

Introduction

Principal's Welcome

It is the goal of our school community to work collaboratively with students, parents and other members of the community to build relationships and promote effective communication. Once these relationships have been established all parties will be able to recognize individual differences among one another and encourage our students to reach their potential academically and as good citizens. SES will continue to foster the ideals of a community-centered school through a continuous collaborative effort with groups and individuals in the community.

Working together to build a strong foundation will help promote a positive perception of school for our students and will also promote a safe and respectful learning environment. We believe that all staff and students should take responsibility for their actions and for the integrity of their work. The school will advocate for the needs of these individuals, through the academic and social standards in place to help provide additional support to ensure all student needs are being addressed.

We as a school can meet our goal of having students achieve academic success and develop good citizenship by providing rigorous and engaging learning opportunities that foster curiosity, creativity and exploration. It is our hope that students will develop a strong desire to learn because of these ideals. We will positively reinforce this desire and promote the best education possible for our students by continuing to develop the schools education programs, through constant revision and evaluation of our curriculum.

I would like to encourage parents to be involved in your child's education. You can do this by joining the PTO, have your student participate in an after school program or by visiting the classroom to work directly with teachers to provide an extension of the school day at your home. If you have any question or would like to meet in person please contact the school to set up appointment.

Thanks so much,

Barrett Williams
Principal
Sharon Elementary School

Sharon Elementary School Staff

Preschool Director – Rachel Piper Ext. 34

Preschool Teacher – Kelsey Keith Ext. 35

Preschool Teacher – Randi Spittle Ext. 36

Kindergarten – Martha Cain, Ext. 20

Grade 1 & 2 – Laura Lewis & Debra Walton-Strong, Ext. 19 and Ext. 25

Grade 3 – Keenan Haley, Ext. 23

Grade 4 – Meg Hopkins Ext. 22

Grade 5 – Dulce O’Hare, Ext. 24

Grade 6 – Janis Boulbol, Ext. 21

Art – Candace Vande Griek, Ext. 18

Music – Steve Owens, Ext. 18

Librarian – Catherine Freese, Ext. 14

Physical Education – Steven Frenette

Special Education– Toni Phillip, Ext. 12

Reading Recovery/Basic Skills – Ellen Rogers, Ext. 32

Basic Skills – Paul Sadowski

School Guidance – Melissa Zoerheide, Ext. 37

Nurse – Jill Lloyd, Ext. 15

Instructional Assistants:

Grade Pre-k – Faith Radicioni, Cheslee Morrison, Ann Marie Blake

Grade 1-2 – Deb Boles, Robbin Conway

Grade 3/4 – Carol Rogers

Grade 5/6 – Jael Hook, Linda Moore

Basic Skills – Sheila Clark-Ferris

General Special Ed – Linda Kent, Ext. 17

Principal – Barrett Williams, Ext. 11

School Secretary – Carol Rousseau, Ext. 10

Hot Lunch Agent & Cook – Linann Perry, Ext. 16

Kitchen Assistant – Carmen Colon

Custodians – Tim Panciera & Carmen Colon

Chief Technology Wizard – Michael Barsanti

Bus Drivers –Jim Thompson, TBD

Consultants:

Secondary Special Education Liaison – Kim Moreno

Occupational Therapist. – Diane Doubleday

One Planet – Cindy Perry, Ext. 18

Physical Therapist – Deanna Perreault

School Board

The Sharon Town School District operates Sharon Elementary School and is also responsible for providing a free and appropriate education for Sharon students in grades 7 - 12. The Sharon School District is governed by an elected three-member Board of Directors. Each year one director is elected for a three-year term at the School District Annual Meeting held on the evening of the first Monday in March. Regular board meetings are held at 5:30 p.m. in the school's Downer Memorial Library on the fourth Thursday of the month unless otherwise posted. The meetings are open to the public, and citizens of Sharon are welcome to attend. Citizens having business to bring before the board are encouraged to contact the chairman of the board, principal, or superintendent in order to be placed on the agenda. The current directors serving on the board are: Peter Rodis, Don Shaw (chair), and Steve Gagliardone.

Mission Statement

Content of "Sharon Community Educational Commitment" grew out of a Community Forum held on February 4, 1995. Ideas from school staff and students were blended with community contributions. The resulting Mission Statement was approved by the voters at the 1996 School District Annual Meeting. This, then, is "The Sharon Educational Commitment":

The commitment of the Sharon community is to provide a caring and safe environment for our young people. We will promote quality education that emphasizes high academic standards, sound personal development and positive social growth – thus laying the foundation for lifelong learning and a personally fulfilling and productive life.

This statement sets forth lofty ideals for the education and nurturing of our children. It is truly a "community" statement, thereby indicating that many have a role to play. Everyone who has contact with a growing child has an impact on, and a responsibility to that child. Parents and those of us who work in the school have clear responsibilities. While we in the school have no magic answers for how to reach these high ideals, we are committed to striving earnestly to move toward these worthy ends. School volunteers, organization leaders, grandparents, relatives, and friends also make significant contributions. Further, those taxpayers who do not have elementary age children in school help us enormously with their continued essential financial support. We know how expensive it is to run even a small school such as ours, and for this continuing support we are deeply grateful. Our gratitude goes, too, to the many generous donations made to the school, and the support for our fund-raising campaigns. It is this

gathering of human and fiscal resources which give life to the words in our Mission Statement. We are all entrusted with our children's lives. Let us continue to work together to give them the help they need to be prepared for the increasingly demanding world in which they will live.

Core Beliefs

Our work with students is guided by the following core beliefs that are informed by our Mission Statement:

- It is the responsibility of every student, teacher, parent and community member to actively support the educational needs of our children.
- Each individual has an innate desire and ability to learn.
- Individuals learn best when held to appropriately high expectations.
- The individual learner, with appropriate support and direction from parents and teachers, is responsible for her/his own learning.
- Individuals learn best in an environment that is caring, safe and respectful.
- Learning is a lifelong process.
- Learning is a shared experience: Everybody teaches; everybody learns.
- Ongoing review, evaluation and the will to adjust are essential to continuous improvement.
- Each individual is intrinsically valuable.
- Teaching methods need to reflect different developmental levels and students' individual learning styles.

Learner Goals

Students should consider the following goals as keys to success at Sharon Elementary School. We expect Sharon students to:

- Be engaged, curious, hardworking learners who love to learn and who show: a desire to read, an interest in exploring new ideas, a desire to pursue areas of personal interest, willingness to take appropriate risks, and use critical, creative and reflective thinking.
- Acquire a basic core of knowledge and skill in language arts, mathematics, history and government, geography, science, the arts (music, drama, dance and visual arts), and physical education and health.
- Acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to find needed information by using a variety of resources for success today in school and life situations, for success in future educational and life setting, and to use current technology to retrieve and process information and to produce work.

- Acquire the following basic social skills and values: respect for self and others (self esteem and esteem for others), skill in working cooperatively with others, valuing differences between and among ourselves and others, knowledge about healthy life choices, respectful independence from different opinions, willingness to take responsibility for decisions, interest and skill in solving personal and social problems, ability to be flexible and respond effectively to change, and active participation in civic and community affairs.

Basics

Age Requirement for Admission

A child entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1 of the year of enrollment. In order to enter our first grade, a child must be six on or before September 1 of the year of enrollment. Exceptions may be considered only for children who attended a different town's public school with different age requirements and who transferred to Sharon at a later date. Proof of age is required upon initial enrollment in school.

Residency Requirement/Tuition

Children who attend Sharon Elementary School must be legal residents of the Town of Sharon or pay tuition as set annually by the Sharon Board of School Directors. This is also true for middle and secondary students for whom Sharon is expected to pay tuition. Generally, legal residency for children is the same as that of a parent or legal guardian. Living with a relative does not constitute legal guardianship. Under Vermont law, penalties, including fines and imprisonment, may be given for misrepresentations of residency. Parents wishing to have a child or children attend Sharon Elementary School on a tuition basis should contact the building principal.

Attendance and Absences

Students are expected to be in school for the full school day every day that school is in session. State law places responsibility upon parents to see that children attend school. The list of legal reasons to be absent is short and can be summarized as either medical or religious in nature. Tardiness is a problem. Teachers present a significant portion of their day's lessons at the beginning of class. We ask that parents call the school to report any absence or tardiness and the reason for it by 9:00 a.m. It is particularly important for the school to know of any contagious illness so that school personnel can take measures and inform other parents as appropriate. Any student needing to leave school grounds during the school day must have a note from the child's parent or guardian. We expect children arriving late or leaving early to sign in or out, giving the time of arrival or departure. Special trips resulting in school absences may be excused, but only after permission is granted by the principal and arrangements have been made with the teacher.

School Calendar & School Day

Under Vermont law school calendars are agreed upon “regionally”. This becomes a problem in a town like ours, which sends secondary students to different “regions”. We do our best to develop a calendar, which disrupts families and our buses as little as possible.

The school day at Sharon Elementary begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. First buses arrive at school at approximately 7:45 a.m. We provide supervision for elementary students who are dropped off starting at 7:15 AM. At the end of the day our buses leave school at about 3:00 p.m. Again, supervision is provided for children until these buses leave. Students are expected to ride home on their assigned bus unless they are staying, with supervision, for a special activity or an emergency situation exists. Students who walk home or are picked up by car are asked to leave the school grounds by 3:05 p.m. and anyone not picked up by this time will be sent to the one planet afterschool program. The circle in front of the school is closed to all but bus and handicapped traffic during the afternoon bus hours so please be prepared to park in the parking lot. **No supervision is provided before 7:15AM or after the afternoon buses leave, and the school takes no responsibility for children on the grounds before 7:15 a.m. or after 3:05 p.m.**

School Closings and Early Dismissal

Sharon Elementary School closes when conditions significantly threaten the safety of our children. Generally, this action is taken because of weather conditions, but water system failures or loss of heating can also require a closing. When conditions indicate that a school closing is necessary we aim to make a decision by 6:00 a.m. An automated phone alert system will be started and area radio stations called. The following stations are notified: WNHV 91.0 FM, WGXL 92.3 FM, WKXE 95.3 FM, WCVR 102.3 FM, WHDQ 106.1 FM, and WTSL 1400 AM. Local TV stations such as WCAX also run a list by county.

The decision of whether to close school is made by observing road conditions, considering weather forecasts, and consulting with the town road crew and other appropriate persons. Usually, the decision is easy. Occasionally, it is not. Please be merciful! Your feedback is appreciated and can be extremely helpful.

We rarely dismiss children early due to emergency conditions because additional emergencies can be created by taking young children to homes with no one present — particularly in severe weather conditions. In a few extreme conditions, however, school may be dismissed early. It is our hope to minimize calls to parents when dismissing early because the time required to call numerous parents tends to defeat the purpose of the early dismissal and force the buses to face even worse driving conditions as road conditions deteriorate. Your help in giving precise, dependable directions for what to do with your child is appreciated.

Evacuation Drills

As required by law, our school conducts building evacuation drills once each month. The date and time required to evacuate the facility are recorded to document compliance and to monitor effectiveness of the process. Because of the number of exits, it generally takes less than a minute to clear the building. In order to be prepared for the need to move to a safer location, drills may sometimes involve moving the children to another building.

Homework Guidelines

What you should expect from the School

Homework supplements daily classroom activity. It is most effective when directly related to the instructional objectives of classroom work. The purpose for any homework assignment must be clear, and students and parents must understand the teacher's expectations. Homework is *not* meant to be busy work, nor is it meant to be the primary means of learning new material. Homework is definitely *not* meant to cause undue stress on teachers and families. (Please keep in mind, though, that most learning comes from HARD WORK – struggling with difficult problems and complicated ideas.) When students or parents get to the point of utter frustration regarding a homework assignment, it is time to stop! Clear, direct lines of communication between teachers and parents help students understand the importance of homework and help avoid unnecessary problems. We have developed these guidelines that should help you understand the school's responsibility in development of homework assignments. In later sections you will find what we consider to be appropriate homework responsibilities for students and parents.

- Appropriate homework assignments usually involve one or more of the following:
 - ✓ Reading for content or pleasure or as a means of introducing material that will be covered in class.
 - ✓ Practice using skills already taught in class.
 - ✓ Completion of assignments not completed in class.
 - ✓ Review of previously taught material including studying for quizzes and exams.
 - ✓ Solving problems by applying information and skills introduced in class.
 - ✓ Completion of projects and long-term assignments (provided the purpose, expectations and time line for completion are understood in advance).

- Teachers' responsibilities regarding homework
 - ✓ Provide assignments that are worthwhile clearly linked to instructional goals, and of reasonable length.
 - ✓ Use homework to assess students' understanding of material covered in class.
 - ✓ Provide reasonable accommodations for students with special needs.
 - ✓ Provide written materials that are legible.
 - ✓ Provide timely feedback to students regarding their homework.
 - ✓ Establish reasonable consequences for homework assignments that are missing, incomplete or late.
 - ✓ Keep students and parents informed regarding problems related to homework.

- School's responsibilities
 - ✓ Review and discuss these guidelines.
 - ✓ Develop classroom procedures that are consistent with these guidelines.
 - ✓ Publish and distribute guidelines to parents and students.

You will find more on expectations around homework later in this *Handbook*. Specifically you will find responsibilities that we consider appropriate for students and parents to accept so that the school day instruction has a chance of success.

Programs & Services

Academic Program

It is appropriate to begin this section on school services with discussion of our academic program. A public school's historic mission is to develop the academic skills and understandings of the young people in its charge. You will see from the Mission Statement, printed near the beginning of this *Handbook*, that our community has a broad vision of what it means to develop a child's capacity for life and learning. To that end you will find more comprehensive services than you might have seen in your own school days. Each of these services, however, is in place for the primary purpose of developing children's potential for academic learning. Yes, we love children here and want for them everything that a good life can provide – but we strive to keep our eye on the academic prize and that is a well educated young person with strong basic skills.

Each teacher will share information about curriculum for specific developmental levels. You will see that the 3 R'S remain central – Reading, 'Riting' and 'Rithmetic. It is essential, however, that a citizen of today's complex world and economy cares about, and understands, the social, physical and natural sciences. It is also necessary that students are skilled at problem solving (most of the jobs that will be available to them as adults have not even been invented!), communications technology, and interpersonal working relationships. We also weave into the school lives of our children as much experience with those elements, which truly make life worth living – the arts, literature, and a sense of wonder in this world.

One Planet: After School Program

Sharon Elementary School operates an out-of-school program called *One Planet*. Our program is so named in hopes of having our children feel deeply rooted in this special place where they are growing up and have opportunities to grasp the larger world beyond Sharon's boundaries. *One Planet* provides academic tutoring, homework support and all the enrichment activity we can invent - and afford. This program partners fully with *Sharon Rec.* and provides the childcare services previously available through *Pathways for Children*. Watch for more information.

Counseling Services

The school provides a school guidance counselor to work with students to help them cope with the common issues and problems of childhood. The counselor works in the classroom with all students and also may work with students individually and in groups. It is our practice to require parental consent for the counselor to work with a child on a regular basis beyond the work done with the whole class. The counselor keeps matters disclosed by students or parents in strict confidence **unless** it involves the potential for serious risk of harm to self or others. Where a child requires prolonged or more intensive counseling service, the school will help parents make those arrangements.

Health Services

Our school nurse is present on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. She oversees and monitors policies and practices for delivery of routine health services (medications, first aide, care for sick children, hugs). We are fortunate to have another former RN who works in a different capacity in the school who can provide support on days when our nurse is absent. We do call on her in emergencies or when medical questions arise. We also inform all staff members when there is a life threatening condition, which might become a problem at any time during the school day. No child should be sent to school if he or she has a severe cold, fever over 100 degrees, sore throat, rash of unknown cause, vomiting, or any other symptom of a contagious disease. The school should be notified of any illness your child may have. Generally, we recommend that if your child is not well enough to participate in recess or physical education, it is best for the child to remain out of school longer. When there are circumstances in which it is necessary for a child not to participate in recess or physical education, for example because of a bone fracture, a note from the child's doctor should be sent to school stating how and for how long a child's participation should be limited.

If a child becomes ill or injured and needs to leave school, the child's parents will be notified as quickly as possible. Therefore, it is imperative that parents provide the school with current work and home phone numbers. It is the parent's responsibility to have some authorized person pick up the child. If the parent is inaccessible by telephone, parents are responsible for authorizing another trusted party who can be contacted to pick up the child if the need arises. Occasionally, a parent will not give us this information, which causes real hardship for a sick or injured child.

In case of medical emergencies, when a physician's care is needed, the family's doctor will be called. If for some reason that physician is not accessible, another physician in the area will be selected by school personnel. Parents will be asked annually to give their consent to seek medical treatment in this manner if the need arises. Of course, parents will be notified as quickly as possible.

It is particularly important to notify the school if your child comes down with a significant contagious disease such as strep throat, chicken pox, or pink eye. Your cooperation helps us recognize the condition quickly and protect other children.

Health Screening

The school nurse conducts height, weight, blood pressure, vision and hearing screening in accordance with Vermont Department of Education requirements. Parents will receive notice of any indication that their children have a problem in these areas. The school nurse also checks students for communicable problems such as scabies and head lice. For the protection of all, the school requires that any child having head lice must be taken home and treated with a special shampoo for killing the lice and their eggs called "nits." Any questions about head lice may be addressed to the nurse

Immunizations

All students entering the school system are required (unless given a specific exemption) to have immunizations for diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, rubella, measles, and mumps. By Vermont statute, students who do not have the required immunizations cannot attend school. The school nurse can assist parents who need help getting their child(ren) immunized.

For parents of sixth graders, note that all seventh graders must have received the three shots in the Hepatitis B series or show proof that they have started the Hepatitis B shots before they can attend seventh grade. The Hepatitis B shots must be given at intervals so the series takes several months to complete. If your child did not receive the shots as an infant, please allow time to complete the series before your child starts seventh grade.

Please provide the school nurse with an up-to-date copy of immunizations records so that your child's health record can be updated. Your child's doctor can also fax copies of immunization records to the school at (802) 763-2056. A health record is kept on all students and is part of his or her permanent record.

Medications

The use of medication at school is strictly regulated by statute in order to protect the children from the misuse of legal drugs and use of illegal drugs. Accordingly, the following procedure will be followed:

1. It is the responsibility of parents to make appropriate arrangements for the administration of medications for their child(ren) at school. Whenever possible the parents are asked to schedule the administration of their child's medications such that it not be necessary to receive the medicine at school. For example, if the child is to take the medication three times daily, it can often be given in the morning before school, immediately after coming home from school, and at bedtime.
2. Parents who are able to do so are encouraged to come to school to administer the medications themselves. If however, the school is expected to administer a medication, parents must send the school a signed permission form with full written information about the medication, including the following: the reason for the medication, the dosage, and the time of administration. For prescription medications a doctor's prescription medication order **signed by both the physician and parent/guardian must be also received before the medication will be administered.** Doctor's orders may be faxed to the school at (802) 763-2056. Nonprescription or over-the-counter medications will not be given without a written note giving precise instructions signed by the parents.
3. Medication must be brought by parents to the school with the proper dosage appropriately labeled by a physician or pharmacist.
4. Under VT Law H.748, effective school year 2008-09, students with life-threatening allergies or asthma may carry and self-administer their emergency medications at school, on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, on school-provided transportation and during school-related programs. It is up to parents to decide if they want their child to self-administer emergency medications, however, if a parent authorizes self-medication, the following rules apply:

For each school year, **the parent or guardian shall:**

- A. Provide the school with written authorization, on a form provided by the school, for the student to carry and self-administer emergency medications.

- B. Sign a written statement provided by the school, releasing the school and its employees or volunteers, from liability as a result of injury arising from the student's self-administration of emergency medications, except when the school, or school employee' conduct would constitute gross negligence, recklessness, or intentional misconduct.
- C. Participate with the school nurse in the development of an emergency plan of action authorized and signed by the student's physician and the parents.
- D. **Provide the school with written documentation from the physician:**
- 1) Stating that the student has one or more life-threatening allergies, asthma or both.
 - 2) Providing the name of the emergency medication, the dosage, and the times and circumstances under which the medication is to be taken.
 - 3) Affirming that the student: Is capable of, and has been instructed by the physician in the proper method of self-administration of the emergency medication, Has been advised of possible side-effects of the medication and has been informed of when and how to access emergency services.
- E. A copy of the entire bill entitled H.748, AN ACT RELATING TO PERMITTING STUDENTS TO POSSESS AND SELF-ADMINISTER EMERGENCY MEDICATION, can be viewed at www.leg.state.vt.us.
- F. The school nurse/designee will continue to be responsible for securing and administering emergency medications to students who are incapable of self-medication or whose parents choose NOT to have their child medicate themselves.
- G. The school nurse will continue to teach students the proper use of an asthma inhaler, however, the nurse will not be responsible for improper use of an inhaler when the student self-medicates (see paragraph B. above).
5. All prescription and nonprescription medications are to be turned into the school principal or nurse. No student is to keep medication on his/her person. The only exception is for those children identified in #4 above.

Food Service Program

The Food Service program will be making the switch to a computerized system to track purchases. All accounts must maintain a positive credit balance. Payments are expected on the first day of the week in a clearly marked envelope. Checks are the preferred payment choice. Students will be issued a tracking number the first day of school. This tracking number will be used to track the student's breakfast and lunch history throughout the year. A detailed report of your child's bill may be requested at anytime from the main office. A teacher or Food Service Agent will scan the student's tracking

number into a computer prior to going through the line. Cold lunch and snack milk may be charged on accounts with a positive account balance.

Free/Reduced Priced Lunch Policy

At the beginning of each year parents should review the income eligibility guidelines to see if they qualify for free/reduced lunch. The free/reduced price meal applications may be obtained in the School Information Packet available at the beginning of the school year, call and request one be sent home, or online at http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_nutrition.html. Should your income change anytime during the year; you may reapply or apply for the first time. Please request another application form by calling the school secretary and request a new form be sent home. Free and Reduced information is confidential and not shared with anyone. All qualifying families this year receive free meals and there will be no reduced category this year.

Payment Plans and Pricing

Payments should be in a clearly marked envelope with the name of the student and the amount of payment. We prefer payment by check. Monthly or weekly payments are encouraged.

Meal Prices: Kids' Breakfast \$1.50 Lunch \$2.75
Adult Breakfast \$2.50 Adult Lunch \$3.25

Extra milk not provided with a meal: .50 cents
Salad bar: \$1.00; ala carte items (apple, chips) priced .25 - .75 cents

Payment Plan

	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly (175 days)
Lunch Full Price	\$11.25	\$45.00	\$393.75
Breakfast Full Price	\$5.50	\$22.00	\$192.50
Milk Only	\$2.50	\$10.00	\$ 87.50

Emergency Lunch Policy

All students will be allowed one meal on an emergency basis [lost or forgotten money]. But all accounts are subject to the Student/Adult Account Policy. Also any student may receive a sandwich and milk if account remains in a negative balance. * A maximum \$.75 charge will be applied for sandwich and milk. Please call the school food service to find out your child's account balance. We send home low cash letters weekly and payment should be made promptly, so that your child does not have to receive an emergency lunch. A simple call to the school can avoid an embarrassing situation.

Breakfast Program

Breakfast is one of the most important meals of the day. Some children are not hungry when they wake up, and, the school breakfast program is a very cost effective and time saving way to feed your child. Studies have proven that eating breakfast at school increases awareness, generates better grades, and helps students be less fidgety, have fewer stomachaches, and be an overall better learner. We also offer a great breakfast with many daily choices such as, sausage on English muffin, ham and cheese bagels, egg and cheese sandwiches, fresh bagels, fruit filled muffins, hot or cold cereal, cinnamon buns, other breakfast entrees are available on a rotating basis. The Breakfast Program is open to everyone!

Field Trips

The Food Service loves to make bag lunches for any occasion. Please place your order through the classroom teacher 3 days prior to the trip. The price is the same price as for lunch. The bag lunch contains a sandwich, chips, fruit, cookie, milk or juice. Those who qualify for free or reduced lunch prices will be able to get a bag lunch at your normal lunch cost.

Nutrition

The Food Service coordinator is actively involved in training with the Dairy Council, State of Vermont Child Nutrition Department, The American Heart Association, USDA Team Nutrition, and many other organizations to bring healthy, attractive, nutritious, and low fat meals to your school. We incorporate low fat cooking techniques and use many low to no fat ingredients. When available bread products are supplemented with whole-wheat flour to add fiber to our meals.

Local Purchasing Efforts

In Support of the local agriculture community, Sharon Elementary School proudly directs its purchasing efforts to include locally grown produce & locally made products in our meal production in the cafeteria we manage. We proudly affiliate our efforts in our nutritional pursuits with The Feed Network and NOFA organization, and other regional organizations in your area promoting local products. We are fortunate to have wonderful community support in our effort to raise money to enhance the local products that we use in our food service program. Please look for our monthly menus published and distributed on a monthly basis or on our school website. You may obtain a copy of the menu through the school (monthly). If at anytime you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school and ask for the Food Service Manager, or contact Carol Rousseau in the main office. We greatly value your support and appreciate any feedback you might have for us.

Student/Adult Account Procedure

Philosophy: The goal of Sharon Elementary School's Food Service Program is to provide good, healthy, nutritious meals to all students and staff. The meals are provided at very

reasonable prices for those who pay the full price and are subsidized by the USDA for families qualifying for assistance. We provide many choices and have a wide variety to choose from, which requires us to operate on extremely small margins. Therefore to maintain control over student and adult account balances, we will enforce the following guidelines to ensure a fiscally sound program.

1. No balance shall be allowed beyond the limit of four [4] unpaid lunches.
2. Written notification, will be sent home with the student when the account balance is equal to or less than two charged meals.
3. Written notification, Zero-Balance, is sent home with the student when the account balance is less than one charged meal or negative amount owed.
4. Phone notification, Minus-Balance, is initiated to the parent or guardian, when there is a negative balance equal to or beyond four charged meals.
5. Written notification, Minus-Balance, is mailed home to the parent or guardian when the negative balance exceeds four [4] charged meals or greater. A copy of this notification is always available from the school food service manager or Administrative assistant.
6. With no response, and within the guidelines of reasonable fiscal restraints, the school will notify the parent or guardian that the student is to be refused services provided by SES.

Healthy Food Choices

Children have a “snack time” in the midmorning. Parents are encouraged to send in appropriate, healthy snack items. The school does not provide mid-day snacks. We strongly believe that we should be helping children make healthy food choices, which is why **candy, gum high content sugar drinks and soda are not allowed in school.** (see section on Items not allowed or Limited at School). The school staff recommends that the snacks avoid excessive sugar, fat, and salt. **Chocolate (which is a form of candy) is strongly discouraged in all grades because of the caffeine, fat and sugar content.** Despite your best efforts and ours, children seem to get too many calorie-rich, nutrient-poor foods. Fresh fruits and vegetables, a wholesome sandwich, or the like is preferable to many commercially prepared snack foods. Students may not have candy and soda at school except as authorized by their teachers for occasional classroom parties. Milk is available for purchase at snack time for 25 cents per eight-ounce carton.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences are arranged by each classroom teacher and occur within the first ten weeks of school. All parents are urged to participate in these conferences, which are mutually beneficial, with teachers and parents learning from one another about a child. Parents or teachers may request additional conferences at any point during the year, as the need arises.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued three times each school year. Teachers also keep in more frequent communication with parents as needed. A copy of the report card is placed in each pupil's permanent record folder at the end of the school year.

School-Home Coordinator

We now have our school guidance counselor filling this role to offer coordination between school and home. This may be as simple as an introductory visit by our School-Home Coordinator to welcome you to the community. Sometimes a parent or teacher will notice a situation, which can easily be helped by conversation with someone who is not a part of the school faculty. Examples of situations in which this service has been helpful are: family stress around homework; family issues around divorce or trauma which are causing school and family difficulties; anxiety in the home about special needs and services related to those needs. Feel free to ask the principal if you feel that your family could use such a contact between the school and your home. If you are new to our school community please expect that our school-home coordinator will be introducing herself to you.

Open Houses and School Learning Fair

This year we will hold our classroom open house prior to the start of school. This is an opportunity for teachers to share information about their programs and suggest how parents may help their children be successful in school. In the spring the school has traditionally hosted a Learning Fair that highlights student work and projects from a pre-selected academic area that is usually in line with our staffs professional development focus for that year. Parents and other citizens are encouraged to attend to see samples of student work and to review information about student performance. In an effort to reach more people we may explore the possibility of running this event on the evening of our town's school district meeting.

Newsletters

The Principal's letter is sent home to parents every two weeks, either in hard copy or, upon request, via e-mail. Please watch for it. Something mysterious happens to papers that go into backpacks – especially those of older students! These newsletters provide information about upcoming events and tell about significant school happenings. If you have a community event, which is of interest to parents of school age children, please let the principal know up to a week in advance of the event. Classroom letters will also come home, providing more detail on grade level doings.

Educational Services

Most special educational services are not “special education”. Most are academic support services available to all children and are a part of our regular educational program. Here are short descriptions of what we mean by the most common program names and, yes, jargon you may hear in our school. Please consult your child's teacher or the principal for information about how to gain access to any of these services.

Compensatory Support/Basic Skills Support: This is a federally (and locally) funded program targeted at students having difficulty reaching grade level standards in basic

skills of reading, math and writing. Our school is classified as a “School-wide” program, meaning that we may provide these services, using federally funded personnel, to any child in the school who is at risk of school failure. These services supplement regular classroom instruction and may occur in or out of the classroom. Some children need this extra time and support.

Summer School: Our summer school program operates Tuesday through Thursday mornings during five weeks of the summer. Goals of the Summer Program are to support students’ maintenance of academic skills, to provide enrichment activities and to provide students with opportunities to succeed. Enrollment is based primarily on teacher recommendations of children whose academic skills might slip over the summer. Parents may ask that their child be enrolled and this will be considered when there is space. Participation in the summer program is a commitment on the part of both students, who must work hard, and parents, who must get them here on a regular basis.

EST (Educational Support Team): The EST is a “think tank” – a group of staff members who meet to study teacher concerns and to review what steps have been taken to help a child who is having school difficulty. The group then assists the teacher in planning and providing other supports, which may include different ways of teaching and/or services. Teams consist of the classroom teacher, the school counselor, school nurse, special education teacher, principal and EST coordinator. If the team feels that it would be helpful, a referral may be made for evaluations to determine why a child is experiencing difficulty. This step initiates the “special education” process though a child is not considered to be receiving special education services until a later determination of eligibility is made. If such a referral is made, parents become a central part of the team and its subsequent decisions.

ESS (Educational Support System): The Educational Support System evaluates school supports, programs and initiatives, which we refine to be more responsive to students’ needs. This group looks at such matters as how effectively the EST is functioning, how well our school discipline plan is working, internal and external communication challenges, and what programs we have in place to promote a healthy lifestyle and readiness for learning.

Act 230: Act 230 is a Vermont law requiring that a regular education program take steps to provide supports for all children who are at risk of school failure. These supports must be provided even when there is no evidence of a disability.

Disability: A word about this word. Federal law regarding protections for the disabled use this word. We cannot easily avoid it. In a school setting we prefer to think of this as “differently abled” so that we keep our eyes on a child’s gifts and skills. This also helps us focus on problem solving for success. The two sections below do use the word “disabled”, however, since it sounds less like jargon than “differently abled” – but please keep our caution in mind. We do not think of children receiving protections or services under the federal law as “disabled”. We think of them as our wonderful children who need us to do things differently so that they may reach their potential.

504: The overarching federal law protecting people with documented disabilities is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. We shorten this to “504”. Any school age

child whose disability has a negative impact on a major life function (such as learning) is to be protected by accommodations in the regular school program. This child's case is not "special education" but accommodations within regular education.

Special Education: We understand that there is much about "special education" which is confusing for parents. Only a child with a documented disability, whose school achievement is adversely affected by that disability AND who requires specialized instruction and services is eligible for "special education". These services are so well integrated into the school day that most children see it as completely normal for different children to be doing different things at different times of the day.

Student Records

Sharon Elementary School collects and maintains academic and other information in students' records. These records are maintained in a locked filing cabinet. In accordance with the rights afforded by the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA) and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, parents or guardians have the right to request to review the records. Further, parents may request copies of their child's records for the cost of copying. With the exception of authorized school personnel, student records are released only with the written permission of a parent or guardian. We ask parents to notify us if they do NOT want the school to release information about student achievements such as academic success and participation in special events.

Directory Information

The school gathers contact information (phones, e-mails, workplace data) at the beginning of the school year. This is so that we have a good picture of how to reach you in an emergency. FERPA requires that we give you an opportunity to tell us if you do NOT want us to distribute this contact information to anyone who may want to connect with you.

Transportation

The Sharon School District provides pupil transportation services for students outside the village of Sharon and for students in the village when children may face unsafe walking conditions between school and home. The Board of School Directors is happy to provide this service for Sharon students. It should be kept in mind, however, that these services are a privilege, not a right. State law does not require school districts to provide bus service.

We urge parents' support for reasonable behavior restrictions on our school buses in order to ensure the comfort and safety of all our riders. Students who are disruptive or who unnecessarily risk their safety or the safety of others may lose their right to ride Sharon school buses. Common sense rules apply. Some adult common sense, however, does not necessarily occur to young people. The most common violations are foul or obscene language and behavior that is inappropriate in an environment where there are young children. Students whose behavior on the bus is not appropriate will receive the following progressively more restrictive consequences.

All listed consequences may be made more severe when appropriate.

<u>Offense</u>	<u>Grades K-6</u>	<u>Grades 7-12</u>
1st	Warning	Warning
2nd	1 day off bus	5 days off bus
3rd	3 days off bus	10 days off bus
4th	5 days off bus	off rest of school year
5th	Off rest of school year	

Organizations

Action Planning Team

An Action Planning team is not an “organization” per se, but it is definitely a group, which depends on community involvement. Vermont schools are required by law to develop annual action plans, specifying goals for improving the academic achievement of children in their care. Because academic achievement is, in turn, dependent upon many factors within and outside the school, the goals also include what we call “foundation” goals. For example, no amount of instructional improvement will make a child who cannot stay awake in school excel. Action planning work is twofold. The first is the teamwork necessary to develop goals and action steps for the following year. We are now in the process of putting together the team, which will be looking at action steps for the following school year. Every bit as important is current work on this year’s goals. If you would like to be involved in any of these efforts please call the school principal.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Sharon Parent-Teacher Organization is composed of parents and teachers who seek to support the mission of the school through funding of special activities and purchases. The PTO meets in the evening at a time convenient to its membership. The PTO has supported playground improvements, special programs for students, and purchases to enhance instruction—as well as numerous other activities to benefit the school. All parents are encouraged to participate.

One Planet

One Planet's mission is "Helping children thrive by providing opportunities to learn, grow and have fun after school and during the summer." One Planet provides a variety of educational and enriching activities for students in grades K-6 from 3:00 to 5:30pm, Monday-Friday. We offer four 8-week school year sessions and a 6-week summer program. Enrollment packets are sent home with students prior to each session and are accessible at www.owsu.org. We provide students with homework help and a healthy snack on a daily basis and offer a different enrichment program each day, such as mural painting, sign language, cross-country skiing, Lego League, engineering, cooking, computer literacy and more. We also offer academic tutoring services to referred students. Our activities and tutorial are taught by experienced, qualified teachers, many of whom are school day staff.

Sharon Recreation Program

Sharon Recreation (“Rec”) provides ongoing athletic opportunities for Sharon children. Every season of the year finds volunteers setting up and overseeing athletic practices and events for our children. In the summer Rec’s summer camp, housed here at school, provides healthy, fun and safe summertime fun for many of our children. Sharon Rec is a full partner with our after school One Planet program. They can always use more hands – for coaching, driving, moving equipment around, signing kids up, and so on.

Policies & Practices Affecting Students

Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco

Students may not possess or use alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco on school grounds or at any school activity regardless of location. Violations will result in either an in-school or out-of-school suspension. The degree of consequence will depend on the severity of the offense, the age of the child, and the frequency of the offense. Possession and/or use of alcohol or drugs by students will also be referred to law enforcement officials for appropriate action. (See Board policy on “Alcohol and Drug Abuse” - F5 - in Appendices.)

Appropriate Dress

Children are to come to school dressed appropriately with consideration to cleanliness, good taste, comfort and weather protection. In order to promote a wholesome environment, the school will not permit clothing that is excessively revealing or which promotes alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco products. Further, clothing, which has messages, or symbols, which are demeaning or provocative to others or include obscene or profane language, is not allowed. Parents will be called and asked to bring a change of clothing.

For the sake of safety, shoes are required in the school and on the school grounds. Hats are not to be worn in the school building unless there is a religious prohibition against appearing bareheaded in public. Teachers may make an exception to this rule.

It is important that both current weather conditions and weather forecasts are considered in deciding what clothing is appropriate. It should be kept in mind that children spend a considerable amount of time outside. In the winter months, boots, coats, and snow pants are required on the playground.

Lost and Found

Although it is not required, parents are urged to label all items which a child brings to school by writing the child's name using a safe, indelible means. A "Lost and Found" container is maintained in the school, and parents or students may look through it. We do, however, request that articles removed in a search for a missing item be neatly returned to the rack. After a reasonable time, unclaimed articles are donated to area charities.

After School Events (Waiting for...)

After school events can begin at awkward times. Children who do not live near the school often have difficulty being at practices or games or lessons at the right time if they take the bus home. Accordingly, it is not uncommon to have children waiting around school until their scheduled event. There has to be a time, however, when the school ceases to be responsible for children, and at Sharon Elementary that is when the second afternoon bus runs begin (about 3:05 p.m.). After 3:05 p.m. no supervision is provided. Children are not allowed to be in the building after that time unless by arrangement with an adult school staff member, coach or organization sponsor. The school is not responsible for students after 3:05 p.m. We recognize that parents may have difficulty because they are not available to their children at this time of day. We recommend that parents consider other arrangements such as having children stay with friends or relatives.

We do allow children to return to the playground after second bus has left. We consider our grounds as a town recreation area, but just like a public park, there is no supervision for those who come at these times, and they are on the grounds at their own risk. Obviously, if there were an emergency or injury, any staff member would help—just as we would on a weekend if we were here, but, as on a weekend, there is no assurance that anyone will be available. Because of these considerations, we encourage parents to work with their children and other appropriate parties to make arrangements for children waiting for their after school events to begin.

Behavioral Expectations

The following behavioral expectations have been established for *all* persons in the school:

1. **RESPECT:** We are polite, considerate and respectful toward others.
2. **SAFETY:** We keep others and ourselves safe.
3. **RESPONSIBILITY:** We are responsible for what we do and say.

During the first weeks of school each classroom discusses these overarching expectations and generates a matrix to post throughout the school. These are sent home to parents who are asked to acknowledge receipt by signing and returning the document. Further, there are special rules for special situations, such as riding on the bus, walking in the hallways and being at school events in the building during after school hours.

Behavioral Expectations for Specific School Areas

In addition to grade appropriate interpretations of school wide rules (see above) there are behavioral expectations for specific school areas. Expectations for bus conduct and consequences for misconduct are outlined in the *Parent Handbook*. Consequences for misconduct on the bus largely focus on the loss of the bus riding privilege. There are expectations for playground activity and for particular pieces of playground equipment. These are reviewed in every classroom and posted in a prominent place near the playground where they can be read by both students and duty personnel.

Harassment/Bullying

The Sharon School does not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment. Our goal is to stop all bullying and harassment regardless of its origin. We believe that all students must feel safe within the school or at any school-sponsored activity regardless of its location. Even though our children are growing up in a small school in a small, rural community, they are not immune to the images, cultural influences and personal and social dynamics which cause bullying and harassment to occur. Bullying and harassment need special mention because parents can be distraught at the severity of our response when their child is determined to have bullied or harassed another person. State law MANDATES that we handle these cases forcefully, attending first to the rights of victims. Most times, however, with elementary school children, educating the young perpetrator is part of the developmentally appropriate action the school will take. Even though we try to explain what is not allowed before it happens, some children need to be taught after they have already committed a harassing or bullying act.

Students, staff and parents are asked to REPORT ANY BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR TO THE PRINCIPAL OR DESIGNATED EMPLOYEES. Principal, Barrett Williams, ½ teacher Debra Walton Strong, Guidance Counselor, Melissa Zoerheide or Third Grade Teacher, Keenan Haley at: (802) 763-7425 to make a report of suspected harassment OR bullying. Anyone wanting to make a CONFIDENTIAL complaint or expression of concern may do so by placing their concern in envelopes posted outside the principal's or the guidance counselor's doors. The same two individuals are authorized to investigate any reports of suspected harassment or bullying. The Sharon Board of School Directors' policy F15 concerns unlawful harassment. Bullying is substantially the same as harassment EXCEPT that with harassment the victim is a member of a legally protected class. As a result Sharon Elementary follows the same investigation procedures for both harassment and bullying allegations. In accordance with the provisions of this policy, the principal or Guidance Counselor will investigate complaints of bullying and harassment and take appropriate action.

Anyone choosing to retaliate in any way for the good faith reporting of bullying or harassment to school officials will be dealt with appropriately. It should be recognized that such retaliation is illegal under Vermont law. Action shall be taken against any person knowingly making a false report of harassment.

Definitions

Teasing: Teasing is occurring when:

- Behavior is hurtful regardless of its intention(s).
- It is an overt action and seen as a mean or intentional act by a group or an individual.
- Goal of the act was to harm, intimidate or isolate.

Bullying: Bullying of any kind creates a hostile environment that interferes with the education of one or more students.

Bullying is occurring when:

- There is an unequal or imbalance of power.
- Behavior is repeated intentionally and is hurtful regardless of its intention(s).
- A group or individual feels it as a serious threat.
- Goal is intimidation.
- Bully may deny, blame, target, show no remorse, or desire to solve the problem.

Harassment: Harassment means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family members' actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Hazing: Hazing is occurring when an individual or group commits any act against a person in connection with being initiated into or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with an educational institution if the act has the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of a student. Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts.

English Language Learners

Students and parents have the right to read the text of this Discipline Plan in a language, which will allow them to read it with enough understanding to be able to exercise their rights. This may be accomplished by providing translated copies of the plan and procedures, by providing an interpreter, or by such other means as will ensure due process.

Behavior Crisis Response Team

Sharon Elementary School has a team, which will respond to severe student disruption to violent misconduct. Team members have skills in the following areas:

- de-escalation techniques and mediation skills
- Short term counseling techniques and safe physical restraint

The team will respond to any behavior-related crisis immediately. The goal is to restore the school to a safe and orderly atmosphere. The procedure for handling such situations is as follows:

1. The staff member needing assistance sends another adult, or barring an available adult, another child to the office, to say, “ _____ wants help NOW.”
2. Office personnel locate team members Barrett Williams, Toni Phillip, Keenan Haley, Melissa Zoerheide and Debra Walton-Strong and tell them where to report.
3. Neighbor teachers and aides will be asked to cover any classroom left by a team member.
4. Team members either remove the child to the planning room or other safe location OR remove the other children to another location.
5. At least two members of the team remain with the child until the crisis subsides. One adult should remain throughout taking notes about the progress of the incident.
6. The reporting teacher and then one team member should document the precipitating events and then the progress of the crisis.
7. Parents are notified as soon as possible.
8. The principal or delegate will determine appropriate consequence, de-escalation techniques, short term counseling technique, mediation skills, and safe physical restraint

Response to Problem Behaviors

We have developed a three-tiered response to discipline situations. The elements in the response column represents a menu of possible responses, most of which are not directly keyed to a particular offense. Throughout the action-reaction cycle teachers will always consider the continuing personal and social education of the child being disciplined. The intent is to have clear and consistent consequences for misbehavior but also to teach children to behave in socially acceptable ways. The three tiers of our response system follows a clear guide that recommends three interventions before submitting a minor write up. Below is a flow chart to help better understand the difference between a minor and major infraction and how to proceed appropriately.

Reporting to Parents

Behavior Level I Teachers will notify parents either by phone or e-mail prior to using a “Behavior Report” which appears at the end of this Plan. If a pattern begins to emerge teachers will report to parents, using the “behavior Report” with each incident. (A blank copy of this form appears at the end of this booklet.)

Behavior Level II Teachers or the principal will prepare a written “Behavior Report” for every incident.

Behavior Level III The principal, with the help of the teacher or others in the team, will prepare a written “Behavior Report.” In most Tier III cases an investigation will be conducted. Procedures for following up

on reports of harassment are identified in the school's Policy on Prevention of Harassment of Students.

Bus Discipline Procedures

Riding a school bus is a privilege, not a right. While riding the bus, students are expected to abide by our school expectations:

- **Responsibility** - Refrain from any action, which could distract the bus driver.
- **Safety** - Stay seated when the bus is moving.
- **Respect** - Talk quietly; no shouting or screaming.

These are your basic level 1 behavior that we expect from all kids. Much like the classroom the driver manages behaviors as they arise and follows a system that redirects students when they are not meeting the expectations. If a child continues to not meet our expectations the driver will report the behavior to the principal. The principal has the right to revoke a student's bus riding privileges for serious and/or repeated offenses.

Bus Consequences

Students have **Three (3)** level 1 written warnings before being removed from the bus. All written warnings will be discussed with students and then sent home to parents or guardians to be signed and returned to school the following day. Classroom teachers will also receive written notification.

1. First warning: Bus form is sent home to be signed and returned to school. Principal will conference with the student and will notify the teacher and guidance counselor.
2. Second warning: Conference with student, loss of free time, parent and teacher contact. Next write-up will result in an assigned seat and parent meeting.
3. Third warning: Conference with student, loss of free time, assigned seat, teacher notification and a request for a parent meeting.
4. Fourth warning: Conference with student, mandatory meeting with parents and loss of bus privileges for up to 5 days. Parents, guidance counselor and teachers will be notified and must meet with principal before students are allowed back on bus. Written plan will be developed by this team to help student meet our bus expectations.
5. Fifth warning: Conference with student, parent notification/meeting and immediate removal from the bus while expulsion from the bus is being considered. Superintendent, Principal, the Administrator of Student Support Services and teachers conference to determine length of suspension and or expulsion from the bus.

Please note the degree of offense may lead to immediate bus suspension or even bus expulsion if warranted by the principal and/or superintendent. A copy of this document will be sent home with all bus write-ups so that parent are aware of our processes/procedures.

PBiS at Sharon Elementary School

The purpose of PBIS at Sharon Elementary School is to provide positive behavioral expectations and supports using a common language that strives to meet students' social, emotional, physical and academic needs. Teachers, Support Staff, Students and Parents should consider the following goals as keys to success at Sharon Elementary School. We include ALL our learner goals, including academic ones, in the belief that all individuals accept responsibility, are respectful and safe in all aspects of his/her life.

Pertinent School Policies

(Full text of all policies is available upon request)

D1 and F15	Prevention of Harassment of Students
F4	Student Conduct and Discipline (includes due process rights)
F10	Hazing
F5	Alcohol and Drug Abuse
F6	Student Use of Tobacco
F9	Weapons Policy