

**Mill Stream Elementary School  
STUDENT and PARENT HANDBOOK  
2024-2025**



**Sticking Our Necks Out for Kids!!**

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**<https://millstream.msad54.org/>**

**DEAR PARENTS:**

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! I am very excited to be starting my fourth year at Mill Stream Elementary School. I look forward to supporting staff, students and parents/guardians while we continue the history of excellence that MSES is proud of. I believe close collaboration between home and school is essential. Therefore, I encourage parents to take full advantage of opportunities to attend school functions and activities.

This handbook has been developed as a means of communicating with students and parents about various policies, procedures, and available services. We ask for you to read and discuss this handbook with your student. We encourage you to keep the handbook available for reference throughout the school year. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us to clarify any school matter.

I am confident this school year will be a positive and worthwhile educational experience for you and your child. There can be a significant impact on student success when home and school work together!

I look forward to meeting and working together with all of you to support your child.

Sincerely,

Rob Rodrigue  
Principal

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**Mill Stream Elementary School Staff  
2024-2025**

**Office Staff**

Rob Rodrigue, Principal  
Denise Lang, Secretary  
Sarai Tanner, Secretary  
Kendra Bentley, Nurse  
Sharon Lovell, School Counselor

**Special Services and Educational Technicians**

Patricia Moody, K-2 Resource Room  
Heather Leo, 3-4, Resource Room  
Susan Matthews, 4-5 Resource Room  
Lori White, K-2 Transitions  
Timothy Wess, 3-5 Transitions  
Callie Hammer, K-2 FLS  
Dana Lievowitz, Speech and Language

**Teaching Specialists**

Barbara Wech, Literacy Instructional Coach  
Morgan Marden, Math Instructional Coach  
Nikki Duncan, Reading Recovery Teacher  
Roxanne Davis, Reading Recovery Teacher  
Lisa Moore, PE  
Kathy Hayden, Art  
John Lawson, Music  
Kim Judkins, Library  
Andrew Staples, Technology  
Kathy Dorko, ELL Services  
Mary Pono, Enrichment

**Classroom Teachers**

PK Kayla Tibbets  
PK Amanda Welch  
K Sherri Everett  
K Alyssa Duchesne  
K Ashley O'Brien  
1 Samantha Veilleux  
1 Broghan Gagnon  
1 Eleasha Works  
2 Tracey LaPlante  
2 Ciera Lambert  
2 Tiffany Frost  
3 Eileen Crowley  
3 Sheryl Gray  
3 Sandy Belanger  
4 Diane Leeman  
4 Crystal Dorr  
5 Stacey McBreairty  
5 Emily Lightbody  
5- Jessica Skillings York

**Support Services**

Jamie Bitgood, Day Custodian  
Mark Mercier, Evening Custodian  
Jill Young-Holt, Evening Custodian  
Liane Johnson, Kitchen Manager

**DAILY SCHEDULE:**

7:45-8:15 - Parent Drop Off  
8:15 - 2:15 Instructional Day  
2:15 - Parent Pick Up  
2:30 - Bus Pick Up

### **Handbook Purpose**

The purpose of this handbook is to make rules, consequences, procedures, and policies as clear as possible. It is impossible to anticipate all consequences that may be necessary. Therefore, the principal will make exceptions to rules when justice so requires.

### **Policy Statement**

If a situation occurs in which this handbook is in conflict with any RSU/MSAD 54 School Board of Directors Policy, it is understood that policies will always govern.

### **Reservation Clause**

The principal and/or superintendent have the right to change the terms of this handbook at any time without notice.

### **MSAD #54 Mission Statement**

Each member of the MSAD 54 community will create a caring and safe environment which will encourage every student to strive to achieve high academic standards, develop character, be a life-long learner and be a responsible, contributing member of society.

### **MSAD #54 Vision for our School Community**

All individuals in our schools feel safe, welcome and respected for who they are.

### **MSAD \$54 Guiding Beliefs**

- Students learn in different ways and in different time frames.
- Students learn best in a trauma informed environment that is welcoming, orderly, accepting and safe.
- Students learn best in a supportive school community where every student feels connected and part of their school.
- Students want to be successful in their learning and have unique interests that heighten their motivation for learning.
- Student learning styles differ, and learners demonstrate their intelligence in many different ways.
- Habits of work are essential and should be taught, fostered, and acknowledged, as well as assessed separately from academic progress and achievement.
- Learning is a shared responsibility and requires a commitment among the student, teacher, parent and community.
- Learning is enhanced when teachers collaborate within and across disciplines.
- Learning is enhanced when connected to real world contexts and challenges.
- Learning is enhanced with frequent feedback specific to a clearly articulated learning goal.
- Learning is enhanced when students are encouraged to take risks, understanding that mistakes are inherent in the learning process.
- Learning is enhanced with timely interventions and multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency.

## Attendance

The administration and staff recognize our duty to provide a proper education for the children of the community. The term “education” encompasses more than performance on examinations and other evidence of learning. A proper education includes attending and participating in classes. Learning experiences which take place in the classroom are essential components of the educational process. Only by being present in the classroom can students take advantage of the intangible benefits of a public education, such as group interaction with teachers and fellow students, participation in discussion, instruction and other related learning experiences. Class attendance is one of the important factors contributing to academic achievement for all learners.

Attendance is compulsory for every child between his/her 6<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> birthdays. A person 5 years of age or older and under 6 years of age who is enrolled in and who has not withdrawn from a public day school is required to attend that school during the time it is in session. Frequent absences disrupt the continuity of a student’s educational program. Students who fail to attend school without legitimate cause may be considered truant. In accordance with Title 20-A-5001-A-4, a child’s absence may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness;
2. An appointment with a health professional that must be made during the regular school day;
3. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day;
4. A family emergency; or
5. A planned absence for a personal or educational purpose which has been approved.

## Absence, Tardy and Dismissal Procedures

State law requires that a child must reach five on or before October 15<sup>th</sup> to be eligible for kindergarten. When a child aged five (5) or older enrolls in school, they are subject to all attendance requirements and procedures. It also requires that all children between the ages of six (6) and 17 shall attend day school during the time when school is in session and an absence of one-half day or more shall be deemed a violation of this requirement.

### Absences

Parents are requested to notify the school between 8:00-9:00 AM, in the event your child must be absent from school.. All offices will be equipped with voicemail for your convenience. If you do not notify the school, an automated call will be made to notify you that your child is absent and remind you to call and let us know. Staff will make every effort to contact parents at home or at work to verify all unexplained student absences. **All pupils who are absent from school for any reason are requested to provide the appropriate school with a note indicating the date of absence, the reason for the absence, and the signature of the parent or guardian. This note should be brought in upon return to school.**

Though family vacations during the school week are discouraged, if parents choose to take a student on vacation during school time, they should consult with the teacher and the principal about the required work and make arrangements for the students to make up work.

### Tardy

Students who arrive after 8:15 AM will be considered tardy. Parents are requested to bring the student to the office and sign them in.

### Dismissal

Students may be dismissed earlier than 2:15 PM in cases of emergency and/or at the request of parents for scheduled appointments. If you wish to have your child dismissed, please check in with the school secretary. Before a child leaves the school, the person taking the child will need to sign him or her out in the office. For more details on dismissal policy please refer to the Dismissal section of the handbook.

### **Attendance Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism**

A student is habitually truant if he/she is required to attend school or alternative instruction under Maine compulsory attendance law (20-A M.R.S.A. § 5001-A) and he/she:

- A. Has completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year; or
- B. Is at least 6 years of age and has not completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of 7 full days of unexcused absences or 5 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year.

Frequent communication between school and the family will occur to attempt to correct the problem. If the situation cannot be resolved informally, through meetings with families and plans, the situation will be referred to the Department of Health and Human Services, and possibly law enforcement.

Chronic Absenteeism: Each school must report the data to the Maine DOE around chronic absenteeism. This is defined as being absent 10% or more of the total days your child is enrolled in school each year. This includes both excused and unexcused absences. We are working hard to support children and their families to attend school daily.

If you are struggling with supporting your child attending school regularly, please contact your child's principal.

### **Bullying and Cyberbullying**

The Board believes that bullying, including cyber bullying, is detrimental to student well-being and to student learning and achievement. It interferes with the mission of the schools to educate their students and disrupts the operations of the schools. Bullying affects not only students who are targets but also those who participate in and witness such behavior.

### **Prohibited Behavior**

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, sexual harassment, retaliation and false accusation of bullying is not acceptable conduct in MSAD 54 and is prohibited. Retaliation for the reporting of incidents of such behavior is also prohibited.



Any person who engages in any of these prohibited behaviors that constitutes bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.

### **Definition of Bullying**

“Bullying” and “cyberbullying” have the same meaning in this policy as in Maine law:

### **Bullying**

“Bullying” includes, but is not limited to a written, oral or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student or students that:

- A. Has, or a reasonable person would expect it to have, the effect of:
  - 1. Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property; or
  - 2. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to his/her property; and
- B. Interferes with the rights of a student by:
  - 1. Creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment for the student; or
  - 2. Interfering with the student’s academic performance or ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by the school; or
- C. Is based on:
  - a. A student’s actual or perceived characteristics identified in 5 MRSA § 4602 or 4684-A (including race; color; ancestry; national origin; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; religion; physical or mental disability) or other distinguishing personal characteristics (such as socioeconomic status; age; physical appearance; weight; or family status); or
  - b. A student’s association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other distinguishing characteristics; and that has the effect described in subparagraph A. or B. above.

### **Cyberbullying**

“Cyberbullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including but not limited to, a transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted by the use of any electronic device including, but not limited to, a computer, telephone, cellular telephone, text messaging device or personal digital assistant.

### **Application of Policy**

This policy applies to bullying that:

- A. Takes place at school or on school grounds, at any school-sponsored or school-related activity or event or while students are being transported to or from school or school-sponsored activities or events; or
- B. Takes place elsewhere or through the use of technology, but only if the bullying also infringes on the rights of the student at school as set forth in the definition of “bullying.”

### **Interim Measures**

The building principal may take such interim measures as he/she deems appropriate to ensure the safety of the targeted student and prevent further bullying and will inform the parents of the targeted student of measures taken within the confines of FERPA considerations.

### **Consequences for Policy Violations Students**

Any students, employees, contractors, visitors or volunteers who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension, expulsion or a series of graduated consequences including alternative discipline. In determining the appropriate response to students who engage in bullying behavior, school administrators should consider the type of behaviors, the frequency and/or pattern of behaviors, and other relevant circumstances.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent will designate the school principal and/or other school personnel to be responsible for implementation/enforcement of this policy and associated procedures on the school level. The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for developing and implementing procedures in accordance with applicable law to implement this policy.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **JICK** to read the entire policy.

[https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/JICK\\_0.pdf](https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/JICK_0.pdf)

### **Cell Phones and Usage**

The school recognizes that many students possess cellular telephones and other electronic devices. These devices may not be used at school and/or during school activities in any manner that disrupts the educational process. Students who bring cellphones to school must leave them turned off and in backpacks or lockers for the entire school day. If a parent needs to contact a child during the school day, please call the main office and the secretary will assist with this.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **JFCK** to read the entire policy.

[https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/JFCK\\_1.pdf](https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/JFCK_1.pdf)

### **Communicating Educational Concerns**

From time-to-time parents have concerns which they need to have addressed. The following procedure should be followed:

1. Meet with your child's teacher and explain your concern.
2. If your concern has not been resolved to your satisfaction, make an appointment to discuss it with the principal.
3. If a next step is needed, make an appointment with the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent.

## Curriculum Information

Specific information about all district curriculums is available from your child's teacher and/or principal. In addition, all curriculums are available on the district website at

<https://sites.google.com/msad54.org/msad54-curriculum-resources/curriculum-documents?authuser=0>

## Custodial and Noncustodial Parent Rights and Responsibilities

When parents of a student are separated, involved in divorce proceedings, or are divorced, the building principal will respect the rights of the custodial and noncustodial parents equally, except when a court order exists concerning special restrictions. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with a copy of such a court order if restricted access to students or student information is requested.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **KBBA** to read the entire policy.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/KBBA.pdf>

## Dismissal

Students will be released only to parents, legal guardians, and other persons specifically authorized in writing by the parents/legal guardians. The school will not release a child to someone who is not on the emergency card or without a written note or a phone call from parent/guardian. A custodial parent/guardian who wishes the school to comply with provisions of a court order to restrict access to a child is responsible for providing a certified copy of such order to the school.

For safety reasons, if your child is to go home in a way that is different from routine, such as with another child or on a different bus, please send in a note to the office which will inform the appropriate bus driver. This request must be made in the form of a written permission note signed by the parent or guardian. Without notification, we will send the child home in the usual way.

Please make necessary arrangements early in the day to ensure that the student has been notified where he or she will be going after school.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **JLIB** to read the entire policy.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/JLIB.pdf>

## Dressing for School

Students will not wear clothing that can be hazardous to them or interfere with their school activities. School officials have the right to regulate student dress that is disruptive, aggressive, offensive, or inappropriate to reasonable school decorum and safety. Articles of clothing that contain lewd, obscene, or patently offensive messages or which advertise substances that are inappropriate for student use are not allowed. Parents are asked to enforce the dress code (see attached) before students come to school. This is a PreK-5 school and we would like to promote a positive learning environment.

## **Emergency & Evacuation Procedures**

The Emergency Guide is a pre-formulated plan to deal immediately and effectively with unanticipated emergency situations. When disaster strikes, the school Principal, staff, as well as the Superintendent's Office, need to be prepared to think quickly.

To protect students and staff from harm our procedures:

- Clearly identify evacuation procedures and sites
- Coordinate with police, fire, and emergency authorities in each town
- Establish an effective communications system

Schools will make every effort to prepare for emergencies. It must be recognized that many of these situations are sudden and unpredictable, and no plan can adequately prepare for every eventuality. At all times a calm concern for the students' safety will prevail.

Public safety agencies such as the Somerset County Sheriff's Office, the Emergency Management local official, and the Volunteer Fire Departments are partners in this emergency management plan. As such, they will be made aware of all changes to guidelines, and their procedures are a part of the plan.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are a valuable educational experience. To ensure that all students will be able to take part in them, parents will be notified in advance of all field trips. Written permission must be given by parent/guardian before a child can participate.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **IJOA** to read the entire policy.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/IJOA.pdf>

## **Harassment and Sexual Harassment**

Harassment of students because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry or national origin, or disability is prohibited. Such conduct is a violation of Board policy and may constitute illegal discrimination under state and federal laws.

School employees, fellow students, volunteers, visitors to the schools, and other persons with whom students may interact in order to pursue or engage in education programs and activities, are required to refrain from such conduct.

Harassment and sexual harassment of students by school employees is considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Harassment and sexual harassment of students by other students is considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. The Superintendent will determine appropriate sanctions for harassment of students by persons other than school employees and students.

All school employees are required to report possible incidents of harassment or sexual harassment involving students to the Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator. Failure to report such incidents may result in disciplinary action.

Students, parents/legal guardians and other individuals are strongly encouraged to report possible incidents of harassment or sexual harassment involving students to the Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator. The Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator is also available to answer questions and provide assistance to any individual who is unsure whether harassment or sexual harassment has occurred.

All reports and complaints of harassment or sexual harassment against students shall be addressed through the Student Discrimination/Harassment and Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **ACAA** to read the entire policy.

[https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/ACAA\\_0.pdf](https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/ACAA_0.pdf)

### **Hazing**

Maine statute defines injurious hazing as “any action or situation, including harassing behavior, that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health of any school personnel or a student enrolled in a public school.”

No administrator, faculty member, or other employee of the school unit shall encourage, permit, condone, or tolerate injurious hazing activities. No student, including leaders of students’ organizations, shall plan, encourage, or engage in injurious hazing activities.

Violations of this policy by any person may be subject to disciplinary action which may include but not limited to suspension, expulsion, dismissal, loss of privileges to operate on school property and/or civil or criminal penalties.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **ACAD** to read the entire policy.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/ACAD%20011122.pdf>

## **Health Services and Requirements**

Please do not send your child to school if she/he is ill. This is to assure the quick recovery of the sick child and to protect other children. A child must be fever-free (without the aid of medication) for 24 hours before returning to school. If a child becomes ill at school or complains of being ill when they are at school the parent will be contacted and the child will be dismissed. **It is very important that you can be contacted in case of emergency. Please keep the office updated with your current phone number, place of work, and people to be contacted if you are unavailable.**

Minor first aid may be given by trained school personnel. For illnesses or more complex injuries parents will be notified and we will follow emergency procedures as outlined on the emergency card.

If a child has symptoms of a communicable disease, that child will be excluded from school until the child has recovered. If the school is concerned about a condition that the child may have, the parent and school nurse will be consulted.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policies **JLC, JLCB, JLCD, JLCDA** to read the entire policies.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/JLC.pdf>

## **Administering Medications to Students**

The Board discourages the administration of medication to students during the school day when other options exist, but recognizes that in some instances it may be necessary for a student to have medication administered to him/her while the student is in attendance at school. The school will not deny educational opportunities to students requiring the administration of medication in order to remain in attendance and participate in the educational program pursuant to school policy.

### **I. Parent/Legal Guardian Written Request**

In the event that no alternative exists, the parent/legal guardian may request in writing that medication be administered to the student during the school day. Such written request shall provide for an acknowledgment and agreement that unlicensed personnel may administer the medication as per physician's instructions. In addition, such a request shall indicate that information regarding the student's medication may be shared with appropriate school personnel. Parents may, if they so choose, reveal the reason (diagnosis) for the administration of medication; however, the provision of such information is optional and disclosure shall not be compelled. **The written request must be submitted each year.**

### **II. Health Care Provider Order**

All parental requests must be accompanied by a written order from the student's health care provider substantiating the fact that the administration of a particular medication

during the school day is necessary for the student's health and attendance in school. Such order must include:

- Student's name;
- Name of the medication;
- Dosage;
- Route of administration (e.g. tablets, liquid);
- Time intervals for administration (e.g. every four hours, before meals);
- Special instructions if needed;
- Name and signature of the prescribing health care provider; and
- Parent signature.

### III. Insufficient Information and Requests for Licensed Personnel

It is the responsibility of the school nurse to clarify any medication order that he/she believes to be inappropriate or ambiguous. In accordance with Department of Education Rule Chapter 40 2(B), the school nurse may decline to administer a medication if he/she believes such administration would jeopardize the student safety. In this case, the school nurse must notify the parent, the student's health care provider and the school administrator (i.e., building principal or designated administrator).

### IV. Miscellaneous Provisions

- A. The student's parents shall deliver any medication to be administered by school personnel to the school in its original container and properly labeled. In the event that this is not practical the parent must contact the school to make alternate arrangements.
- B. No more than a 20-day (one month) supply of medication shall be kept at school, excluding inhalers and epinephrine auto injectors. The parent is responsible for the replenishment of medication kept at school. The parent is responsible for notifying the school of any changes in or discontinuation of a prescribed medication that is being administered to the student at school.
- C. All medication will be appropriately maintained and secured by the designated school official.
- D. School staff administering the medication shall document each instance medication is administered including the date, time and dosage given.
- E. The designated school official shall maintain a record including the physician and parent/legal guardian request, details of the specific medication(s), dosage and timing of medication and a notation of each instance of administration of medication.
- F. Any changes to the following shall require new written requests/orders as applicable:

1. Information on original physician's written order;
  2. Health care provider(s);
  3. Any unique procedures for the administration of medication;
  4. Condition of the child; and
  5. Any changes in types and dosage.
- G. Students shall not be permitted to carry and self-administer prescription medicine in school except under very special circumstances—as requested and described by the student's physician/medical practitioner/dentist and approved by the school nurse.
- H. To the extent legally permissible, staff members may be provided with information regarding medication and its administration as may be in the student's best interest.
- I. All unlicensed personnel who administer medication must receive training before being authorized to do so.
- J. The principal and school medical personnel will monitor compliance with this policy and administrative procedures.

The Board disclaims any and all responsibility for the diagnosis, prescription of treatment and administration of medication for any student. For purposes of this policy, "medication" shall include all medicine prescribed by a physician/medical practitioner/dentist for a particular student.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policies **JLC**, **JLCB**, **JLCD**, **JLCDA** to read the entire policies.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/JLC.pdf>

### **Immunization of Students**

All students attending school, grades K-12, must meet immunization standards as required by state law. Students that do not meet legal standards as established by the Maine Board of Immunization and by Maine State Law, shall not be permitted to attend school unless they provide a health care providers note indicating they have a plan to catch-up on immunizations.

The Superintendent/designee is directed to develop such administrative procedures as are necessary to carry out this policy and comply with statutory requirements. If you have questions regarding your child's immunizations please contact the school nurse.



### **Items brought to school**

Children frequently would like to bring things to school to play with at recess or to share with their friends. Even with the best of intentions, things sometimes get lost or broken. Please be aware of this before any “special treasures” are brought to school.

There are some items that are not allowed at school: any type of weapon or item that could be used as a weapon, matches, lighters, caps, and toys that shoot things out of them. If an item is brought that could be dangerous, it will be kept in the school office and the parents will have to pick it up. When in doubt about the appropriateness of an item your child wishes to bring, check with the classroom teacher.

### **Lost & Found**

Lost and found is where items such as clothing, backpacks, and other assorted items that your child has misplaced can be located. To prevent items from being lost please label your child’s belongings with their first and last name. Please check the lost and found often to retrieve lost items. After a period of time, all unclaimed items will be removed from the building.

### **Nondiscrimination/Equal Educational Opportunities/Affirmative Action**

The RSU 54/MSAD 54 Board is committed to maintaining a workplace and learning environment that is free from illegal discrimination and harassment. RSU 54/MSAD 54 does not discriminate on the basis of sex or other protected categories in its education programs and activities, as required by federal and state laws/regulations.

Discrimination against and harassment of school employees because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry or national origin, age, disability or genetic information are prohibited.

Discrimination against and harassment of students because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry or national origin, or disability are prohibited.

The Board directs the school administration to implement a continuing program designed to prevent discrimination against all applicants, employees, students and other individuals having access rights to school premises and activities.

RSU 54/MSAD 54 has designated and authorized an Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator who is responsible for ensuring compliance with all federal and state requirements relating to nondiscrimination, including sexual harassment. The Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Coordinator is a person with direct access to the Superintendent.

RSU 54/MSAD 54 has implemented complaint procedures for resolving complaints of discrimination/harassment and sexual harassment under this policy. RSU 54/MSAD 54 provides required notices of these complaint procedures and how they can be accessed, as well as the school unit's compliance with federal and state civil rights laws and regulations to all applicants for employment, employees, students, parents and other interested parties.

ADOPTED: March 5, 2010 REVISED: August 6, 2020 FILE: AC

### **Notice of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

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

They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day MSAD #54 receives the request.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading.
3. The right to refuse to let the school department designate any or all of the types of information about the student as directory information by notifying the school department in writing by October 1st for the current school year or within 30 days after enrollment, whichever is later, with respect to information about the student for that and subsequent school years. Notices should be sent to: Superintendent of Schools, MSAD #54 196 West Front Street, Skowhegan, Maine 04976.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by MSAD#54 to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

### **Progress Reports/Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Written progress reports are provided at the closing of each trimester to allow parents to follow and understand the progress of their child. It is expected that parents will meet with their child's teacher for a parent-teacher conference. Conferences will be held at the end of the first trimester. First trimester progress reports will be distributed at your parent-teacher conference. Parents can also request a teacher conference at any time during the year.

## Recess

Recess is a part of the elementary school program. It is the time set aside for children to develop social and physical skills in a semi-structured setting. Whenever possible the children go outside for all or a portion of the recess time. Factors such as temperature, wind chill, and rain are considered before a decision for outside recess is made. The students will remain inside if the temperature is below 10 degree Fahrenheit in conjunction with the wind chill factor. We ask that students dress appropriately for the weather conditions. Since conditions in Maine can vary throughout the day, children may need to wear layers especially in the fall and spring. **If providing proper outerwear is not possible, please contact the school. Any child not well enough to go out to recess should remain at home unless the child's physician has provided the school with a written note that they should remain inside at recess time.**

## School Cancellation/Early Dismissal

When storms prevent school from being held OR if an early dismissal is needed bulletins will be announced through Swift Reach alert system, MSAD 54 website, local radio and TV stations.

The decision to cancel or dismiss school is made as early as possible by the Superintendent. In the event that school is dismissed early, announcements will be made through Alert Solutions, MSAD 54 website, local radio and TV stations. In the event school is dismissed early, without prior notification, your child may not be able to follow his/her usual after school arrangements. Parents should see that children have an alternate plan in place and communicate this with the school.

To assure you are being informed please review the following information:

1. Make sure the school is notified of alternate after school arrangements if needed.
2. Sign up for *Swift Reach* messaging to receive cancellation notices and other important announcements by phone and/or email. Check with your school secretary if you need assistance.
3. Check the following media locations for announcements
  - a. TV: Channel WLBZ 2; WABI 5, WCSH 6, WMTW 8, Fox/WVII 7
  - b. Radio: (FM) 107.9, 106.5, 105.1, 104.3, 101.3, 99.3, 98.5, 97.1, 94.5, 92.3 (AM)1160, 910
  - c. Online: [www.msad54.org](http://www.msad54.org)

## **School Nutrition Program**

MSAD 54 offers breakfast and lunch to all students AT NO COST for the 2022-2023 school year as part of the Community Eligibility Provision. However, MSAD 54 still needs to collect economic information which directly impacts Federal & State funding the district receives to provide education for our students. Collection of this income data is necessary for many different funding sources, and failure to provide this information may have a negative impact on the school budget. Please complete the **“2022-2023 Economic Status Form,”** and return it to your school so we can continue receiving funding to support the education of our students. This information is CONFIDENTIAL and treated as such. High participation in the meal program by our students is required to ensure the continuation of the free meal program. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jana Wacome, School Nutrition Director via email at [jwacome@msad54.org](mailto:jwacome@msad54.org)

## **School System Commitment To Standards for Ethical and Responsible Behavior**

The School Board believes that promoting ethical and responsible behavior is an essential part of MSAD 54’s educational mission. The Board recognizes that ethics, constructive attitudes, responsible behavior, and “character” are important if a student is to leave school as a “responsible and involved citizen,” as described in the Guiding Principles of the Maine Learning Results. The Board also recognizes the importance of the adoption of a district-wide student code of conduct which is consistent with statewide standards for ethical and responsible behavior.

The Board seeks to create and maintain a school climate in which ethical and responsible behavior can flourish. The Board believes that instilling a sense of ethics and responsibility in students requires setting positive expectations for student behavior as well as establishing disciplinary consequences for behavior that violates Board policy or school rules. Further, the Board believes that in order to teach ethical and responsible behavior, adults who interact with students must strive to model and reinforce ethical and responsible behavior. To that end, the Board supports an active partnership between schools and parents.

Following the identification of core values, the Board, with input from administrators, staff, parents, students, and members of the community, will adopt a Student Code of Conduct consistent with statewide standards for student behavior as required by law.

When revising the prescribed consequences for violation of the Student Code of Conduct, the Board shall consider (evaluate and revise, as deemed necessary or desirable) relevant existing district-wide school disciplinary policies and/or consider adoption of new policies.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **ADAA** to read the entire policy.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/ADAA.pdf>

## **Student Support Services**

MSAD#54 schools provide many services to support the needs of our students. We have school counselors, social workers, special education services (IEP), 504 accommodations, English Language services, school resource officer support, speech, and instructional interventionists (Title I). If you feel your child needs additional support at school, please contact the building principal for more information.

### **RSU 54/MSAD 54 Student Substance Abuse Policy**

The RSU 54/MSAD 54 School District recognizes that illegal drug, tobacco and alcohol use and abuse are harmful to the individual and too prevalent in today's society. It is the District's philosophy to educate students about the detrimental effects of alcohol and drug use and abuse and to deter the use and possession of alcohol and drugs.

#### **I. PROHIBITED CONDUCT, SUBSTANCES**

Students, staff, parents, and visitors (refer to policy GBEC) are prohibited from consuming, possessing, furnishing, selling, receiving, buying, manufacturing or being under the influence of prohibited substances before, during and after school hours, at school, in any school building, on any school premises, in any school-owned vehicle or in any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities, off school property at any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function (such as a field trip or athletic event) where students are under the jurisdiction of the school unit, or at any time or place if the conduct directly interferes with the operation, discipline or welfare of the schools. MSAD 54 prohibits pro-ATOD (Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs) messaging and advertising in school buildings, at school functions, and in school publications

#### **II. CONSEQUENCES**

The school procedures that follow are intended as guidelines. The administration reserves the discretion to impose consequences for any violation of this policy up to and including a recommendation for expulsion. The offenses and subsequent disciplinary procedures described in this policy shall be cumulative throughout the student's years in the RSU 54/MSAD 54 School District.

After receiving a written or oral report involving possible student possession, use or sharing of a prohibited substance, the administrator shall take the following steps:

##### **First Offense**

1. Verify and/or confiscate substance
2. Notification of parents/guardians, police, and central office administration
3. Meet with student to discuss participation in an approved diversion program
4. Suspension of the student for up to 10 days

##### **Any Subsequent Offenses**

1. Verify and/or confiscate substance
2. Notification of parents/guardians, police, and central office administration.

3. Meet with students to discuss participation in an approved diversion program.
4. Suspension of the student for up to 10 days, with appearance before the Superintendent to discuss the student's educational future and possible expulsion

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **JICH** to read the entire policy.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/JICH.pdf>

### **Technology**

MSAD 54 provides computers, networks and Internet access to support the educational mission of the schools and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff. MSAD 54 believes that the resources available through the Internet are of significant value in the learning process and preparing students for future success. At the same time, the unregulated availability of information and communication on the Internet requires that schools establish reasonable controls for lawful, efficient and appropriate use of this technology.

All MSAD 54 computers remain under the control, custody and supervision of the District. The District reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by students. Students should not have expectations of privacy in their use of school computers.

Student use of school computers, networks and Internet services is a privilege, not a right. Students are required to comply with this policy and the accompanying rules (IJNDB Regulation). Students who violate the policy and/or rules may have their computer privileges revoked and may also be subject to further disciplinary and/or legal action. Students and parents shall be informed of this policy and the accompanying rules through handbooks, the district's web site and/or other means selected by the Superintendent/designee.

### **STUDENT COMPUTER/DEVICE AND INTERNET USE RULES (Acceptable Use Policy INJDB)**

All students are responsible for their actions and activities involving RSU 54/MSAD 54 computers, network and Internet services, and for their computer files, passwords and accounts. These rules provide general guidance concerning the use of the district's computers and examples of prohibited uses. The rules do not attempt to describe every possible prohibited activity by students. Students, parents/legal guardians and school staff who have questions about whether a particular activity is prohibited are encouraged to contact a building administrator. These rules apply to all school computers and all school-provided laptops wherever used, and all uses of school servers, Internet access and networks regardless of how they are accessed.

#### **A. Acceptable Use**

1. RSU 54/MSAD 54 computers, network and Internet services are provided for educational purposes and research consistent with the school unit's educational mission, curriculum and instructional goals.

2. Students must comply with all School Board policies, school rules and expectations concerning student conduct and communications when using school computers, whether on or off school property.

3. Students also must comply with all specific instructions from school staff and volunteers when using the RSU 54/MSAD 54 computers.

## **B. Prohibited Uses**

Unacceptable uses of school unit computers/devices include, but are not limited to, the following:

**1. Accessing or Communicating Inappropriate Materials** – Students may not access, submit, post, publish, forward, download, scan or display defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexual in nature, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, bullying and/or illegal materials or messages.

**2. Illegal Activities** – Students may not use the RSU 54/MSAD 54 computers, network and Internet services for any illegal activity or in violation of any School Board policy/procedure or school rules. RSU 54/MSAD 54 assumes no responsibility for illegal activities of students while using school computers.

**3. Violating Copyrights or Software Licenses** – Students may not copy, download or share any type of copyrighted materials (including music or films) without the owner's permission; or copy or download software without the express authorization of the Technology Coordinator. Unauthorized copying of software is illegal and may subject the copier to substantial civil and criminal penalties. The district assumes no responsibility for copyright or licensing violations by students.

**4. Plagiarism** – Students may not represent as their own work any materials obtained on the Internet (such as term papers, articles, music, etc). When Internet sources are used in student work, the author, publisher and web site must be identified.

**5. Use for Non-School-Related Purposes** - Using RSU 54/MSAD 54 computers, network and Internet services for any personal reasons not connected with the educational program or school assignments.

**6. Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access** – Students may not share passwords; use other users' passwords; access or use other users' accounts; or attempt to circumvent network security systems.

**7. Malicious Use/Vandalism** – Students may not engage in any malicious use, disruption or harm to the school unit's computers, network and Internet services, including but not limited to hacking activities and creation/uploading of computer viruses.

**8. Avoiding School Filters** – Students may not attempt to or use any software, utilities or other means to access Internet sites or content blocked by the school filters.

**9. Unauthorized Access to Blogs/Social Networking Sites, Etc.** Students may not access blogs, social networking sites, etc. to which student access is prohibited.

### **C. Compensation for Losses, Costs and/or Damages**

The student and his/her parents/legal guardians are responsible for compensating RSU 54/MSAD 54 for any losses, costs or damages incurred for violations of School Board policies/procedures and school rules while the student is using school unit computers, including the cost of investigating such violations. RSU 54/MSAD 54 assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or costs incurred by a student while using district computers.

### **D. Student Security**

A student is not allowed to reveal his/her full name, address, telephone number, social security number or other personal information on the Internet while using a school computer. Students should never agree to meet people they have contacted through the Internet without parental permission. Students should inform their teacher if they access information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate or make them uncomfortable in any way

### **E. System Security**

The security of RSU 54/MSAD 54 computers, network and Internet services is a high priority. Any student who identifies a security problem must notify his/her teacher or building administrator immediately. The student shall not demonstrate the problem to others or access unauthorized material.

### **F. Additional Rules for Devices Issued to Students**

1. Laptops are loaned to students as an educational tool and may be used for purposes specifically authorized by school staff.

2. Parents/legal guardians are required to attend an informational meeting before a laptop will be issued to their child. Both the student and his/her parent must sign the school's acknowledgment form.

3. Students and their families are responsible for the proper care of laptops at all times, whether on or off school property, including costs associated with repairing or replacing the laptop. RSU 54/MSAD 54 offers an insurance program for parents to cover replacement costs and/or repair costs for damages not covered by the laptop warranty. Parents/legal guardians who choose not to purchase the protection program should be aware that they are responsible for any costs associated with loss, theft or damage to a laptop issued to their child.

4. If a laptop is lost or stolen, this must be reported to the school administrator immediately. If a laptop is stolen, a report should be made to the local police and the school administrator immediately.

5. The School Board's policy and rules concerning computer and Internet use apply to use of laptops at any time or place, on or off school property. Students are responsible for obeying any additional rules concerning care of laptops issued by school staff.

6. Violation of policies or rules governing the use of computers, or any careless use of a laptop may result in a student's laptop being confiscated and/or a student only being allowed to use the laptop under the direct supervision of school staff. The student will also be subject to disciplinary action for any violations of School Board policies/procedures or school rules.

7. Parents/legal guardians will be informed of their child's login password. Parents/legal guardians are responsible for supervising their child's use of the laptop and Internet access when in use at home.



8. Laptops issued to high school students may only be used by the student. Laptops issued to middle school students may be used by parents to the extent permitted by the MLTI program and in accordance with the Student Computer Use Policy and Rules.

9. Laptops must be returned in acceptable working order at the end of the school year or whenever requested by school staff.

### **G. Additional Rules for Use of Privately-Owned Computers by Students**

1. A student who wishes to use a privately-owned computer in school must seek the permission of his/her parent/legal guardian and the building administrator, district technology coordinator and the teacher. There must be an educational basis for any request.
2. The district technology coordinator will determine whether a student's privately owned computer meets the district's network requirements.
3. Requests may be denied if it is determined that there is not a suitable educational basis for the request and/or if the demands on the district's network or staff would be unreasonable.
4. The student is responsible for proper care of his/her privately-owned computer, including any costs of repair, replacement or any modifications needed to use the computer at school.
5. RSU 54/MSAD 54 is not responsible for damage, loss or theft of any privately owned computer.
6. Students are required to comply with all School Board policies, administrative procedures and school rules while using privately-owned computers at school.
7. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of a privately-owned computer while at school. RSU 54/MSAD 54 reserves the right to search a student's privately-owned computer if there is reasonable suspicion that the student has violated School Board policies, administrative procedures or school rules, or engaged in other misconduct while using the computer.
8. Violation of any School Board policies, administrative procedures or school rules involving a student's privately-owned computer may result in the revocation of the privilege of using the computer at school and/or disciplinary action.
9. RSU 54/MSAD 54 may confiscate any privately-owned computer used by a student in school without the authorization required by these rules. The contents of the computer may be searched in accordance with applicable laws and policies.

### **Title I Program**

Title I is a federally funded educational program. This program targets students who need extra help in reading or math. Title I is supplemental instruction provided in addition to the regular classroom instruction. The goal of this program is to develop self-reliant, independent, problem solvers in reading and math. Student selection is based on assessment data and teacher recommendations.

All schools which receive Federal Title I funds for programming are required to have school compacts. A copy of our compact can be found in the back of the handbook.

## Transportation

Transportation is provided to all students. Bus routes are determined by the Business Administrator. Specific bus routes, bus numbers, drivers and estimated pick-up times are printed in the local newspaper prior to the opening of school in August. Bus transportation is a privilege for students. Parents and teachers can help with bus safety by reinforcing bus rules. These rules are given to every student by their driver during the first week of school. A school bus is an extension of school and the school day. School rules apply to the school bus. **Students who have changes in their daily routine for going home require a note that clearly indicates the child's name, the date the change is necessary, and a parent's signature.**

Consequences for bus rule violations may be but are not limited to:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense- Written warning sent to the principal; possible bus suspension. Slip signed by parent/guardian.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense-*Possible* bus suspension, minimum two days. Slip signed by parent/guardian.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense-*Possible* bus suspension, minimum of three days and up to the remainder of the school year. Suspension of bus riding privileges until meeting with the principal or school counselor to show evidence that the privilege has been restored. Student will not be allowed back on the bus unless the slip has been signed by parent/guardian.

## Parent Drop-Off/Pick-Up

### Arrival

- During arrival please be sure you are parking on the outside of the pickup loop, nearest the school and closest to the sidewalk. By parking on the inside of the pickup loop we are creating two lanes of traffic, resulting in unsafe and inefficient drop offs and pickups. Please abide by the safety signs posted so that everyone can be dropped off and picked up safely and in a timely manner..
- Pull as far forward as possible when dropping students off or when picking them up. The loading and unloading zone is located near the crosswalks. Please park in the parking lot if you need to come into the building or intend to be out of your vehicle for an extended period of time.
- Please drop students off on the **curb** near the cross walk whenever possible. We have a staff member there to ensure students can get inside safely.
- When walking children from the parking lot to the school buildings please use the crosswalk rather than crossing between cars in the drop off lane. **We ask that adults/guardians supervise their children when students use the crosswalks in and**

**around our school campus.** It is important to model for children the rules we expect them to follow.

- If your child will be eating breakfast at school, please plan to have them arrive by 8:00 to make sure they have time for breakfast before the start of the school day at 8:15.

### Dismissal

- If for some reason your child will be picked up by someone different than normal please communicate with our office prior to 1:45pm.
- As most are aware we have started a process where parents are signing out their children when they are a parent pickup. Our hope is that this procedural change will maximize safety for all of our students. Please be sure to seek out the multiple staff members with clipboards to sign your child out. On most afternoons this entire process takes approximately 10 minutes. Please remember that school is dismissed at 2:15. We certainly appreciate your patience, flexibility, and understanding as we work to make this new process as efficient as possible.
- At times, students may take longer to get ready at the end of the day and do not get to the cafeteria before 2:20. This may make it seem like a longer wait to get your child.
- Please be sure to utilize the pickup loop as it is intended to be used. There are signs that provide directions and guidance regarding expectations and proper use of the pick up circle located on campus.
- Please refrain from parking on any crosswalks. There have been families parking on the crosswalk leading out Route 2. When we do this it forces our children that are walking to daycares located on route 2 to walk into the pickup loop causing an unsafe situation.

### **Visitors**

The Board of Directors of MSAD#54 encourages the active interest and involvement of parents and citizens in the public schools. In order to avoid interruption of the instructional program and to promote the safety of students and staff, building principals shall institute administrative procedures concerning visitors to the schools. It is understood that procedures may vary from school to school due to differing considerations such as age of the students and building layout and location.

For the safety and protection of our students, all visitors to our building must buzz in at the front entrance and check in at the office. Visitors will be required to sign in upon arrival and sign out when leaving the building. While in the building you will be asked to wear a visitors pass. Please remember to call ahead to schedule a visit.

You may refer to MSAD#54 Policy **KI** to read the entire policy.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/KI.pdf>

## **Volunteers**

Parents are encouraged to contact their respective schools to inquire about volunteering in the classroom, library, or to share a special craft, hobby, or occupation. It is our intent to provide opportunities for actively involving parents in a home/school partnership to better provide for the needs of our children. Feel free to contact your child's teacher or the school administrator to discuss volunteering opportunities. Volunteers must fill out an application, attend orientation and sign a background check waiver. For more information, please contact the school office.

## **Weapons, Violence and School Safety**

The School Board believes that students and staff are entitled to learn and work in a school environment free of violence, threats, bullying, and other disruptive behavior. Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for others and in accordance with Board policies, school rules, reasonable unwritten behavior expectations, and applicable state and federal laws.

School staff are required to immediately report incidents of prohibited conduct by students to the building administrator for investigation and appropriate action. Students who are subjected to or observe prohibited conduct are strongly encouraged to report it to a staff member.

The Principal, Superintendent and/or the Board may draw any reasonable inferences from the student's behavior concerning the risk the student poses to school safety for purposes of determining appropriate discipline action.

You may refer to MSAD#54 policy **JICIA** to read the entire policy.

<https://www.msad54.org/sites/default/files/JICIA.pdf>

## **DRESS CODE**

Students and parents are encouraged to use sound judgment and reflect respect for themselves and others in dress and grooming. Dressing appropriately is important to maintain a safe, healthy, and non-discriminatory environment for promoting positive academic and social development; therefore, the following restrictions will be enforced:

- Shirts and footwear must be worn at all times.
- Clothing with vulgar or profane lettering or drawings, either explicit or implied is prohibited
- Clothing that advertised drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is prohibited
- Clothing depicting images of weapons or violence is prohibited

- Clothing with insulting words or images, (i.e. racial or ethnic slurs) either explicit or implied is prohibited.
- Clothing or other items indicative of gangs is prohibited.
- Clothing that is either dangerous or destructive to school property (i.e. spiked collars, wristbands, cleats or chains) is prohibited
- Flip Flops and high heel shoes are not recommended. Due to safety issues some pieces of equipment may be off limits to students wearing these types of footwear.
- Comfortable clothing and sneakers should be worn for physical education classes which are held once a week.
- Sunglasses may not be worn inside the school building unless it is for a medical reason. If a medical reason makes it necessary a dr. note must be provided for the office.
- Undergarments should not be visible
- One's private areas must always be covered.

#### Hats

- Hats and hoods may not be worn in school during school hours.
- Exceptions are headgear worn for religious reasons and other circumstances approved by administration.

Administrators reserve the right to prohibit items not specifically named above if such items disrupt the educational environment. Building administrators have the authority to waive parts of this policy for school-wide special activities sponsored by school sanctioned groups or for religious/medical purposes.

Students who violate the dress code will be given the opportunity to rectify the situation by changing into appropriate clothing. Those who do not comply may be sent home.