

First Branch Unified District

K-8 Student Handbook

2020 -2021

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Student Handbook

Dear Students, Parents/Guardians,

Welcome back! The First Branch Unified District at Chelsea Public School and Tunbridge Central School are wonderful places for students to learn and great environments to nurture respectful boys and girls. The 2020-2021 *Student Handbook* reflects the core values, beliefs and principles of our communities. The policies and procedures contained in this handbook have been established by the First Branch Unified District, school administration, state statute, and federal law. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with all of the contents of this handbook.

*For up-to-date information on in-person education, please refer to **Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021**.*

The First Branch Unified District at Chelsea Public School and Tunbridge Central School takes great pride in providing an environment that is respectful and safe for the social, emotional, and academic success of our students. On behalf of the faculty and staff, thank you for your continued support and partnership. We look forward to a wonderful 2020-2021 school year.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Blount
Principal at Chelsea

Michael Livingston
Principal at Tunbridge

First Branch Unified District Information

School Board Members

Kathy Galluzzo (Chair)
Maryann Caron
Jackie Garran
Susan Kay
Mike Gray
Nick Zigelbaum

White River Valley Supervisory Union Administration

Superintendent	Jamie Kinnarney
Business Manager	Tara Weatherell
Special Services Director	Don McMahon
Director of Curriculum	Mary Ellen Simmons
Director of Technology	Ray Ballou
Administrative Assistant	Kristy White

Chelsea Public School Faculty and Staff

Name	Position	Ext
Anderson, Erik	Teacher - MS Science, Math & Shop	139
Ballou, Jill	Teacher - MS Grade 5-6/English & Science	171
Bilodeau, Abigail	WRVSU Teacher – SPED Case Manager	157
Blount, Mark	Principal	125
Bohmen, Yvette	WRVSU - SPED Case Manager	157
Clegg-Brown, Diana	Teacher – Title I Reading K-5	153
Collins, Tammie	Custodian	133
Connolly, Susan	Teacher – Elementary Cluster 1/2	137
Crocker, Tracy	Teacher - Kindergarten	150
Cruz, Loretta	Teacher - Elementary Cluster 3/4	152
Cudney, Emma	Teacher – Elementary Cluster 3/4	154
Diamond, Tom	WRVSU Paraeducator	157
Doyle, Andy	Custodian	133
Elder, Lori	WRVSU Paraeducator	157
Faccio, Charlotte	School Nurse	131
Farnham, Melinda	School Counselor	129
Fifield, Virginia	Kitchen Assistant	162
Fitzgerald, Karen	Library Media Specialist	126
Ganzenmuller, Kerilyn	WRVSU Speech and Language	170
Gratz, Marty	WRVSU Paraeducator	157
Interlandi, Jeb	Teacher - ELL/Reading Support	148
Joyce, Stephanie	WRVSU Teacher - SPED Case Manager	140
Kiernan, Jack	Teacher - Elementary Cluster 1/2	149
Lesure, Abigail	Teacher - Physical Education/ Health Grades K-8	134
Maraget, Lou	Head of Maintenance	133
McCullough, Wendy	Administrative Assistant	121/101
Mills, Anne	WRVSU Occupational Therapy	169
O'Hearn, Scott	FBUD Student Support Specialist	124
Perry, Michelle	Teacher - MS Grades 5-6/Math & Social Studies	142
Reed, Cheryl	WRCSU Special Ed. Administrative Assistant	145
Rouelle, Dee	Teacher - K - 8 Art	143
Sample, Cathy	Kitchen Manager	161
Sroka, Melanie	Teacher – K - 8 Music	132
West, Krystal	WRVSU Paraeducator	157
Whitney, Danielle	Regular Education Paraeducator	152
Wilkison, Jane	Teacher - MS English & Social Studies	136

Tunbridge Central School Faculty and Staff

Name	Position	Ext.
Bogardus, Amy	Teacher PE/Health Student Council etc.	2012
Burns, Delilah	Special Education Teacher Middle School	2003
Colby, Karen	Middle School Math Teacher	2015
Colson, Darrell	Part-time custodian	2024
Desjardins, Priscella	Special Education Paraeducator	2003
Dutton, Elizabeth	Kindergarten Teacher	2005
Farbman, Sandy	Elementary Special Education Teacher	2003
Franske, Chris	Middle School Science Teacher	2014
Ganzenmuller, Kerilyn	WRVSU-Speech and Language	2010
Garner, Walter	Middle School Language Arts/English	2013
Henault, Becky	Special Education Paraeducator	2003
Howe, Elaine	Library Media Specialist	2022
Hull, Susan	Part-time Nurse	2021
Lewis, Penny	Regular Para Educator/ Kitchen Aide	2005/2004
Livingston, Michael	Principal	2002
Maraget, Lou	FBUD Head of Maintenance	2024
Marshia, Emily	Middle School Social Studies	2023
McGlaflin, Caitlyn	Elementary Teacher	2017
Mills, Andra	Teacher-Title 1 Reading Intervention Grades 1-6	2016
	Elementary Teacher	2007
O'Hearn, Scott	Guidance Student Support	2022
Payson, John	Elementary Teacher	2018
Perkins, Brenda	Special Education Paraeducator	2003
Perkins, Stephanie	Elementary Teacher	2006
Riddle, Lindsay	WRVSU- OT Specialist	2010
Sroka, Melanie	FBUD Music teacher	2011
Vesper, Tracy	Administrative Assistant /Legal Registrar	2001

Academic Code of Integrity – Middle School

Academic Integrity is at the foundation of any community of learners. First Branch Unified District Middle School follows an Academic Code of Integrity which states:

We, as members of the First Branch Middle School community, value personal integrity and believe that all aspects of cheating and/or plagiarism are not ethically or socially acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Any violation of this Academic Code of Integrity is a failure to follow the reasonable rules of the school and may result in the following:

- Parental notification
- Disciplinary consequences for all parties involved

In addition, students must understand that technology, including but not limited to iPads, translators, cell phones, graphing calculators, and the internet are resources and should be used responsibly. Listed below are some examples that would be considered violating our Academic Code of Integrity (these include but are not limited to):

- Copying or using other's work (homework, labs, etc) as "your" work when instructed or the expectation is to do the assignment by yourself (Both parties would be guilty).
- Discussing test material with students who have not yet taken the test.
- Using any type of illegal aide during tests and quizzes (ie "cheat sheets" or using a graphing calculator without permission).

(Permission to adopt and use Academic Code of Integrity is granted by Londonderry School District, NH)

Animal Dissection

It is the intent of the White River Valley Supervisory Union and its member school districts to comply with the requirements of Act 154 of 2008 regarding the right of students to be excused from participating in or observing activities involving the dissection and vivisection of animals. Students enrolled in district schools shall have the right to be excused from participating in any lesson, exercise or assessment requiring the student to dissect, vivisect or otherwise harm or destroy an animal or any part of an animal, or to observe any of these activities, as part of a course of instruction.

Definition:

1. “animal” means any organism of the kingdom animalia and includes an animal’s cadaver or the severed parts of an animal’s cadaver.

(WRVSU and SU District School Boards D5 Animal Dissection Policy)

Asbestos Management Plan

To: Parents, Teachers, Employees, Other Personnel or Their Guardians

From: Jamie Kinarnney, WRVSU Superintendent of Schools

Date: August 24, 2020

Re: Notification of Asbestos Management Plan Availability

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1987-(40 CFR 763.93 [g] [4]) requires that written notice be given that the following schools have management plans in place for the safe control and maintenance of asbestos-containing materials found in their buildings. These management plans are available and accessible to the public at the administrative office of each facility listed below, or at the office of Superintendent of Schools.

White River Valley Supervisory Union

461 Waterman Road

Royalton, VT 05068

763-8840

S. Royalton Elementary /White River Valley HS, S. Royalton

763-8844

Sharon Elementary School, Sharon

763-7425

FBUD - Tunbridge Central School, Tunbridge

889-3310

FBUD - Chelsea Public School, Chelsea

685-4551

The Newton School, S. Strafford VT

765-4351

Bethel Elementary/White River Valley MS, Bethel

234-9966

RSUD – Rochester Elementary/Middle School, Rochester

767-3161

RSUD – Stockbridge Central School, Stockbridge

234-9248

Athletic Programs – Middle School

The Interscholastic Athletic Program pending sufficient student interest includes:

<u>Season</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
Fall	Soccer (7-8) Cross-Country (MS)	Soccer (7-8) Cross-Country (MS)
Winter	Basketball (el, MS)	Basketball (el, MS)
Spring	Baseball (MS) Track & Field (MS)	Track & Field (MS)

Sports Physicals:

- Physicals are required each calendar year (365 days) for every student grades 5-8 who will be playing on any middle school team. A sports physical form will be handed out at the first practice or can be obtained from the School Nurse or the Athletic Director. The form should be brought with the student to a physician for completion. A sports physical form must be on file before a student can participate in practices or competitions.
- The sports physical form should be turned into the School Nurse or Athletic Director.

Acknowledgement of Risk/ Insurance Statement/Emergency Forms:

- All forms must be turned into coaches before the completion of the first week of official practice.
- Any student with asthma must have an inhaler present at all practices and games.
- Any student with a bee allergy must have an EpiPen present for all practices and games.

Co-Curricular Activities:

- A co-curricular activity is any activity associated with a school-sponsored team, club or other organization that meets outside the regular classroom.
- Participation in co-curricular activities is a privilege and one of the participant's responsibilities is to be a representative of the First Branch Unified District. A student's behavior, conduct and citizenship should always be exemplary.

Academic Eligibility for Middle School Athletes:

The student/athlete will abide by all First Branch Unified District academic performance guidelines.

- The student will be a full-time student.
- The student must be passing ALL classes at the end of each quarter.
- If a student has below a 65 at the end of the quarter, they will become ineligible for a two week period.
- At the end of the two week period there will be a grade review. If the student's grade remains below a 65, the student will remain ineligible until progress reports.

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*When ineligible, a student may not participate in practices, games or any other co-curricular activity.

Spectator/Audience Behavior at School Functions:

A student or fan whose behavior is disruptive, dangerous or detrimental to the First Branch Unified District Community at an athletic, social or cultural event, or on a bus transporting First Branch students, shall forfeit participation in or admittance to such events, home or away.

- Distractions made to the field of play, whether by voice or artificial means, are prohibited. Artificial devices include, but are not limited to air horns, whistles, megaphones, and bells.
- Taunting actions that are intended to anger, bait, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others regardless of language are prohibited.

Failure to comply with these spectator/audience behavior rules may result in the expulsion of the offending individuals for the remainder of the contest, the sports season (home or away), or for the remainder of the school year.

Concussion Management:

If a concussion is suspected:

The athlete is immediately removed/prohibited from participating in any training session or competition until the athlete has been examined by and received written permission to participate in athletic activities from one of the following health care providers: Physician, Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, or Certified Athletic Trainer.

If it is determined that the athlete did not sustain a concussion, the health care provider must provide a written statement indicating that the athlete was examined and was not found to have sustained a concussion. The athlete may return to play in accordance with any limitations/restrictions determined by the health care provider.

If it is determined that the athlete did sustain a concussion, the following procedures must be followed:

Return to Play Protocol:

You are only allowed to begin the graduated return to play protocol when you are completely symptom free. During your recovery and when you still have symptoms, you must abide by complete physical and cognitive rest.

It is critically important to be honest with yourself regarding your symptoms as returning too soon may result in a prolonged recovery time. Only you, the athlete, will know when you are feeling ready to increase your activity level.

Gradual Return to Play Following a Concussive Injury

You must be cleared to “return to play” in accordance with this protocol by a qualified health care provider.

- This return to play plan should start only when you have been without any symptoms for 24

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hours.

- It is important to wait for 24 hours between steps because symptoms may develop several hours after completing a step.
- Do not take any pain medications while moving through this plan (no ibuprofen, aspirin, Aleve, or Tylenol).
- Make a follow up appointment with your provider if symptoms develop during this progression.
- Intensity levels: 1 = very easy; 10 = very hard.

Step 1: Aerobic conditioning - Walking, swimming, or stationary cycling.

- Intensity: 4 out of 10.
- Duration: no more than 30 minutes.
- If symptoms return, wait until you are symptom free for 24 hours then repeat Step 1.
- No symptoms for 24 hours, move to Step 2.

Step 2: Sports specific drills – skating drills in hockey, running drills in soccer/basketball.

- Intensity: 5 or 6 out of 10.
- Duration: no more than 60 minutes.
- No head impact activities. No scrimmages/potential for contact.
- If symptoms return, wait until you are symptom free for 24 hours then repeat Step 1.
- No symptoms for 24 hours, move to Step 3.

Step 3: Non-contact training drills – include more complex training drills (passing in soccer/ice hockey/basketball. Running specific pattern plays, etc).

- No head contact, or potential for body impact.
- OK to begin resistance training.
- Intensity: 7 out of 10.
- Duration: no more than 90 minutes.
- If symptoms return, wait until you are symptom free for 24 hours then repeat Step 2.
- No symptoms for 24 hours, move to Step 4.

Step 4: Full contact practice.

- Only after medical clearance.
- No intensity/duration restrictions.
- If symptoms return, wait until you are symptom free for 24 hours and repeat Step 3.
- No symptoms for 24 hours, move to Step 5.

Step 5: Full clearance for return to play.

Additional information on concussions and other head injuries, to include information on the nature and risks of concussions, the risks of premature participation in athletic activities after receiving a concussion, and the importance of obtaining a medical evaluation of a suspected concussion and receiving treatment when necessary can be found on the VPA Sports Medicine Information website at www.vpaonline.org.

Attendance Regulations

Attendance in class is an essential part of the learning process. State law requires that each child between the ages of 6 and 16 years who are residents of the district and non-resident students who enroll in the First Branch Unified District must attend school for the full number of days for which they are enrolled, unless they are mentally or physically unable to continue or are excused by the Superintendent in writing (*VT Education Law T.16 1121-1129*). Students need to be present in order to participate as well as to complete assignments. When students are absent, there is an academic consequence. We urge all students and parents to strive for excellent attendance as that will ensure maximum scholastic performance. It is recommended whenever possible to schedule routine medical appointments during scheduled school breaks and early release days. Accordingly, the following policy and procedures will be enacted:

During a semester, absenteeism (excused or unexcused) from class shall be kept to a minimum for any one semester.

Excused absences are limited to the following: illness (phone or parent note), family emergencies (phone or parent note), medical appointments (copies of doctor's documentation for medical absences to the Nurse's Office), visits to high schools (prior approval), religious holidays (parent note), absence from town (prior approval with minimum two week advance notice), court appointments (court documentation), bereavement (parent note), school sponsored field or athletic trips (advisor/coach must verify attendance), the school nurse may excuse a student for part of a day or a full day.

Absences: Parents/guardians who know their student is going to be absent from school must call the office at 685-4551 in Chelsea or 889-3310 in Tunbridge prior to 8:30 AM. Notification is required.

Documentation: All excused absence documentation must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant upon the student's return to school. Documentation may be submitted by phone, hardcopy or electronically.

Late Arrival: Students arriving to school after 8:30 AM at both schools must report to the office to be health screened and temperature checked prior to admission to class.

Tardy to School/Late to Class: Being on time and remaining for the entire school day is an essential part of being a good student. Part of our commitment as a school community is to promote and foster good students who work to the best of their ability on their educational assignments and are prepared and on time for each class and school day. If there are extenuating circumstances that lead to excess tardiness or leaving early please notify the Administrative Assistant or Principal. The official start of the school day is 8:30 AM at Chelsea and Tunbridge. Parents may optionally pick up students at 1:30 pm. Students remaining for Enrichment Time (1:30-3:00) with One Planet will be escorted by a staff member to the program. Students being picked up at 1:30 pm will be escorted by their teachers for car pick up at the front of the school.

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At 3:00 PM, Enrichment Time with One Planet will release remaining students for parent pick up at the front of the school and busses will depart for the afternoon run.

Being tardy ten times is considered the equivalent of one day absence according to Orange County – Windsor County Truancy Protocols. At any point when a student has developed a pattern of absences or is excessively tardy, the school reserves the right to access outside agency resources such as the Vermont Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Orange County Sheriff Department.

Planned and Extended Absence: A planned absence form must be completed prior to the absence of students missing one or more days from school. Forms are available in the main lobby. Parents are urged to plan family trips during school vacations/early release days so as not to interfere with education. **A maximum of five school days per academic year will be allowed for family vacations.** Vacation absences in excess of five days will be marked as unexcused absences. **The school must be notified of vacation/extended absences a minimum two week advance notice before the student is out.** Please check with your school principal for any extenuating circumstances.

Make-up work: Make-up work should be arranged with the student's teacher(s) prior to the planned or extended absence.

Early Dismissal: *See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.* Parents/guardians requesting to have a student excused early must request in writing or by phone no later than 9:00 AM of the dismissal. Students who leave school prior to 11:30 AM and not return to school will be marked as an absence.

Bus/After-School Plans: Parents/guardians requesting changes to after school plans must request in writing or by phone no later than 9:00 AM of the day of bus/after-school plans.

Cuts: Students who cut classes or leave school grounds will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Notification of Absenteeism: Parents/guardians will receive notification of accumulated absences after five days; and thereafter each additional five days of absences. Students accumulating excessive absences of eleven days or more may be subject to summer school and/or corrective action.

Concerts – Attendance: Until further notice there will be no in-building performances unless specifically directed by the district or the Supervisory Union. Students are expected to participate/perform in all school concerts. Although concert performance is not the entire focus of the classroom lessons/rehearsal activities, it is considered to be a culminating event and an important part of the course work.

Note: Until further notice there will be no field trips, assemblies, all school meetings or extra-curricular activities unless specifically directed by the district or the Supervisory Union. School related assemblies, meetings, field trips or extra-curricular activities that result in a student missing a class are not included in determining a student's minimum

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attendance record. Disciplinary action that causes a student to miss a class (i.e. suspension, in-school suspension) will be counted toward minimum attendance.

Students who join the First Branch School Communities during the school year will be allowed a pro-rated number of absences.

(WRVSU and SU District Board Policies C7 Student Attendance)

Bicycles

Students who choose to ride their bike to school must wear a helmet and secure their bike in a bicycle rack. Students are responsible for their bikes at all times.

Bullying Policy

The First Branch Unified District recognizes that all students should have a safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environment (*16 V.S.A. 570(a)*). For the purposes of this policy, “bullying” is defined as any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student or a group of students which:

1. is repeated over time.
2. is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student or employee; and either:
 - a. occurs during the day on school property, on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity; or
 - b. does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school sponsored activity but can be shown to pose a clear
 - c. and substantial interference with another student’s right to access educational programs.

Examples of bullying include:

- Name-calling and verbal taunts
- Physical threats or actual physical harm
- Off-campus text messages or social media posts that ridicule or intimidate to the extent that the target is not able to fully access the school’s programs.

In order to be bullied, incidents such as the ones described above must be repeated over time, directed at a particular student, and intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate.

Reporting Procedures

Any student who believes that s/he has been subjected to bullying or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute bullying, are strongly encouraged to report it to a teacher, school counselor, student support specialist or principal. School staff and volunteers are required to report possible incidents of

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bullying to the school counselor, student support specialist or principal as soon as practicable. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report any concerns about possible bullying of students to the school counselor, student support specialist or principal.

Consequence for violation of Bullying Policy

The principal and/or designee (i.e. school counselor, student support specialist) have the discretion to determine appropriate consequences and/or interventions for violations of the policy based upon the relevant facts and circumstances in a particular case, including but not limited to the age and maturity of the students involved; the frequency of the behavior; a student's willingness to cooperate in the investigation and correct behavior; and the student's prior disciplinary record. Disciplinary consequences may include awareness, counseling, acts of restitution, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or expulsion.

(WRVSU and SU District Board Policies C10 Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying of Students)

Bus Transportation

The First Branch Unified District shall control and regulate the transportation of students in school under its charge (*16 V.S.A. 1221 and 1222*). All students grades K-8 who are required or eligible to attend public school within the district, may be furnished with total or partial transportation due to such factors as age, health of students, distance to be traveled, conditions of the road and type of highway. School buses will operate only on publicly owned and maintained roads. School buses will operate only on bus routes established and approved by the First Branch Unified District Board of School Directors.

(WRVSU and SU District Board Policies C3 Transportation)

Bus Rules

For their safety, students while on school busses and while entering and exiting, are required to obey the directions of the driver to exhibit reasonable, quiet, and orderly conduct. Additionally, students must comply with all COVID related restrictions and understandings relative to riding the bus. Parents are responsible for supervision until all students enter the bus in the morning and after the students exit the bus at the regular stops at the close of the school day.

Examples of unacceptable student bus conduct include and is not limited to the following:

- Striking, shoving, tripping, or restraining any person on the bus.
- Hurling objects of any kind on or from the bus.
- Igniting any flame or causing smoke or noxious fumes.
- Standing or changing seats while the bus is in motion.
- Possessing or using any drug, including alcohol or tobacco.
- Causing loud noises or disturbances.
- Stealing or damaging property.

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- Disobeying the directions of the driver (or monitor).
- Violating any school rule or the Safe Schools Act.
- Hazing.

Dismissal from Bus

Riding a school bus is a privilege. Students whose conduct on a school bus is unacceptable may be denied the use of bus transportation by the Principal or designees (school counselor, student support specialist). In this event, it is the parents' responsibility to see that the student is transported to and from school. Dismissal from the bus should not be construed as dismissal from school.

Bus Breakdown – Accident/Emergency Response Policy

This policy applies to all bus contractors and companies doing business in the White River Valley Supervisory Union and its member districts. It establishes a system for reporting bus breakdowns, road conditions and accidents. All school bus and district vehicle breakdowns and accidents must be reported immediately. This includes non-collision type accidents that result in bus breakdown, any damage to the bus, injury to the bus driver, or passengers. Whenever there is a bus breakdown or accident, Emergency 911 (Fire Company, EMS, Police) shall be called by the driver/contractor as quickly as possible. The top consideration is the safety and well being of all students.

(WRVSU and SU District Board Policies F9A Bus Breakdown – Accident/Emergency Response Policy)

Cafeteria and Food Consumption

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

The First Branch Unified District shall operate a food program that makes available a school lunch as provided by the National School Lunch Act, and a school breakfast as provided in the National Child Nutrition Act to each attending student every school day (16 V.S.A. 1264).

Until further notice, students will be eating outside, in classrooms or cohort groupings and their meals will be brought to them. Students are expected to behave in an appropriate manner.

It is the responsibility of each student to help maintain a clean and appropriate environment for meals. Students are expected to clear away their own trays and waste. Students are expected to be considerate of other students and those who will follow in other lunch periods. Students who do not display proper behavior will face disciplinary consequences up to removal from the cafeteria.

Meal Charges

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The First Branch Unified District believes that a nutritious breakfast and lunch each day is essential to student productivity. Accepting a student meal charge from the cafeteria is an available option for students who do not bring their own breakfast and/or lunch money to purchase breakfast and/or lunch meal. Meal charges are permitted to ensure that students can perform optimal capacity during the school day.

Meal charges are a temporary solution to address intermittent forgetfulness on the part of a parent or student to provide or to bring money for a meal. Charges are not intended to address broader issues of a parent's inability to pay for a meal. In an effort to assist parents in budgeting for school meals, the Kitchen Manager will communicate regularly about your student(s) account(s). Alternate breakfast and/or lunch meals will be provided should charges exceed twenty-five (\$25) dollars.

Child Find

ATTENTION PARENTS OF CHILDREN BIRTH TO 5

The White River Valley Supervisory Union is interested in pre-school age children (birth-5 years) who show a developmental delay in the areas of speech/language, social adjustment, adaptive behavior, self-care, gross/fine motor coordination, and/or cognitive development **AND** any school-age handicapped children who are not currently enrolled in school. These children are entitled to receive an education, regardless of handicap, at public expense. It is possible that the White River Valley Supervisory Union may not be aware of all handicapped children who are eligible. If you know of a child living in the towns of Bethel, Chelsea, Hancock, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon, Stockbridge, Strafford, or Tunbridge who might be eligible for educational services and is not in school, please contact Donald McMahon, Director of Special Services, WRVSU, 761 Waterman Road, Royalton, VT 05068 or call (802) 763-7765.

Classroom Celebrations

Students participate in various celebrations and special event parties in cooperation with classroom teachers and parent/guardian volunteers. At this time no birthday treats will be allowed in school or shared with other students. Birthday "treats" that follow the First Branch Unified District Board's Wellness Policy are permitted for children in all grades in cooperation with the teacher. Treats are always to include one (1) per person. Invitations for parties outside of school are not permitted to be distributed at school.

(WRVSU and SU District School Board Policies C9 Wellness Policy)

Classroom Visitations

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

At First Branch Unified District, we are currently unable to welcome parents and guardians to visit the classrooms to acclimate your student(s) to their new surroundings and teachers. At the start of each day, it is important to have your child ready to begin a

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productive day at school. Teachers would like to hear from you. Please call or email to schedule an appointment with your child's teacher.

Communications

At First Branch Unified District, parents and guardians are our most important partner in the success of our students. We provide regular communications to our parents/guardians in the form of regular communications between faculty and home, newsletters, and electronic communications.

We encourage direct communication at our school. If your student may be having academic, behavioral, health, or social-emotional issues, please follow these helpful steps:

1. Discuss the issue and/or concern with the appropriate faculty member (i.e. classroom teacher, school nurse, school counselor, student support specialist, and coach) first. Please set up an appointment to discuss the issue and/or concern directly with the classroom teacher or professional support specialist.
2. If the issue and/or concern cannot be resolved by the classroom teacher or specialist, please contact the following personnel in the order listed below:
 - a. School Principal
 - b. Superintendent of Schools
 - c. First Branch Unified District Board of School Directors

Consolidated Federal Program Assurances

Communications to Parents and Community

1. Disseminate to parents an LEA and school report cards or link to the Vermont State Snapshot at <https://schoolsnapshot.vermont.gov>
2. Notify parents of students in Title I schools of their right to request information regarding any State or local education agency policy regarding student participation in any Federal, State or locally required assessments, which shall include a policy, procedure, or parental right to opt out of such assessment, where applicable.
3. Make widely available, through public means for each grade level served by the local educational agency, information on each assessment required by the State and assessments required by districtwide by the local education agency.
4. Provide parents of children in a Title I school, information on the level of achievement of their children in each of the State academic assessments.
5. Provide to parents of students in Title I schools timely notice that the student has been assigned, or has been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.
6. Provide all notices to parents in a format that is understandable and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand.

Student Handbook

7. Notify, at the beginning of each school year, parents in Title I schools of their right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers.

Copyright Materials-Resources

U.S. Copyright Law (*17 U.S.C. 101-120*) are federal laws that protect copyrighted materials. Unless specifically stated herein, or specifically stated on the materials, no copyrighted material or content may be performed, distributed, downloaded, uploaded, modified, reused, reproduced, reposted, retransmitted, disseminated, sold, published, broadcasted, circulated or otherwise used in any manner whatsoever without express written permission from the copyright owner. Any modification of the content, or any portion thereof, or use of the content for any other purpose constitutes an infringement of the copyrights and other proprietary rights.

Student violation of U.S. Copyright Law shall be disciplined in accordance with the student discipline procedures.

Custody

By state law, First Branch Unified District must have appropriate documentation to verify any change in custody of any child. The school must have paperwork to verify any change in custody of any child. Without court documents verifying custody, biological parents have access to all information on their child, and have the right to sign the child out of school. Please keep the school informed of any such changes.

Dances – Middle School

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

At this time we will not be hosting dances of any kind. First Branch Middle School students may attend any and all school dances. Visitors and guests attending school dances are required to complete permission forms prior to the dance and have identification for admittance. Students attending school dances shall comply with the school's dress code. Any specific attire to be worn for the dance will be announced in advance. Students inappropriately attired will not be admitted. Admittance more than 1 hour after the start of the dance will not be permitted, unless previously approved by the Principal. Students are expected to enter the building as soon as they arrive and should leave school grounds after the conclusion of the dance. Upon leaving the dance, a student may not re-enter the building. Responsible behavior is expected from all students and guests. The use of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or drugs is not permitted. All school rules regarding student discipline and behavior apply at dances.

Dangerous Weapons on School Property

In order to provide for a safe school environment, the First Branch Unified District bans all weapons from school property (*16 V.S.A. 1166*). A weapon is any firearm, knife or explosive device and any other weapon, instrument, or material, whether animate or inanimate, which is known to be capable of inflicting bodily harm or death.

No person shall at any time bring a dangerous weapon onto school property or harbor such weapon on school property without specific written prior approval from the Principal. Law enforcement officers as defined by *13 V.S.A. 4016* are excluded when engaged in legitimate law enforcement duties on school property.

Student violation of this policy will result in both disciplinary action and notification to law enforcement. Disciplinary action may include expulsion from school for one calendar year pursuant to *16 V.S.A. 1166 (b) (2)*. The First Branch Unified District Board of School Directors requires this policy to be printed in the School Handbook.

(WRVSU and SU District School Board Policies C 5 Student Firearms)

Directory Information

The schools comprising the White River Valley Supervisory Union (Bethel, Chelsea, Hancock, Rochester, South Royalton, Sharon, Stockbridge, Strafford and Tunbridge) have designated the following personally identifiable information as directory information under the Family Rights and Privacy Act:

- A parent's name, address and phone number
- A student's name, address, telephone number, and date of birth
- Participants in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees and awards received, including honor roll
- List of graduates
- Class lists
- Dates of attendance

Directory information may be released to members of the public and newspapers at the discretion of the school administration. Parents and guardians of students attending schools in the White River Valley Supervisory Union and students who are 18 years of age or older have the right to refuse to allow the release of any or all of this information. Photos, video, and information about school activities will be released for school use, to school and supervisory union websites, to local newspapers, and to community television. Parents, guardians, and students 18 years of age or older who do not wish to have their child or themselves included in such releases and/or do not want any or all of the above information released must notify the school in writing by **September 14, 2020**.

Discipline Procedures

The administration of First Branch Unified District implements disciplinary action pursuant to *White River Valley Supervisory Union and District School Board Policy C20 Student Conduct and Discipline* and 16 V.S.A. 1161-1162 with the following goals in mind:

- To support the efforts of faculty and staff in providing a safe, secure environment that is conducive to learning.
- To deter students from acting out or behaving in a socially unacceptable manner, helping them recognize the impact of their actions and take responsibility for those actions, thereby better preparing them for life beyond middle school.
- To identify students who have personal matters that are preventing them from fully taking part in their education and to assist them in accepting and receiving treatment/support in partnership with parents and community resources.

Behavioral Standards and Consequences

Though every situation is dealt with individually, the administration strives to administer discipline in a way that is even-handed and fair. Violations of the student disciplinary code are divided into four classes:

Level I will generally be dealt with at the classroom level through teacher initiated strategies.

Level II will generally be dealt with at the Student Support Specialist level and with support specialist initiated strategies.

Level III will generally require more severe disciplinary actions such as acts of restitution, in-school suspension, and short out-of school suspensions issued by the Principal and/or designee (Student Support Specialist).

Level IV are of an extremely serious nature and generally will warrant long term suspensions and/or expulsions by the First Branch Unified District Board of School Directors. Each Level III offense in excess of six in any school year will be considered a Level IV offense to follow the reasonable policies and rules of the school and may subject the student to discipline, up to and including expulsion.

By implementing these standards, the First Branch Unified District can provide a safe environment which is consistently maintained throughout the school by all teachers and administration. All students subject to disciplinary procedures will be afforded due process, and all disciplinary actions will conform to 16 V.S.A. 1161a (7), and 29 U.S.C. 794 (Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973), and associated policies of the *White River Valley Supervisory Union and District Board of School Directors*.

(WRVSU and SU District School Board Policy C20 Student Conduct and Discipline)

Discipline Consequences

Teacher Behavior Sanction: May be assigned by the classroom teacher to students who detract from normal classroom instruction and management (Level I category). Parents will be notified prior to the serving of the behavior sanction. The duration of teacher initiated behavior sanction after school is at the discretion of the classroom teacher, generally not to exceed an hour.

In-School Suspension: The removal of a student from regular classes by an administrator for infractions noted in Level II and Level III of the Behavior Standards table.

Short Term Out of School Suspension: The removal of a student by the Principal for a period of time not to exceed 10 school days for misconduct identified in Level III and IV of the Behavior Standards table.

Long-Term Suspension: The removal of a student from school for a period in excess of 10 school days. The Superintendent, only with the approval of the Board and in accordance to *16 V.S.A. 1162 (a)* may impose a long-term suspension for longer than 10 days for misconduct identified in Levels III and IV of the Behavior Standards table.

Expulsion: Any student may be expelled from the school by the Superintendent, as authorized by the School Board, for gross misconduct, or for neglect or refusal to conform to the reasonable rules of the school or for an act of theft, destruction, or violence, or for possession of a weapon identified in Level IV of the Behavior Standards table and in accordance with *16 V.S.A. 1162 (a) (b) and (c)*.

Student Suspension: The Superintendent or Principal/designee may suspend a student. In all cases of suspension, the student and parents will be notified of the grounds, hearing and findings, as well as the duration and place of suspension.

Student Discipline: Misconduct described in Levels II through IV may result in the suspension of a student.

Hearing: Before recommending suspension of a student longer than one day, the principal or designee will conduct at least a rudimentary hearing, which will include at least notification to the student that the alleged violation is cause for suspension, specification of the violation, and the opportunity for the student to respond. In the event the student denies wrongdoing or claims other circumstances, the principal or designee shall make further inquiry. On making an inquiry, or at parent request, the principal may schedule a formal hearing. In cases where a suspension exceeds ten (10) days a formal hearing must be conducted.

Findings: When satisfied of the facts, the principal will report the hearing, findings and recommendations to the Superintendent.

Duration: Suspensions shall be of definite duration, in most cases not to exceed ten (10) school days. The student and parent/guardian must be given notice of the charges, an explanation of the evidence against the student, an opportunity for the student to respond, and a decision in writing to the parent/guardian. Suspensions longer than 10 days may only be authorized by the Superintendent. Long-term suspensions must be preceded by notice and formal due process procedures including the opportunity for a hearing before the School Board.

Place: At the principal's discretion, the student may spend the suspension in supervised studies or away from school. This will depend on the severity and level of the misconduct.

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Manifestation Determination: A Manifestation Determination is a process, required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), which is conducted when considering the exclusion of a student with a disability that constitutes a change of placement.

In circumstances where a student's continued presence constitutes a real danger to persons, property, or proves to be a serious disruption to the educational environment, the principal or designee may, once a rudimentary hearing has been conducted, may suspend the student for up to two school days while events proceed through inquiry, findings,

recommendations, and the principal's decision. The principal will inform the parent and superintendent.

Dismissal

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

The school day ends at 1:30 or 3:00 PM in Tunbridge and Chelsea. Kindergarten is dismissed five minutes early for dismissal to busses.

For students in Grades K-8 at Chelsea:

- At 1:30 PM and at 3:00 PM dismissal, staff will escort your child to the front of school for parent pickup. Parents are to remain in their vehicles
- Students riding the bus at dismissal will be walked by faculty to the busses at the rear of the school.
- Students riding bicycles will be walked by faculty to the rear of the school where the bicycle rack is located.
- Students that have parent/guardian permission to walk home will exit school through the main doors.

FBUD Dress Codes -

The FBUD Dress Code will be updated during the 2020-2021 school year.

Chelsea

Developed by representatives of Chelsea Students and Faculty – July 2016

Students and staff believe that appropriate dress and grooming contribute to a productive learning environment. Our decisions regarding dress are based on the need to promote a climate conducive to a caring learning community that nurtures personal growth and promotes safety, security and positive attitudes. A student who is found in violation of the dress code shall be subject to disciplinary consequences. The Principal and designees (Student Support Specialist, School Counselor) shall: 1) Provide the opportunity for the student to fix the situation; 2) Call a parent/guardian to bring a change of clothing; 3) Provide different clothes.

Regulations: The following regulations shall apply:

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- T-shirts and other clothing and jewelry imprinted with words, pictures, or their insignia of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or other drugs, obscenities, violent images, sexual references, gang identification, or which advocate prejudice or harassment of religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability, are inappropriate and prohibited.
- Underwear and other undergarments may not be worn as outer garments as they are not meant to be seen.
- Hats, hoods, or other headwear may not be worn in the following areas: cafeteria during lunch; during assembly and ceremonial occasions and at staff/teacher discretion.
- Leggings and other form fitting pants are acceptable as long as they are opaque.
- Clothing that immodestly exposes chest, abdomen, midriff, and private areas are prohibited: spaghetti straps; short skirts and dresses must reach fist length; shorts must reach fist length; and straps must be at least 1" wide.
- Footwear must be worn at all times.
- Chains, studded bracelets, belts or necklaces and/or other items of dress which in the judgment of school administration pose a potential danger to persons and/or property are prohibited.

Dress – Tunbridge

Developed by past Tunbridge Administration and Faculty – August 2016

Clothing worn to school and a student's grooming are matters that are the responsibility of that student and his/her parents. Footwear is required at all times. We require two pairs of shoes, for indoor and outdoor wear, from November 1st until May 1st. We request that students dress and groom themselves focusing on hygiene and appropriate attire. Specifically, dress must be safe for the activity in which the student is involved (example: sneakers for gym), clean, and must not create a disruption to class routine or objectives. Should a student's dress not meet these standards, the school reserves the right to:

1. Call a parent to bring a change of clothing.
2. Send the student home to change.
3. Provide different clothes.

Shorts and skirts may be worn to school in a manner that is consistent with the student dress procedure. Specific rules regarding shorts and skirts are:

1. Shorts and skirts must be longer than the end of the fingers on the extended arm;
2. Spandex shorts (biking shorts) as undergarments only;
3. No ragged or hole-filled cut-offs. Clothing that advertises or advocates alcohol, drugs or sexual harassment is not permitted.

See-through or revealing clothes such as tank or halter tops (straps must be at least the width of a dollar bill), tops that expose a bare midriff, or visible undergarment, are

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prohibited. Hats are prohibited inside the school building, with the exception of a “school sponsored” Hat Day (a student council event that generates food for the local food shelf).

Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Free Environment

The First Branch Unified District, *16 V.S.A. 140*, and *16 V.S.A 1165* recognizes that the use, possession or transfer of prohibited substances such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or drug paraphernalia is illegal, poses a threat to the health and safety of individuals, and that rehabilitation through counseling has been successful in dealing with this issue.

The First Branch Unified District will not tolerate the possession, solicitation, use, or transfer of alcohol, tobacco or prohibited drugs, real or counterfeit, or drug paraphernalia at any time on school district property, or at any school approved activity, or in any school vehicle while such vehicle is being used to transport students to or from school, or to or from any school approved activity.

Any student who has consumed or used alcohol, tobacco or drugs on or off school district property and is found to be on school district property, or at any school approved activity, shall immediately be reported to school administration or a designated school person in charge.

Any student who violates this policy shall have the substance confiscated and held accountable for violations of this policy. In addition, the student may be referred to educational programming, counseling, and/or referral to outside agencies that provide substance abuse prevention services at the expense of the parents and or guardians. Reports will be made to DCF, the police and Superintendent of Schools.

Any student who violates this policy a second time is subject to suspension from school, a referral to a treatment program at the expense of the parents/guardians, reported to the police, and Superintendent of Schools. Further offenses will result in a long term suspension (more than 10 days) and a recommendation to the Superintendent for possible expulsion.

(WRVSU and SU District Policies B7 Tobacco Prohibition; C2 Student Alcohol and Drugs)

Emergency Response/Drills

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

In order to ensure the safety and well being of our students, the First Branch Unified District works in cooperation with local and state agencies and authorities in maintaining up-to-date emergency response plans and procedures. A school safety plan is required by the Vermont Board of Education (*Rule 4101*). In addition, the First Branch Unified District is required by state law to conduct eight (8) drills each school year. The drills enable faculty, staff, students, and local first responders to practice the procedures in the possible event of an emergency.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Teacher Qualifications:

First Branch Unified District seeks to employ fully qualified educators who hold an appropriate and current Vermont License from the Vermont Agency of Education. Unfortunately, due to the shortage of fully qualified educational professionals in many fields, this is not always possible. When it is not possible to have fully qualified personnel, the First Branch Unified District seeks to employ the most highly qualified candidate by applying to the Agency of Education for a waiver from licensing requirements. The waiver requires that the individual works to meet the requirements for licensure and is for two-year duration.

Parents have the right to know the professional qualifications of any teacher serving their children and whether that person has a Vermont License. Such requests should be submitted in writing to the building principal. Further, the parent of any student in the First Branch Unified District who is taught for more than four weeks by any classroom

teacher who is not fully qualified will receive written notification of this situation from the school.

Right to Constitutionally Protected Prayer & Religious Beliefs and Practices:

Neither the First Branch Unified District nor the **White River Valley Supervisory Union** has any policy or practice that restricts participation in constitutionally protected prayer. The school is neutral in matters of religion and neither directs students regarding what religious beliefs they should hold nor interferes with religious beliefs and practices which are not disruptive and do not violate the rights of others. Religious groups or clubs may utilize the school on the same basis as non-religious groups and clubs.

Provision of Information to Military Recruiters:

As required by federal law, the First Branch Unified District will, upon request, provide any military recruiters from the United States Armed Services with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of students in grades nine through twelve. A parent, however, does have the right to have this information withheld from military recruiters, if, *and only if*, he or she submits a written request that his or her child's name not be provided to recruiters.

Student Victims of Violent Offense at School:

The First Branch Unified District strives to keep all children safe and preclude violence at school. Under federal law, any student who has been a victim of a violent criminal offense on the grounds of any public school has the right to transfer to another school within the "Local Education Agency." For the First Branch Unified District, the Local Education Agency is the **White River Valley Supervisory Union** which includes the following schools: Bethel Elementary School, White River Valley Middle School, White River Valley High School, Rochester School, The Newton School, Sharon Elementary School, Stockbridge Central, Tunbridge Central School, and Chelsea Public School.

Schoolwide Program Authority:

The First Branch Unified District receives funding from the Consolidated Federal Programs grant as a “schoolwide” program. This status permits the First Branch Unified District to consolidate funds from the grant and those from other federal, state, and local sources to build programs that are directed at benefiting the whole school population.

Having a school-wide plan, the school is *not* restricted in the application CFP grant monies by the particular “title” (a section of the law) of the federal statute under which the grant funds are authorized, but, rather, can use the funds from *any* title for *any* activity which is permitted by *any* title of the law.

The use of the CFP funds by the First Branch Unified District is governed by its written “school-wide plan” which is available for public review and input.

Field Trips

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

School sponsored or school approved field trips require parental permission. Funding for such excursions is incurred by classroom budget, class budget, or by the participant. Students are not to accept rides or drive or ride in private vehicles on field trips. Students are responsible for all missed work while out on a field trip. Parents and guardians who wish to chaperone a school sponsored or school approved field trip will require a criminal background check. Please check with a school administrative assistant for forms.

Friends of Chelsea

The Friends of Chelsea is a volunteer organization that provides parents/guardians and community members with the opportunity to become involved in Chelsea Public School. The purpose of the organization is to sponsor and support various school activities that require fund-raising and volunteer work.

Tunbridge School Club

The purpose of the school club is to provide funds for extracurricular activities that the local budget is unable to cover. School Club provides many opportunities for parents, teachers and community members to connect with one another, share ideas and plan activities. We welcome volunteers of all interests and abilities. Skills such as organization management, bookkeeping, fundraising, event planning, public relations, cooking, are helpful.

Grading – Middle School

FBUD is moving towards a proficiency based assessment system and a narrative reporting format in the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Report cards are issued three times per year at the end of each trimester. Progress reports are reported to parents/guardians mid-way through each trimester. Parents are given a username and password to access Web2School Parent Portal to regularly check progress of their students. In June, all report cards are mailed home. For the 2020-2021 school year we will be moving towards a proficiency based assessment system

Harassment

The First Branch Unified District is committed to providing a safe and supportive school environment in which all students are treated with respect. The purpose of this policy is to prevent harassment as defined in *16 V.S.A. 11 26(a)* and amended by Act 91 of 2004, and to ensure that the school's responses to allegations of harassment comply with *16 V.S.A. 565* as amended by Act 91 of 2004, Title VI and IX of the Civil Rights Act.

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 member's actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability that

has the effect of interfering with a student's performance at school, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment in which to work or learn.

Sexual harassment includes a wide range of behaviors, from the actual coercion of sexual relations to unwelcome offensive comments, jokes and innuendo, other sexually oriented statements and unwelcome advances emphasizing sexual identity. Sexual harassment may be indirect and even unintentional.

Retaliation against a student who makes a complaint about sexual or other harassment is prohibited by state and federal law. Such retaliation is a form of harassment and will be handled in the same manner as other forms of harassment.

Unlawful harassment of any sort is a violation of First Branch Unified District Policy and both state and federal law prohibit it.

Harassment Complaint Procedure

1. Students who have reason to believe that an incident of harassment occurred shall report such incident to any coach, teacher, school nurse, school counselor, student support specialist or principal. The report may be made orally or in writing.
2. The principal and/or designee (i.e. school counselor, student support specialist) shall conduct a timely, impartial, thorough and comprehensive investigation of the alleged harassment.
4. The principal and/or designee (i.e. school counselor, student support specialist) shall prepare a written report summarizing the investigation and recommending disposition of the complaint. Copies of the confidential report shall be provided to the complainant, the

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accused and others directly involved, as appropriate. A confirmed report of harassment may be reported to law enforcement officials, and other agencies as appropriate.

5. If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of harassment, the principal shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action, as circumstances warrant, subject to *WRVSU and SU District Board Policies C10 Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying of Students*.

(WRVSU and SU District Board Policies C10 Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying of Students)

Hazing

It is the policy of the First Branch Unified District, and as set forth in *16 V.S.A. 140 (a) – 140(d)*, that no student or employee of the school shall participate in or be members of any organization that is affiliated with the school or to a school activity; which is intended to have the effect of, or reasonably be expected to have the effect of humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student. No student organization or any person associated with any organization sanctioned by the school board shall engage or participate in hazing.

Hazing Complaint Procedure

1. Students who have reason to believe that an incident of hazing occurred shall report such belief to any coach, teacher, school nurse, school counselor, student support specialist or principal. The report may be made orally or in writing.
2. The principal and/or designee (i.e. school counselor, student support specialist) shall conduct a timely, impartial, thorough and comprehensive investigation of the alleged hazing.
4. The principal and/or designee (i.e. school counselor, student support specialist) shall prepare a written report summarizing the investigation and recommending disposition of the complaint. Copies of the confidential report shall be provided to the complainant, the accused and others directly involved, as appropriate. A confirmed report of hazing will be reported to law enforcement officials.
5. If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of hazing, the principal shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action, as circumstances warrant, subject to *WRVSU and SU District Board Policies C10 Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying of Students*.

(WRVSU and SU District Board Policies C10 Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying of Students)

Health Services

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

All students are able to access health services as needed. Parents or guardians with questions may contact the school nurse at 685-4551 X 131 - Chelsea and 889-3310 X 2021 - Tunbridge.

Emergency Medical Plans: Any student who has a potentially life threatening allergy or medical condition should have a yearly updated emergency plan in place in the health office and or be evaluated for a 504 plan. Parents should contact the school nurse for details and questions. <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/16/031/01387>

HealthHUB and Ronald McDonald Care Mobile (RMCM): Medical Providers and the Dental hygienist are available to see students at both the Tunbridge and Chelsea campuses through HealthHUB.

The medical providers are available for well child visits, sports physicals and immunizations. Appointments can be made by calling 802-763-7575. The dental hygienist will provide preventive care and cleaning for students and adults. Appointments can be made by calling 802-431-6060.

For further information, please go to: <http://www.healthhubvt.org>

RMCM can provide restorative care and dental supervision to referred students at both schools.

Health Screenings: Following the guidelines set forth by the VT Agency of Education, screenings will be done for vision and hearing. The school nurse may use her discretion to do screenings of height and weight on a case by case basis. Parents/guardians/teachers may request additional screenings if they are concerned about their child's hearing or vision.

Illness: Students should not come to school if ill. Students attending school will be expected to fulfill all the requirements of the day, including outdoor recess and P.E. (except in the case of documented physical injury and a developed alternative plan with the school nurse).

All students should be nausea/vomiting free (off medicine) for 24 hours prior to returning to school. Students who have had fevers will need to be documented to be Covid Free and be 24 hours fever-free off any analgesic medication. Students who become seriously ill or injured in school will be sent home as soon as a guardian/parent or emergency contact can be notified. Please be sure the school has all updated emergency contact information.

Students out of school longer than three (3) consecutive days will need to provide a Health Care Provider note related to the illness or injury. Please contact the school nurse or the principal with any questions or concerns.

Immunizations: All students are required to be in compliance with Vermont state immunization requirements. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure the school health office receives all needed information. (18 V.S.A.121-1123) Please refer to the following link for the Vermont Recommended Child and Teen Vaccination Schedule (8/2017 last update):

https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/ID_IZ_CCP_vt_schedule_kids.pdf

Pediculosis (Head Lice): Head lice have not been found to spread disease and are considered a nuisance. If parents/guardians discover head lice or nits in a child's hair they should notify the school nurse ASAP so school actions can be put in place to contain any spread of head lice. Parents will need to be diligent in keeping the students head free of nits. Students may return to school after documentation of treatment and/or communication with the school nurse. If the issue is discovered at school, parents will be notified of the situation so they can take the necessary precautions at home. All individual student information will be kept confidential.

<https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/schools.html>

Student Medications: For the health and safety of all, student medications must be kept in the health office unless a specific contract (for emergency medications for certain medical conditions) has been created with the school nurse. The first dose of any medication needs to be given at home. Subsequent school doses must be reviewed by the school nurse prior to being given. Paperwork will need to be signed by the parent/guardian and MD for any prescription medications to be administered at school.

Non-prescription medication also requires a specific parent release indicating use. Please refer to WRVSU Board Policy C30.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BIwjqBZ7ZgK8-Q0wViUZUSj_rAO56WudShXhBVBZROc/edit#

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/16/031/01387>

Toileting: All students are expected to be toilet trained prior to entering Kindergarten. If a medical condition delays or impedes toilet training, the nurse should have a note from a medical doctor providing a diagnosis and management plan. Parents/guardians are responsible for supplying diapers/pull-ups and a daily change of clothes for the student. The nurse has minimal supplies to cover emergency situations only.

Homeless Students

The White River Valley Supervisory Union is interested in locating homeless children and youth. These children and youth are entitled to receive an education and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in our schools. If you know any child considered homeless in the area who is not enrolled in school, please contact Charlie Watson, Parent Liaison, WRVSU, 461 Waterman Road, Royalton, VT 05068 or call (802) 763-8840, ext 114.

Homework

Homework will be sent home with elementary students. By taking an active interest and encouraging your child to complete their work, you are helping him/her feel the satisfaction of being prepared for school the next day. Please encourage your child to work in the afternoon or early evening before he/she becomes tired or frustrated.

Middle school students who are absent from school are responsible to request any missed assignments, quizzes, exams from all classroom teachers. Students and parents should also check for classroom assignments through Web2School portal. Students/parents are encouraged to check with the classroom teacher to review their specific procedures for make-up work.

Library Media Information

The First Branch Unified District has school libraries that are filled with books, magazines and newspaper subscriptions. The libraries also contain audio, e-book, and video collections. Interlibrary loans are available and shared through the Vermont Automated Library System, a consortium including all public, school, and college libraries in the state. Please contact Karen Fitzgerald – Chelsea at 684-4551, ext. 126 or Elaine Howe – Tunbridge at 889-3310, ext. 2022 for more information.

Lockers – Middle School

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

All middle school students are assigned lockers. Students receive locker assignments on the first day of school. Students who desire a combination lock, may inquire with the Head of Maintenance.

Lockers are the property of the First Branch Unified District, and as such, the school reserves the right to access lockers to collect books and assignments, to clean or repair damaged lockers, to conduct general investigations or search individual lockers.

Messages and Phone Calls

At First Branch Unified District, we value the quality of the learning environment of our students. Please keep messages and phone calls and electronic communications to a minimum. The use of office personnel to deliver messages to students diverts time and resources away from education. For this reason, we will ask that this privilege be used only when necessary, not as a convenience. Office phones are for business purposes only.

Teacher Support

First Branch Unified District encourages elementary and middle school students to seek support from their teachers. This support, when arranged with the teacher in advance, is available before or after-school.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The First Branch Unified District does not discriminate in policies and practices on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, or marital status. Inquiries concerning application of these standards may be referred to the Principal at Chelsea, 6 School Street, Chelsea, VT 05038, (802)685-4551 or the Principal at Tunbridge, 523 VT 110, Tunbridge, VT 05077, (802)889-3310.

Grievance Procedure for Title IX, Title VI, Section 504:

The following procedures covering Title IX, Title VI, and Section 504 is to be used:

1. The complainant will present his/her grievance in written form to the school principal. The school principal will promptly conduct an investigation. A written response to the grievance will be made within 15 calendar days from the filing of the complaint unless special circumstances are present and warrant documentation.
2. If not satisfied with the resolution at Step 1, the complainant may appeal to the Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days. The Superintendent will promptly conduct an investigation. A written response to the appeal will be made within 15 calendar days from the filing of the complaint unless special circumstances are present and warrant documentation.

(WRVSU and SU District Policies B5 Preventing and Responding to Unlawful Harassment of Employees, Students, and Third Parties)

Parent Involvement

It is the policy of the White River Valley Supervisory Union and its member school districts to encourage and support the involvement of family members in their children's education.

(WRVSU and SU District Policies E31 Parental Involvement)

Policies

The First Branch Unified District operates under a set of guidelines set forth as policy by the elected members of the First Branch Unified Board of School Directors. The school administration is charged with implementing and enforcing policies.

Selected policies are identified and quoted in this handbook. Complete copies of WRVSU policies are available at the White River Valley Supervisory Union Office or at their website under "School Boards" Adopted Policies.

Public Display of Affection – Middle School

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

Students must social distance a minimum of six feet apart for students ages 10 and above. Public Display of Affection is limited to holding hands. Improper student conduct will result in disciplinary consequences. First offense: verbal warning. Second offense: written warning and communication to parents or guardians. Third offense: Behavior Modification plan.

Pupil Privacy Rights

In compliance with federal requirements under the Protection Rights Act (PPRA) provides parents with notice of specific parental rights of request with regard to the following:

1. Policy on the rights of parents upon request to inspect any survey created by a third party (a survey funded by a non-U.S. Department of Education source). If the third party survey involves questions related to political affiliations, mental or psychological problems, sexual behavior and attitudes, illegal or antisocial behavior, critical appraisals of family members, income, or privileged relationships such as doctors or lawyers, parents may opt their children out of its administration. This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure, or use of student information for marketing purposes.
2. Secondary schools are to provide, upon request from military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers. Parents may request in writing that their child's name not be on the list.

Policies and procedures are available at all schools in the White River Valley Supervisory Union or at the Supervisory Union Office, 461 Waterman Road, Royalton, VT 05068.

(WRVSU and SU District Policies C8 Pupil Privacy Rights)

Recess

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

Students are outside daily for recess unless the temperature and/or wind chill factor is below ten (10) degrees or if it is raining. The school encourages students to wear boots, warm jackets, mittens/gloves, hats and snow pants. Elementary students will need to have snow pants and jackets, hats, gloves and boots for recess. There are two adults responsible for the supervision of students during recess.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect children whose health and welfare may be jeopardized by abuse or neglect and to ensure that school district employees meet their legal reporting obligations under 33 VSA 4913. It is further the purpose of this policy to make clear to school district employees that it is not their role to be investigator, judge and jury in cases of suspected abuse or neglect. Rather it is the role of the school district employees to be faithful and timely reporters of suspected abuse or neglect so that allegations can be brought to the attention of objective, trained and experienced investigators.

General Policy

All school district employees are “mandated reporters,” and shall report suspected child abuse or neglect to DCF. The building principal, school counselor, school nurse, or student support specialist can assist school employees in making the report. If the building principal or designee is the person suspected of child abuse, the report shall be made to the superintendent of schools. Any school district employee who is a “mandated reporter,” in addition to reporting such suspected abuse or neglect to the principal, principal’s designee, or superintendent, shall immediately report the suspected abuse or neglect to the VT Department for Children and Families (DCF). Upon receiving a report, the principal, principal’s designee, or the superintendent shall remind the reporter of his or her legal responsibility to further report immediately to DCF.

Definitions

“Mandated Reporter” means a school principal, school teacher, school counselor, school librarian, school nurse, and other school personnel.

“Immediately” means as soon as the abuse or neglect is suspected but in no case later than 24 hours after such abuse or neglect is suspected.

“Report” means an oral and/or written description of the suspected abuse or neglect. If the report is made orally, the reporter should make a written notation of when and to whom the report was made. A copy of this notation shall be submitted to the principal. A report to DCF shall contain the following:

1. The name and address of the reporter;
2. The name and address, if known, of the child and the child’s parents or other persons responsible for the child’s care;
3. The age of the child;
4. The nature and extent of the child’s injuries together with any evidence of previous abuse or neglect of the child or the child’s siblings.
5. Any other information the reporter believes might be helpful.

“Abused or neglected child” means a child under the age of eighteen whose physical or mental health or welfare is harmed or threatened with harm by the acts or omissions of the child’s parents or other individual who may be responsible for the child’s welfare (e.g guardian, foster parent, stepparent, teacher, etc.) or in the case of sexual abuse, any individual. Harm can be caused by the actual infliction of harm, by allowing such harm to occur, by failing to provide the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter or health care, or by abandonment of the child.

“Sexual abuse” means any act by a person involving sexual molestation or exploitation of a child. Sexual abuse also includes the aiding, abetting, counseling, hiring, or procuring of a child to perform or participate in any photograph, motion picture, exhibition, show representation, or other presentation which, in whole or in part, depicts sexual conduct, sexual excitement or sadomasochistic abuse involving a child. Sexual abuse may also be sexual harassment. However, following the school district’s policy on sexual harassment does not fulfill the mandatory reporter’s legal responsibility under the SRS reporting law. Suspected sexual abuse must be reported to SRS.

Responsive Classroom and Conscious Discipline

The First Branch Unified District is working toward *Conscious Discipline* and *The Responsive Classroom*. *The Responsive Classroom* is a research- and evidence-based approach to elementary education that leads to greater teaching effectiveness, higher student achievement and improved school climate. Students learn and practice a specific set of skills including cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. Components of the *Responsive Classroom* include morning meeting, rules and logical consequences, apology of actions, guided discovery, academic choice, classroom organization, and reaching out to parents/guardians as educational partners.

The seven principles of *The Responsive Classroom* are as follows:

1. The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
2. How children learn is as important as what they learn.
3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. There is a specific set of skills that children learn and practice in order to be successful academically and socially.
5. Knowing the children we teach is as important as knowing the content we teach.
6. Knowing the families of the children we teach is important as knowing the children we teach.
7. How the grown-ups at school work together is as important as our individual competence.

What is Conscious Discipline?

Created by Dr. Becky Bailey, an internationally renowned expert in child developmental psychology, Conscious Discipline® is built on the premise of developing discipline *within* children rather than applying discipline *to* them.

The Conscious Discipline process applies equally to parents, child care givers, educators, and patient caregivers. It can be pictured as a pyramid with four stages:

- **Understand the brain states**

Discover how to use the latest brain research to break out of the instinctive habit of disciplining children the same way you were disciplined as a child. You'll also be able to help children progress from physical or verbal aggression to calm self-regulation, freeing them to make better choices and empathize with others.

- **Learn your seven powers as adults**

Among these powers is your ability to see discipline as an opportunity to teach rather than a disruption... and to stay in control of your own actions, creating a safe environment for your children. Consider: an adult who is out of control is perceived by a child as a threat to his or her safety. As part of this stage, you'll learn how to self-regulate your own emotions and actions.

- **Discover new ways to connect members of your family, classroom, or team**
Building stronger connections in your family, classroom, or team will increase their willingness to solve problems together rather than fight against each other.

Many parents and teachers are delighted to find that attention seeking behaviors in children are automatically reduced at this stage, which isn't surprising since most people crave connection more than attention.

- **Use the seven skills of discipline to respond to events in new ways**

If you've ever struggled to keep a child focused on an idea or task, you'll be delighted to find that changing your own responses can help children boost their learning skills.

Your new ways of responding will also help children develop kindness and self-respect, honor those different from themselves, solve problems with compassion, and grow into responsible adults.

School Board Information

For the 2020-2021 school year, the First Branch Unified District Board of School Directors meet once per month during the school year. Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:30 PM alternating between the two schools (held in-person and virtually). Any special meetings, changes in meetings, or meeting time adjustments are warned in accordance with Vermont state statute. Meetings are open to the public. If you wish to speak at a meeting, or have a topic discussed, please contact the school principal or superintendent the week before the meeting.

School Cancellations, Delays, Emergency Closings

School cancellations, delays, and emergency closing will be broadcast through TV Station WCAX/Vermont Association of Broadcasters. Notification will also be provided through the schools Blackboard Connect Phone Notification System to all parents/guardians, faculty and staff. Decisions regarding the closing or delayed opening of schools will be made by 5:45 AM.

Emergency closings or early dismissal are those times when students may have to be transported home before the regularly scheduled dismissal time. The above mentioned (Blackboard Connect, TV Station WCAX/Vermont Association of Broadcasters) will serve as means of notification of an emergency closing. When possible, every effort will be made to provide parent/guardians with early notification of such a closing. Delayed openings may be up to two (2) hours in the event of inclement weather. Students would be attending their normal schedule of classes following the delayed opening schedule.

(WRVSU and SU District Policies F31Emergency Closings)

School Property

The First Branch Unified District and the residents of Chelsea and Tunbridge take pride in maintaining and investing in the school's facilities and equipment. Damage to equipment or facilities should be reported to the office immediately. Writing or otherwise marking on walls, furniture or other equipment is not expected, and will not be condoned. There will be disciplinary consequences for this type of offense and restitution will be required.

Textbooks are furnished free of charge for student use and must be kept covered at all times. Students will be held financially responsible for books lost, destroyed, or damaged.

Financial responsibility for the replacement of materials, repair or replacement of equipment resulting from the use, either authorized or unauthorized, misuse or damage by a student shall belong to the student's parent/guardian or to the adult student.

Search and Seizure Procedure

Searches of School Property

The school retains the right to examine its property at any time. School property includes, but is not limited to, desks, lockers, textbooks, computers, and other materials or supplies.

Student lockers are school property, however students are expected to assume full security of their lockers and the District will not be responsible for the loss, theft or damage of any personal effects stored in a school locker. Material or items loaned by the school to students remain the property of the school, and may be opened and inspected by school administration at any time without student consent and without a warrant.

Search and Seizure of Student and Student Property

Students are permitted to park on school grounds as a matter of privilege, not of right. The school retains the authority to conduct routine patrols of student parking lots and inspections of the exterior of student automobiles on school property. Searches of students' persons, personal effects and vehicles may be conducted where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting at the time of initiating the search that the search will reveal evidence of a violation of law or of school rules.

The superintendent shall develop procedures to ensure that all searches and seizures of students and student property are conducted in a manner that complies with state and federal constitutional protections against unreasonable searches and seizures of students and student property in schools.

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

(WRVSU and SU District Policies C21 Search of Students and Seizure of Property by School Personnel)

Restrictive Behavioral Intervention

It is the policy of the White River Valley Supervisory Union and its member districts that students not be subjected to inappropriate restraint or seclusion as defined by Vermont State Board of Education Rule 4500. It is the intent to create and maintain a positive and safe learning environment, and promote positive behavioral interventions and support in district schools.

(WRVSU and SU District Policies C34 Use of Restraint and Seclusion)

Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act 1973)

In compliance with Section 504 Act of 1973, the White River Valley Supervisory Union provides this notice to all employees, beneficiaries, and the citizens who reside in the member towns of Bethel, Chelsea, Hancock, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon, Stockbridge, Strafford, and Tunbridge.

1. White River Valley Supervisory Union is responsible for identifying, evaluation and affording access to appropriate educational services if a student is 504 eligible.
1. White River Valley Supervisory and member districts do not discriminate against otherwise qualified handicapped individuals in admission and/or access to education or employment in its programs and activities.
2. Any individual with a complaint or concern regarding White River Valley Supervisory Union's compliance with Section 504 may seek a resolution through Don McMahon, Director of Special Services, WRVSU, 461 Waterman Road, Royalton, VT 05068 or call (802) 763-7765.

Snacks

All students will be provided with a daily snack time. Please send a healthy snack that follows the Wellness Policy to school with your child. Caffeinated beverages, energy drinks, sports drinks, and candy are not permitted.

Student Records

ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS OF PARENTS AND ELIGIBLE STUDENTS CONCERNING EDUCATION RECORDS

TO: All parents of students, and to eligible students* currently attending school in the White River Valley Supervisory Union and its member districts:

1. As a parent of a student enrolled in a school in a member district of the White River Valley Supervisory Union, or as an eligible student, you have the following rights with respect to your child's (or, if an eligible student, your own) education records:
 - a. To seek amendment of the student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's

Student Handbook

- privacy rights
 - b. To provide consent prior to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the law allows disclosure without your consent.
 - c. To file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of law with respect to your rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). A complaint may be made in writing to the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 4512 Switzer Building, Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.
2. The procedure for exercising your right to inspect and review educational records is available at the White River Valley Supervisory Union office and each member school site.
 3. The procedure for seeking amendment of educational records is available at the White River Valley Supervisory Union office and at each member school site.
 4. The supervisory union and its member school districts have a policy of disclosing educational records to school officials with a legitimate educational interest without prior consent. A "school official with legitimate educational interest" is defined as follows: any teacher, administrator, other professional or service provider employed by or contracted with the district to provide educationally-related services (including, but not limited to, consultants, attorneys, auditors, insurers, evaluators, support staff, substitutes, assigned student teachers, interns, volunteers, teacher's aides), or a school board member who needs information relating to a particular student in order to carry out his/her official duties for the district.
 5. The supervisory union and its member districts forward education records to other agencies or institutions that have requested records in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

This Annual Notification of Rights is only a summary of rights. Your right to inspect and review education records, and the school district's duty to have your written consent prior to disclosure of personally identifiable information, are subject to limitations. Further details are contained in the school district's detailed student record policy and procedures, and in state and federal law.

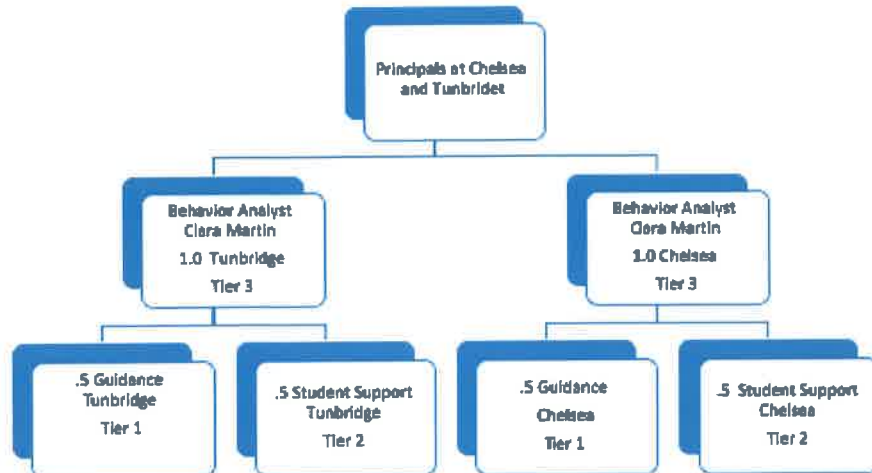
***You are an eligible student if you are at least 18 years of age or are attending an institution of post-secondary education.**

Student Support Systems

The First Branch Unified District Student Support System is based on the MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) that is used statewide for academic and social/emotional support. The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a framework

that helps educators provide academic and behavioral strategies for students with various needs.

- **Key Components** - Instead of the “waiting for failure” assessment model, MTSS takes a proactive approach to identifying students with academic or social/emotional needs. Early assessment and intervention for these students can help them catch up with their peers sooner. The key components of MTSS include:
 - Universal screening of all students early in the school year
 - Tiers of interventions that can be amplified in response to levels of need
 - Ongoing data collection and continual assessment
 - Schoolwide approach to expectations and supports
 - Parent involvement
- **Universal or primary – Majority of students (80-90% of students)**
 - As the largest tier, and the foundation for the entire framework, Tier 1 encompasses the entire school with core instructions and basic interventions. This structure helps to build positive relationships between staff and students. It includes proactive classroom management strategies aimed at creating a supportive atmosphere. Students who do not respond to these interventions may need more targeted/Tier 2 supports.
- **Targeted– Small groups of students (10-15% of students)**
 - Some students need additional prescribed supports in meeting academic and social/emotional goals, and it is in Tier 2 that these individuals receive that help. Often these interventions and supports are delivered in small group settings, such as reading groups. Check-In/Check-Out (CICO) interventions are often a part of Tier 2, as well. This targeted support allows students to work toward catching up with their peers.
- **Intensive – Individual students (< 10%)**
 - A subset of students has significant challenges that do not respond to the interventions and supports in Tier 1 or Tier 2. Tier 3 gives these students individualized supports and can include assistance from outside agencies such as behavioral counselors or family therapists.
- Below is the new MTSS structure for Student Support.



FBUD School Counselor, Universal

The school counseling program focuses on encouraging the positive and individual development of each student. The school counselor provides classroom counseling services as well as individual and group support with the goal of increasing the student's social, emotional, and behavioral skills. Parent/Guardian approval is required prior to any ongoing individual session.

FBUD Student Support Specialist, Targeted

The school student support specialist works with students to ensure the school's behavior expectations are met. When a student is struggling with their behavior, a plan is created that helps the student learn what is expected. Students often need reminders and struggle with school rules. The student support specialist serves as an opportunity for the student to improve and make positive choices. Parents/guardians will be informed of misconduct in writing and/or by phone call.

Clara Martin Center (CMC) Behavior Analyst, Intensive

The CMC behavior analyst at each school works with a targeted set of students (8-10 students) at each school to design and to provide social and emotional interventions. When a student needs intensive support, a Functional Behavior Assessment is created based on Applied Behavior Analysis Principles (ABA). The behavior analyst at each school provides the student strategies and support to overcome social and emotional barriers. Parent/Guardian approval is required prior to services starting.

Educational Support Team (EST)

The First Branch Unified District uses a variety of supports and services to help meet the needs of all children. These supports and systems make up our Educational Support Team (EST). Students are referred to the EST through school staff and/or parents/guardians who feel a student needs extra support to be successful at school. The EST is responsible for gathering information about the student who has been referred.

If a parent/guardian is concerned about their child they may:

- Contact the students teacher to discuss their concerns
- Set up a meeting with staff to discuss their concerns
- Contact the EST Coordinator (Student Support Specialist) to discuss what to do with their concerns
- Complete an EST referral

Technology - Responsible Use Agreement for Students White River Valley Supervisory Union

Purpose

The Technology Vision in the WRVSU is that technology shall be effectively employed to create student learners who possess the critical skills and proficiencies to compete and participate successfully in a global society.

Success in education, employment, and civic involvement increasingly demands the ability to effectively use technology. The intent of this RUA is to provide a framework to allow us to use technology, as well as the resources to which it gives access, to effectively pursue this vision.

These guidelines for careful use of equipment and responsible access to online resources apply within the school as well as at home.

Rules for Use

Access to the school's information technology resources will be provided to students who agree to abide by these guidelines and act in a considerate and responsible manner. Parents and students must indicate their agreement by signing at the end of this document before being allowed to use devices or to access network resources.

Devices and Network Infrastructure

The use of school electronic resources by students, staff, or others is a privilege, not a right. The school's computer and network resources, hardware, software, and infrastructure are the property of the school. Use of these can be denied if rules are violated.

Online Resources

The schools provide access to the Internet primarily for educational purposes. Students are allowed to use our networks to access online resources. The availability of these resources, however, does not imply endorsement of content nor the accuracy of information that may be accessed. The schools shall not be responsible for the content of information retrieved via the Internet.

Each school employs "web content filters" that are effective at blocking most of the objectionable content on the Internet. However, it is possible that objectionable content can get through.

Student Handbook

It is not acceptable for students to access sites or download content that is inappropriate. Some examples include, but are not limited to, sites with content that is:

- Defamatory or disrespectful
- Lewd, Vulgar, or Profane
- Threatening
- Harassing or Discriminatory
- Bullying
- Pornographic
- Terroristic
- Illegal
- Disruptive to the educational process to school operations or any school activity

Students are not to use computers to access online content in areas where there is no adult supervision. Should students accidentally access inappropriate sites or content they should immediately report this to the supervising adult.

Privacy

Students shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, receive or display on or over the school's computers or network resources, including personal files. The school reserves the right to monitor and track network access or deny access to prevent unauthorized, inappropriate or illegal activity. Student email and files may be searched at any time. Consistent with the Code of Conduct or Discipline Policy, the school may administer appropriate disciplinary action for misuse of its electronic equipment and resources. The district will cooperate to the extent legally required with local, state and federal officials in any investigation concerning or related to the misuse of the school's Internet connection, devices, or network.

To help protect personal privacy, students should not post personal contact information about themselves or other people.

Also, students in grades where they have unique passwords should be sure to use secure passwords and should never share their passwords with other students.

Respect

Students are prohibited from making use of any school devices or services to bully or harass others. They also must avoid offensive or inflammatory communication, including hate content.

Students should not access the accounts of other users or attempt in any way to impersonate others. Should a student encounter a situation where another user has inadvertently left themselves signed in they should report the situation to an adult and sign the user out. Students should not attempt to impersonate others.

Students should not make unauthorized access to devices, networks, or resources.

Students are to cite the source of content taken from the Internet or other electronic sources. They are also expected not to use technology to copy class work inappropriately.

Student Handbook

Food and drink should never be near computers or other electronic devices. Students should never intentionally damage any school equipment. If such intentional damage occurs, users will be held responsible for the cost of repair or replacement, according to the school's Code of Conduct or Disciplinary Policy.

Accidental damage to school equipment should be reported promptly to technology staff, teacher, or a designated adult who works for the school. Decisions about user responsibility for costs of repair or replacement will include consideration of what a student could have done to prevent the damage.

Students should never attempt to gain unauthorized access to school-owned or inappropriate resources. Damage and problems must be reported to Technology Support Staff or designated school staff members.

Students and parents should not attempt to tamper with, disassemble, or physically service any school-owned device. Damage or problems must be reported to Technology Support Staff or designated school staff members.

School resources may not be used for commercial or political activities, other than those that are approved as part of a classroom or school activity. They also must not be used to reproduce or illegally distribute copyrighted materials or to distribute unwanted messages (spam).

Students are not permitted to make or attempt to make changes to the operating system or other "low level" portions of devices. They may not perform actions such as, but not limited to, installing software that is intended to bypass security measures or web content filtering.

Social Networking

"Social networking" refers to the use of electronic devices to communicate with other individuals. It includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, personal email accounts, instant messaging ("texting"), and blogs.

There may be instances in which social networking sites or technologies are used by teachers as a tool to enhance the curriculum. Students should not be using devices for purposes of "social networking" during class times with the exception of instances where teachers have allowed this as part of their curriculum.

Any use by students of school devices, school accounts, or school networks to access social media during class times should be for educational purposes only.

Just as at school, students outside of school should not engage in negative behaviors, such as harassment or bullying.

Student Handbook

Consequences

Violations of the above guidelines are to be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct or Discipline Policy.

Consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- personal phone having to be turned in at the beginning of each school day and picked up at the end of the day
- only being allowed to use devices in certain classes or for (a) specific project(s)
- having to pay for repairs
- having to do volunteer work
- loss of permission to bring a personal device from home to school
- loss of permission to bring a school device home
- loss of permission to sign on to a device without an adult present
- loss of device use entirely
- other discipline as outlined in the school code of conduct

Technology – 1:1 Take Home Programs White River Valley Supervisory Union

The purpose of the 1 to 1 Program is to provide enhanced and extended learning opportunities, both at school and at home. Eligible students will be allowed to bring devices home for educational uses. Devices are to be turned in for summer vacation and, if requested by Technology Staff, for checks and/or servicing.

All of the above guidelines apply at all times, both on and off campus. Random checks of devices to ensure compliance may be performed at any time.

In addition to the guidelines found earlier in this document in regards to care of equipment and access of online resources, the following specifics apply for school-owned devices that students are allowed to bring home.

It is expected that students will have their devices available for school classes whenever needed, so they should not be left at home on a school day. Devices should come to school fully charged. In the case of most devices a full charge will get them through the entire day, especially if screens are dimmed a bit. Because of this it may be possible for students to leave chargers at home. If chargers are transported with devices it is vital that students do so in a way that will protect the screen from damage.

Students shall not loan their devices to other students.

Internet usage on devices may or may not be filtered when outside of school, but parents/guardians should be aware that it is their responsibility to make sure that the student device is used appropriately when away from the building.

Technology – Bring Your Own Device Program (BYOD)

White River Valley Supervisory Union

Philosophy:

Our community believes that electronic devices are valuable resources to support and enrich the curriculum and school community. The benefits of these devices outweigh the potential disadvantages for students. It is the philosophy of our school community to teach and model responsible device and resource use in a developmentally appropriate manner. The community feels acceptable use of technology lies in behavior, not technology. However, care should be taken that technology is not used to the detriment of face-to-face social interaction.

Parameters of Use:

Beginning in grade 6 when allowed by the school, students may possess and use personal digital devices (including smartphones, tablets, and laptop computers) at the following times:

- during lunch (i.e. middle school last 15 minutes).
- in the learning block (with teacher's permission).
- during classes when such devices may be used as appropriate tools as directed by the teacher and with the teacher's permission.

Privilege of Use:

By default, students automatically have the privilege to possess and use personal devices as outlined above. The loss of this privilege can result from neglecting responsibilities.

In order to be allowed to use personal devices students should:

- maintain an acceptable effort level in class
- exhibit acceptable behavior during the school day
- show respect for others and never use personal devices to proliferate bullying or harassing behaviors
- Avoid using personal devices in an inappropriate manner, such as, but not limited to:
 - taking photos without permission
 - copying academic material/plagiarizing
 - playing offensive music, videos, or games
 - viewing inappropriate content
 - using other students devices without permission
 - other behaviors included in the guidelines above

Loss of this privilege and its duration, based on the above criteria, will be determined by the principal, their designee, or a team that may include a teacher or teachers, or Technology Support staff member. Loss of privilege due to neglect of a student's responsibilities, as stated above, will be handled through the school's current disciplinary

protocol. The cause and duration of loss of privileges as a result of disciplinary action will be clearly stated in the discipline notice.

Loss of the privilege will result in a mandatory surrender of all personal devices at the start of the school day. During a loss of privilege, the team may determine that students are permitted to access school-owned devices, for academic purposes only, during any class period (with the exclusion of study hall and lunch), under supervision of a teacher or paraprofessional. Students caught with personal devices while on restriction may face further disciplinary action.

Students who choose to bring their own devices to school do so at their own risk. The school does not take responsibility for lost or damaged items. Students are encouraged to safeguard their devices at all times.

The school reserves the right to inspect devices (school-owned or personal) upon suspicion of misuse or abuse. Students have no expectation of privacy for their personal devices once they bring them on campus or use them in any way connected with other

students or the school itself. Devices may be confiscated, searched, or turned over to proper authorities.

Transcripts and Records

Parents/guardians and students requesting a transcript or copy of records should contact the school counselor.

Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Students

This policy is designed to provide direction for administrators, staff, students, and parents to address issues that may arise concerning the needs of transgender and gender nonconforming students. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, and 9 VSA 4502 protect all students from sex discrimination, including transgender students and students who do not conform to traditional gender stereotypes.

It is the policy of the White River Valley Supervisory Union and its member school districts to provide a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment for all students, regardless of perceived or actual sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

(WRVSU and SU District Policies C28 Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Students)

Visitors

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

No outside visitors, volunteers or parents are permitted to enter the school.

Parents and community members are welcome to visit our school and take part in the programs and events that we offer. Parents wishing to visit a teacher or a class are requested to make prior arrangements with the teacher through the principal.

Students/families who are interested in visiting or attending First Branch Unified District Schools are requested to schedule an appointment with the school counselors.

All visitors must sign-in and sign-out with the Administrative Assistant and must have a visitor identification badge while in school facilities.

Volunteer Opportunities

See Safe and Healthy Reopening of School - Students 2020-2021.

No outside visitors, volunteers or parents are permitted to enter the school.

The First Branch Unified District encourages parents and other community members to become active participants in the education process by volunteering. Some ways you may assist include: tutoring, reading, organizing special activities, chaperoning field trips or serving periodically on various committees. Please contact your student(s) teachers or the school on how you can become involved at the school. Volunteer opportunities will require background checks.

Appendix – Behavior Management Levels

Level I

Level I Offenses usually involve minor misbehavior on the part of the student which impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. These misbehaviors can usually be handled by an individual staff member but may sometimes require the intervention of other school support personnel.

Student Offense	Procedural Responses	Disciplinary Options
Classroom disturbance Classroom tardiness Cheating and lying Abusive/obscene language Improper behavior in hallways Non-defiant failure to comprehend assignments or carry out directions. Failure to follow reasonable rules of the school. Bullying	<p>There is immediate intervention by the staff member who is supervising the student or who observed the misbehavior</p> <p>Repeated misbehavior requires that contact be established with the parent(s). A conference with the parent may be arranged. Involvement of the school counselor, student support specialist and/or administrator is appropriate.</p> <p>A proper and accurate record of the offense and disciplinary action is maintained by the staff member.</p>	Verbal reprimand Special assignment Behavior contract Withdrawal of privileges Teacher Behavior Sanction Parental contact Conference with Parents

Level II

Level II misbehaviors are behaviors whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate of the school. The infractions generally require the intervention of other school support personnel and administration. Also, included in this level are misbehaviors which do not represent a direct threat to the health and safety of others but whose educational consequences are serious enough to require corrective action on the part of administrative personnel.

Student Offense	Procedural Responses	Disciplinary Options
Continuation of unmodified/repeated Level I misbehaviors. Disruptive classroom behavior School tardiness, unauthorized presence in a restricted area, or absence from one's assigned area (i.e. cutting class). Failure to sign in/out of one's assigned area. Misuse of a pass Use of electronics in an unauthorized area. Defiant failure to carry out a staff member's instruction. Violation of dress code policy. Use of forged notes or excuses. Refusal to identify oneself to a staff person. Disrespectful behavior toward others. Harassment/Sexual Harassment/Bullying Intentional pushing/shoving of others. Failure to follow the reasonable rules of the school.	<p>The student is referred to the Student Support Specialist and/or administrator for appropriate disciplinary action.</p> <p>The Student Support Specialist and/or administrator meets with the student and/or teacher and affects the most appropriate responses.</p> <p>The teacher is informed of the Student Support Specialist and/or administrator's action.</p> <p>A proper and accurate record of the offenses and the disciplinary action is maintained by the Student Support Specialist and/or administrator.</p> <p>A parental contact must be made.</p>	Behavior Modification/Plan In-school suspension Any of the preceding disciplinary options under Level I.

Level III

Level III are acts directed against persons or property but whose consequences do not seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school (or at any school approved activity). These acts may be considered criminal but most frequently can be handled by the disciplinary options in the school. Corrective measures which the school should undertake, however, depend on the extent of the school's resources for remediating the situation in the best interests of all students.

Student Offense	Procedural Responses	Disciplinary Options
Possession of stolen property. Failure to follow the reasonable rules. Repeated unexcused absences. Stealing Fighting (simple) Threats to others Use of obscene or threatening language towards others. Possession of tobacco Smoking Repeated absence from one's assigned class (i.e. cutting class) Gross misconduct Harassment/Sexual Harassment/Bullying Failure to follow administrator's instruction. Unmodified/repeated Level II Offenses. Vandalism (minor)	<p>The administrator initiates disciplinary action by investigating the infraction and conferring with staff on the extent of the consequences.</p> <p>The administrator meets with the student and confers with the parent about the student's misconduct and the resulting disciplinary action.</p> <p>A proper and accurate record of offenses and disciplinary actions is maintained by the administrator.</p> <p>There is restitution of property and damages.</p>	In-school suspension. Out-of-school suspension – short term (1-10 days). Long term out-of-school suspension (greater than 10 days at the discretion of the Superintendent). Imposition of conditions for readmission. Any of the preceding disciplinary options under Levels I and II.

Level IV

Level IV are acts which result in violence to another's person or property or which pose a direct threat to the safety of others in the school (or at any school approved activity). These acts are usually criminal and are so serious that they may require administrative actions which result in immediate removal of the student from school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities and/or action by the Superintendent and First Branch Unified Board of School Directors. Vermont school authorities are obligated to report clearly established criminal offenses to law enforcement authorities.

Student Offense	Procedural Responses	Disciplinary Options
Unmodified/repeated Level III misconducts. Bomb threat Possession/use/transfer of dangerous weapons. Assault/battery Sale of stolen property Arson Use of fireworks Driving to endanger Flagrant or continued gross misconduct Extortion Flagrant or continued failure to follow the reasonable rules of the school. Any unlawful act or criminal offense not previously stated. Possession of alcohol, drugs and drug paraphernalia. Under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages on school property or at school sponsored events (internal possession) Transfer or sale of alcohol and/or drugs. Harassment/Sexual Harassment/Bullying.	<p>The administrator verifies the offense, confers with the staff involved, and meets with the student.</p> <p>The student is immediately removed from the school environment. Parents are notified. Law enforcement officials are contacted.</p> <p>A complete and accurate report is submitted to the Superintendent for Board action.</p> <p>The student is given a full due process hearing before the Board.</p>	<p>Short term (1-10 days) out of school suspension.</p> <p>Long term out of school suspension (greater than 10 days at the discretion of Superintendent).</p> <p>180 school day co-curricular suspension.</p> <p>Expulsion</p> <p>Other Board action which results in appropriate placement.</p> <p>Any of the preceding disciplinary options under Levels I-III.</p> <p>Imposition of conditions for readmission.</p> <p>Long term out of school suspension (less than 180 days) by School Board.</p>

Acknowledgment Form

September 2020

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians:

To ensure that parents and students are fully informed regarding the contents of the First Branch Unified District Handbook, we require that both the student and a parent/guardian sign and return this tear-off sheet. These signatures indicate that parent/guardian and student have together reviewed the policies and procedures contained herein. Thank you for your assistance with this and if you have any questions please contact the school principal. Please return this sheet within the first week of school.

I have reviewed the handbook with my student and I/we understand that he/she is expected to comply with the reasonable rules and policies outlined within.

Parent/Guardian Signature Date: _____

I have reviewed the handbook with my parents/guardians and understand that I am expected to comply with the reasonable rules and policies outlined within.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

As a parent or guardian of this student, I understand that computer and internet access at First Branch Unified District is for educational purposes only and violations will result in access being restricted and possible cost reimbursement.