selecting the e~Funds icon to create an account.

Free and Reduced lunch applications are available in the office

5K-5 Registration Fees	\$10.00 each
5K-5 Milk Break	\$21.00/trimester or \$63.00/year
5K-5 Hot lunch Ticket	\$2.70/day
Milk (per carton)	\$.40
Breakfast	\$1.40/day
Adult tickets	\$4.65/day (lunch) \$2.60/day (breakfast)



FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an extension of classroom study and will be planned by teachers to assist in teaching course content. Parents will be asked to sign a permission slip at the beginning of the year for all of the field trips. Teachers will notify you at the time of each field trip. Field trips may be denied to students with compulsive disciplinary concerns at the decision of the teacher and principal.

Please note that although we want to welcome parents/guardians to join us on field trips as chaperones, we ask that no siblings be brought along. Please note that any chaperone will need to have completed a background check every three years. Parents may confirm with the classroom teacher if they are up for renewal. The background checks are digital and can be found on the Seymour website under the Rock Ledge Primary Center useful links. Students must travel with their classroom to the field trip. If parents want to take their student home from the field trip, they must inform the teacher prior to the field trip stating that they have chosen to do so.

Occasionally there are fees involved for our students to attend field trips. In the event that you are only able to pay partial or none of the fee please call the principal to discuss, with confidentiality, other arrangements.

PLEASE NOTE: On field trip days, we encourage parents to take advantage of our bag lunch that can be provided by the school. Just let your student's teacher know that you would like to have them take a school bag lunch, and it will just be deducted from your student's account.

GUIDELINES FOR CHAPERONES

As a chaperone, your participation is very important. In order to make field trips educational, fun, and a safe learning experience, we have outlined a list of chaperone guidelines.

1. Field trip chaperones are expected to be in professional and appropriate dress.
2. Chaperones are responsible for reminding students to be respectful, responsible and safe.
3. Chaperones are responsible for all members of your assigned group.
4. It is important to have a cell phone on you at all times in the event of an emergency, but please do not use it to engage in business or personal matters and do not take phone calls or text while supervising students.
5. Don't hesitate to ask questions of the teacher. The teacher is in charge, and her/his directions must be followed at all times. Please speak to the teacher privately if you have any concerns.
6. Chaperones are responsible for reporting all injuries to the teacher.
7. In order to comply with school policy, before or during the field trip, chaperones:
 - may not use or possess alcohol or other drugs
 - may not use tobacco in the presence of, or within the sight of students
 - may not administer any medications, prescription or nonprescription to students

ILLNESS OR INJURY

Any student that is injured or complains of illness is brought to the office. The severity of the illness may result in parents or emergency designees being contacted immediately. This will allow us to meet the needs of your child(s) as quickly as possible. Other situations will be handled by office personnel as appropriately as necessary. Accident forms will be filled out on serious injuries. All students are expected to go outdoors for

recess. If a student needs to stay in from recess due to an illness or injury for a period of days, a doctor's excuse will be necessary.

If your student is ill with a communicable disease, please report this to the school so information can be given as to the time a student should remain home. The school will report these illnesses to the Health Department. Communicable diseases that need to be reported include: Coronavirus, Chicken pox, measles, mumps, and whooping cough.

MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

A Medication Request Form must be completed before any medication is administered at school. The Medication Request Form can be obtained in the school office. There are two different medication forms. One is used for over-the-counter medication and the other is for prescriptions. To administer over-the-counter medication, the office must have the *Parent/Guardian Instruction/Consent form for medication Administration* form with a parent signature. All doctor prescribed medications will require the *Physician's Instruction/Consent for Medication Administration* form with a physician's signature. A medication must be in the original container, which indicates the student's name, dosage, and frequency of administration. Medication will need to be brought to school by a parent or guardian. student may not bring medication to school in their backpacks. These items will be kept in the school office.

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Ongoing communication between school and home will create a good foundation for your student's education. Please contact your student's teacher with any questions or concerns. This will allow you to stay informed regarding your academic progress and situations that may arise. The Principal is available to help address any matters of concern or general questions if more clarification is needed. Our goal is to work with you for a positive and rewarding school experience for your student.

Your student will have a daily folder. This folder will be sent home each day as a method for sharing projects, math homework, and communication. Please make sure you check your student's folder each day and return it to school.

REPORT CARDS

The elementary report card is designed to communicate a comprehensive picture of how your student is performing in school. This performance reflects the progress and effort demonstrated with the specific knowledge and skills that are being taught in the classroom. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your student's progress in school, please contact your student's teacher.

PLEASE NOTE: Report cards will be sent home at trimester (every 12 weeks). Additional information will be provided at parent-teacher conferences.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RtI)

RtI (Response to Intervention) is a process for achieving higher levels of academic and behavioral success for all students through high-quality instructional practice, continuous review of student progress, and collaboration.

The RtI framework in Wisconsin is a K-12 initiative that applies to all students – general education, special education, Title 1, and gifted and talented. The RtI process at Rock Ledge Primary Center is a collaborative building level process that examines the academic, emotional, and behavioral needs of students, to determine if a student would benefit from **Supported** or **Enriched** Learning. Rock Ledge has a building level RtI team that uses data collected from teachers to determine levels of support and set goals for student growth and achievement.

SAFETY DRILLS

Students will be involved in practice drills during the school year in order to be prepared to deal with any emergency that could occur. A District Safety Plan is in place to address the appropriate procedures that need to be taken during an emergency.

FIRE DRILL- Fire drills are conducted monthly throughout the year. In the event of a fire drill, the buzzer sounds throughout the school and the students exit the building under the guidance of their teacher in a single file line. The students return to their classrooms for instruction upon completion of the drill.

SEVERE WEATHER DRILL- The signal of a tornado drill is an intermittent buzzing sound of the school bell system. Upon hearing this sound, students are directed to a sheltered location within the building, following the procedures indicated by their teacher.

INTRUDER and EDUCATIONAL LOCKDOWN

The signal of an intruder drill is a PA announcement instructing teachers to follow procedures consistent with the District Safety Plan.

VISITORS, VOLUNTEERS and CHAPERONES

All visitors and volunteers must sign in and receive a badge from the office. Upon arrival, the office will complete security checks to ensure that the visitor is either a guardian or approved by the guardian to come visit a student in our school. Any visitors who are not listed as a guardian, will need to be approved by parents/guardians on the Visitor Permission form or a separate note sent to school. Pre-pandemic- if a visitor comes to join a student for lunch, they must be approved by the parent prior to being released from the office. If they are not pre-approved, the office will make a phone call to the parent/guardian. Adult tickets are available for purchase at the RLP office.

For the safety of our students, only students and staff are allowed on the playground during the student recess.

If you would like to volunteer your time in our building or would like to chaperone a field trip, a background check will need to be completed yearly. Please complete and return the chaperone form in the event you are able to join a field trip. When planning to attend volunteer activities, we ask that you submit the form at least 5 days prior to your volunteer involvement so that the background check can be processed. While the district reserves the right to do routine checks on all volunteers, the background check form only needs to be completed once every three years.

SEYMOUR COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

Public Notification Of Student Nondiscrimination (Policy 411)

The Seymour Community School District prohibits all forms of unlawful discrimination against students and other persons in all aspects of the District's programs and operations. Accordingly, consistent with section 118.13 of the state statutes, no person shall unlawfully be denied admission to any public school in this District, or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil service, recreational or other program or activity because of the person's sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability. The District likewise requires and enforces nondiscrimination in a manner consistent with the rights and obligations established under all applicable federal civil rights laws, including the current provisions of Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, religion, sex, or national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (disability), the Americans with Disabilities Act (including Title II of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in state and local government services), and the civil rights provisions associated with the District's participation in federal meal programs.

Children of homeless individuals and unaccompanied homeless youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) as identified under federal law shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including comparable services, as provided to other children and youth who reside in the District. Homeless children and youth shall not be required to attend a separate school or program for homeless children and shall not be stigmatized by school personnel.

The District shall provide legally-required accommodations and appropriate educational services or programs for students who have been identified as having a disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. The District shall also provide for the reasonable accommodation of a student's sincerely held religious beliefs with regard to examinations and other academic requirements. Requests for religious accommodations shall be made in writing and approved by the building principal.

All District career and technical education opportunities are offered to students on a nondiscriminatory basis. Additional information regarding such program offerings and the applicable admission/participation criteria can be obtained on the District's website or by contacting any school's guidance office.

When acceptable to the complaining party, the District encourages informal resolution of discrimination complaints and related concerns. However, a formal complaint resolution procedure is available to address allegations of unlawful discrimination and/or any alleged violation of the District's equal educational opportunities policies.

Any questions concerning this notice, the District's nondiscrimination and equal educational opportunities policies, policy compliance, or the District's complaint procedures may be directed to the District's equal educational opportunities compliance officer:

Pupil Services Director
Seymour Community School District
10 Circle Drive, Seymour, WI 54165
920-833-2304 or 920-833-5159

Discrimination-related complaints may be filed with the Compliance Officer. The Compliance Officer also serves as the District's Title IX Coordinator (sex discrimination and sexual harassment issues and complaints) and Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator (disability rights and disability-based discrimination issues) for all student and all non-employment related matters.

By following all required procedures and timelines, complaints of unlawful student discrimination may also be filed externally with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, the Chicago office of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or, in appropriate circumstances, with any state or federal court or other agency of competent jurisdiction.

Student Attendance (431)

The School Board believes attendance is a key factor in student achievement and believes that students must be in regular school attendance in order to successfully achieve the goal of high school graduation.

Any person having under their control a child who is between the ages of 6 and 18 years of age (including through the end of the semester in which the child becomes 18 years of age), or a child enrolled in 5-year-old kindergarten in the District, shall cause the child to attend school regularly in accordance with state law. The child is expected to attend school on each day school is in session, unless he/she is excused from school attendance for any of the following reasons or has graduated from high school:

1. Prior Parent-Excused Absences.

A student excused in writing by his/her parent or guardian prior to an absence is excused from school attendance. A student may be excused by the parent or guardian under this provision for not more than 10 school days in the school year. Students so excused are responsible for making up work missed during the absence. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with their classroom teacher(s) to complete any assignments or examinations that are or will be missed during the absence. Absences falling into this absence category include discretionary absences known in advance such as family vacations/travel, family weddings, hunting, and, unless within the number of visits counted as school-excused absences under the next section of these procedures, college visitation days.

2. Other Excused Absences of a Temporary Nature.

- a. Illness, including reasonable treatment for such illness, where the student is temporarily not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school.

A written statement from a health care provider may be required to be submitted as proof of the student's condition for student absences due to illness that are 3 school days or more in length. Such health care provider's excuse shall state the period of time for which it is valid, and shall not exceed 30 days.

- b. Medical appointments (although the District strongly encourages parents and guardians to make every effort to schedule non-emergency medical examinations and appointments, e.g., for health maintenance/preventative care, at times that avoid or at least minimize the student's loss of instructional time);
- c. Religious holidays or instruction to the extent authorized by law;
- d. Family emergency;
- e. Severe weather conditions that, in the parent's or guardian's reasonable judgment, are a danger to the health and welfare or safety of the student;
- f. Funerals of a family member or friend;
- g. Up to 3 days per school year for college visitations by high school juniors and seniors;
- h. Suspension from school;
- i. Mandatory court appearances;
- j. Visiting a parent or guardian who is on active military duty and has been called to duty for or is on leave from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, or has returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting within the past 30 days;
- k. Serving as an Election Official – Students may be excused to serve as an election official provided they have at least a 3.0 grade point average or the equivalent and have the permission of their parent(s) or guardian and the building principal;
- l. Sounding Taps – A student in grades 6 to 12 may be excused for the purpose of sounding "Taps" during a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran;
- m. Any other reasonably non-discretionary absence deemed appropriate by the school attendance officer.

Parents and guardians are required to notify the school of an absence prior to or on the day of the absence. Excused absences other than a suspension from school require written approval of the student's parent or guardian. All students with excused absences will be given the opportunity to make up class assignments missed during the absence, including tests and examinations. It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to make arrangements for making up the work missed during an absence from school.

As indicated above, absence from school during a period of suspension will be considered an excused absence for purposes of this policy. Students serving a suspension will be permitted to make up class work and examinations missed during their suspension from school under the same conditions as other excused absences.

Students who are participating, with District approval, in extracurricular activities, athletics, and other District-sponsored programs or events during any portion of an instructional day are not considered absent from school, but teachers shall treat their absence from class as excused with the right to make up work to the same extent permitted in connection with excused absences from school.

3. Program or Curriculum Modifications.

A child may be excused from regular school attendance pursuant to a program or curriculum modification, as further defined under state law that has been requested by the student's parent or guardian and approved by the building principal.

Program or curriculum modifications shall be requested in writing. The administrative decision in response to the request shall likewise be provided in writing. If a child, or his/her parent or guardian, is not satisfied with the decision made by the building principal he/she may appeal in writing to the District Administrator. The District Administrator shall respond in writing. If a child, or his/her parent or guardian is not satisfied with the decision of the District Administrator, they may ask the School Board to review and act on the request. The Board shall render its determination upon review in writing, if the student's parent or guardian so requests.

4. Participation in a Board-Approved Alternative Program.

A child who is 16 years of age or older may be excused from regular school attendance to attend an alternative educational program leading to high school graduation or a high school equivalency diploma in accordance with state law provisions.

5. High School Students Who Are No Longer Subject to Compulsory Attendance.

For any student who is 18 years of age or older and no longer subject to compulsory attendance and truancy referral, the student will still be held to the distinctions between excused and unexcused absences. In addition, by state law, the District may not grant a high school diploma to any student unless, during the high school grades, the student has been enrolled in a class or has participated in an activity approved by the school board during each class period of each school day, or the student has been enrolled in an alternative education program.

6. High School Students Approved to Leave School Grounds During a Class Period.

The Board authorizes the administration to establish a program that allows a student enrolled in the high school grades who has demonstrated a high level of maturity and personal responsibility to apply for school approval to leave the school premises for up to one class period each day if the student does not have a class scheduled during that class period. A student who is under the age of 18 must have parent or guardian permission to seek such approval. Absence from school with approval under such a program constitutes an excused absence from school and does not affect the student's eligibility for graduation.

Students who are absent from school without an acceptable excuse as authorized above will be considered truant and shall be dealt with in accordance with state law and established District procedures. Students with unexcused absences (truant students) will be permitted to make up tests and examinations that were missed during the unexcused absence period provided that that test/examination can be completed independently and by a reasonable

deadline that is established by the teacher. Such students will also be permitted to make up assignments missed during their truancy to the extent such assignments can be completed independently and were not integrated with an in-school or group-based activity that the student missed while truant. Truant students may receive less than full credit for make-up assignments and make-up tests/exams. Teachers shall be expected to apply the same standard for making up missed classroom assignments to all truant students on a fair and consistent basis. With the approval of the building principal, a school may establish periods of supervised study, either during or outside of the regular school day, during which students who need to do make-up work will be expected to complete the make-up work. The District shall not deny student credit in a course or subject solely because of a student's unexcused absences.

The building principal shall serve as the primary school attendance officer and deal with all matters relating to school attendance and truancy. The building principal may designate one or more licensed staff members as deputies who shall also be permitted to serve in the role of school attendance officer provided that each such deputy is sufficiently familiar with the relevant requirements and procedures.

The Pupil Services Director and building principals shall establish necessary procedures to encourage regular student attendance, to identify excused and unexcused absences, and to determine appropriate action to respond to and serve as a deterrent to truancy. These procedures shall be in line with recommendations of the county truancy committee, the District's truancy plan, and state law requirements.

Teachers, students, and parents and guardians shall be informed of the District's student attendance policy and procedures annually via school handbooks or other means necessary to provide proper notice of student attendance-related responsibilities.

STUDENT USE AND POSSESSION OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES (POLICY 443.5)

This policy is intended to apply to students when they are at school, participating in any school-sponsored activity, and at all other times when the student is subject to the authority and supervision of District officials. At such times and under the conditions established in this policy, students may possess an electronic communication device such as a cellular telephone or other personal electronic device with communications functions or with recording, photographic, or video-imaging capabilities. Students may use such devices only with school permission that has been granted pursuant to this policy.

Building principals are authorized to establish school rules and acceptable use guidelines for students' limited and non-disruptive use of electronic devices for educational, safety, medical, vocational, or other legitimate reasons.

The rules shall permit students at all grade levels to use a personal electronic device as needed (e.g., to contact a responsible adult) in any emergency situation that involves an immediate threat to the health, safety, or property of any person. However, when carrying out school emergency response plans an administrator or other staff member may direct students to turn off their personal electronic devices so that emergency communication networks are not overwhelmed and so that emergency response efforts are not jeopardized.

Students shall not use electronic communication devices:

- To engage in bullying or harassment.
- To communicate test answers, photograph tests, or engage in any other conduct that constitutes or facilitates academic dishonesty.
- To take, disseminate, transfer, or share any images, recordings, or other content that is obscene, lewd, illegal, sexually-explicit, or otherwise inappropriate for the school setting.
- In areas where other people have a reasonable expectation of privacy, including all locker rooms, bathrooms, or other changing areas (except in an emergency).
- To create, communicate, share, or post recordings or images of any other student or staff member without permission from that student or staff member (except in an emergency).
- In violation of the District's rules surrounding students' acceptable use of technology.

Possession and use of an electronic communication device by a student under this policy is a privilege. A student who chooses to exercise this privilege does so subject to the following conditions:

- The District is not responsible for the safety or security of personal electronic equipment that students possess or use at school or at a school-related activity. Students who possess or use such device(s) do so at their own risk with regard to possible theft, damage, misappropriation of data/equipment, or other loss.
- If the District determines that a student has possessed or used such a device in violation of the law, this policy, or a school rule or directive, the student is subject to appropriate school-imposed consequences, such as the possible loss of privileges, suspension, and/or expulsion. The District may also refer certain matters to law enforcement.
- If a District official has reason to suspect or determines that a student has possessed or used an electronic device in violation of the law, this policy, or a school rule or directive, a District official may temporarily confiscate the device and/or turn the device over to law enforcement.
- A device possessed or used by a student may be subject to an appropriately limited search by a District official when the official has reason to suspect that such a search may lead to evidence of a crime or a violation of Board policy or school rules. The scope of any such search will be limited to the suspected violation.

To the extent prohibited by law, school employees shall not request or require a student to disclose the access information for any of the student's personal Internet account(s), including those that may be accessible through a student's personal electronic communications device.

Neither this policy nor any school rules shall be construed to limit a student's ability to possess and appropriately use an electronic device that functions as assistive technology that is necessary for a student's education and that is required or authorized under an individualized education program (IEP) or a Section 504 plan.

Students shall be informed of this policy annually via student handbooks.

BULLYING POLICY (POLICY 443.71)

Introduction

The Seymour Community School District strives to provide a safe, secure and respectful learning environment for all students in school buildings and on school grounds, on school buses and at school-sponsored activities. Bullying has harmful social, physical, and psychological and academic impact on the bullies, the victims and the bystanders. The district consistently and vigorously addresses bullying so that there is no disruption to the learning environment and learning process.

Definition

Bullying is a deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation or harm. Bullying may be repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to: age, national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic or family status.

Bullying behavior can be:

1. Physical (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft)
2. Verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks)
3. Indirect (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet – also known as cyber bullying)
4. Covert (e.g. secretly or with concealed electronic equipment recording audio and/or video conversations, images, and interactions between people)
5. Between students and students, students and adults, or adults and adults.

Prohibition

Bullying behavior is prohibited in all schools, buildings, property and educational environments, including any property or vehicle owned, leased or used by the school district. Educational environments include, but are not limited to, every activity under school supervision.

Procedure for Reporting/Retaliation

It is the responsibility of all school staff members, students, and concerned individuals who observe or become aware of acts of bullying to report these acts confidentially to a school staff member or administrator designated by the Board of Education to be a recipient of such reports. All such reports, either verbal or in writing are to be taken seriously and a clear account of the incident is to be documented. There shall be no retaliation against individuals making such reports. Individuals engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

Procedure for Investigating Reports of Bullying

An investigation to determine the facts will take place in a timely manner to verify the validity and the seriousness of the report. Affected parents and/or guardians will be notified that a report has been made. The district shall keep the complaint confidential to the extent required by law for both the accused and the accuser.

Sanctions and Supports

If it is determined that students participated in bullying behavior in violation of the policy, the principal may take disciplinary action, including: suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials for possible legal action as appropriate.

Students found in violation of the bullying policy may be referred to pupil services staff for counseling or other educational programming designed to prevent repetitive bullying behavior. Employees found to have participated in bullying behavior, or having become aware that bullying was taking place and failed to report the behavior, are considered to be in violation of the prohibition expressed by this policy. They may be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the collective bargaining agreement or disciplinary action established by policy or practice.

Disclosure and Public Reporting

The policy will be distributed annually to all students enrolled in the school district, their parents and/or guardians and employees. It will also be distributed to organizations in the community having cooperative agreements with the schools. The school district will also provide a copy of the policy to any person who requests it.

Records will be maintained on the number and types of reports made, and sanctions imposed for incidents found to be in violation of the bullying policy.

Student Search Activities (Policy: 446)

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and healthy environment for all persons in school buildings and on school premises. School officials have a duty to investigate any suspicion that items or materials harmful to the health and safety of students, school personnel, or property are present within the school or on school premises. This includes, but is not limited to, conducting search activities as outlined in this or other Board policies.

- Locker Searches – A school locker is provided for the convenience of the student to be used solely and exclusively for the storage of the student’s wearing apparel and school-related materials during the time the student is attending school. No student shall use the locker for any other purpose. The locker is assigned to a student but remains the property of the District. At no time does the District relinquish its exclusive control of the lockers. Locker searches may be conducted as determined necessary or appropriate without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Locker searches under this policy may be conducted by the District Administrator, a building principal or assistant principal, a school employee specifically designated by the District Administrator or building principal, a school liaison officer, or other law enforcement official who is acting at the request of or in conjunction with school authorities.
- Search of Students and/or Their Personal Belongings – District staff may conduct a search of a student or the student’s personal belongings (e.g., backpacks) when the student voluntarily consents to the search or where

there is reasonable suspicion that the student has in his/her possession items that violate the law, Board policies or school rules. The search shall be conducted in a reasonable manner and must not be overly intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and nature of the infraction. Searches of a student's person or personal belongings should generally be conducted outside the presence of other students. No District official, employee, or person acting as an agent of the District shall conduct a strip search of a student.

- Vehicle Searches – The District may search student-operated vehicles parked on school premises when there is reasonable suspicion of a violation of the law, Board policies or school rules or the student has given consent to the search of the vehicle
- Use of Canine Units in Safety and Search-Related Activities – The School Board authorizes the use of trained canine units to detect the presence of drugs, explosive devices, or other illegal items/substances on school property under the following conditions: (1) the presence of the canine unit on school property is authorized in advance by the District Administrator or designee or is pursuant to a court order or warrant; (2) a law enforcement officer specifically trained to work safely and competently with the canine unit must handle the canine; and (3) the canine unit is represented by the sheriff or chief of the law enforcement agency providing the service as capable of accurately detecting specific contraband. The District shall not use trained canine units to sniff a student's person, including articles of clothing a student is wearing or a bag while the student is holding it. A positive reaction by a trained canine unit will provide reasonable suspicion for a search of a student's locker, vehicle or other property in accordance with this policy.

To the extent prohibited by law, school employees shall not request or require a student to disclose the access information for any of the student's personal Internet accounts.

To the extent permitted by law, a school official conducting student-related search activities under this or any other Board policy may request the active assistance of a school liaison officer or other law enforcement official. School officials may remove any unauthorized item found as a result of a search. Items belonging to the student but removed or temporarily confiscated by the District will generally be held by the school for return to the student's parent or guardian (for students who are minors) or, if appropriate, turned over to law enforcement. The student and his/her parent or guardian shall be notified of any unauthorized item belonging to the student/family that has been found and turned over to law enforcement officials.

Students and their parents and guardians shall be informed of this policy and the specific provisions related to locker searches through the student handbook.

Student Records:

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

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

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

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend their child's or their education record should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested

by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student.]

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

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202