

SHRSD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2023-2024 School Year



**The mission of the SHRSD Public Elementary School community
is to prepare all students to be capable, contributing participants in a changing world.**

Administration & Staff of the SHRSD Public Elementary Schools

Mr. Anthony Suozzo, Superintendent

Mr. David Miller & Ms. Wanda Quiñones, Principals

Ms. Jane-Ellen Lennon, Director of Curriculum, Assessment & Instruction

Mr. Andrew Harris, District Business Administrator

Mr. James Nesmeth, Director of Special Services

Ms. Melissa Cortina & Ms. Jaime Doran, Counselors

Ms. Kimberly Berls & Ms. Spring Pittore, Nurses

Ms. Kathy Fabiano & Ms. Heather Towle, Executive Secretaries

Ms. Jarlyn Suero, Bilingual Secretary/District Translator

SCHOOL HOURS

- Regular School Day: 8:25am to 3:10pm
- Delayed Opening Day: 10:25am – 3:10pm
- Early Dismissal Day: 8:25am – 12:50pm

TARDINESS

It is necessary that a student be in attendance throughout the entire school day to benefit fully from the educational program of the district. In line with compulsory attendance laws, all students are expected to be on time for school.

- a) Children who are tardy must first stop at the office with their parent/guardian to receive a pass to enter class late.
- b) Please be aware that chronic tardiness cannot be permitted. The Attendance Officer will notify the Chief School Administrator when a student has repeated incidents of tardiness, so that the Chief School Administrator may take appropriate measures to rectify the situation.

LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DISMISSAL

Regular arrival time at school is between 8:05am and 8:25am. Arrivals after 8:30am will be marked late.

Late arrivals and requests for early dismissal should be kept to a minimum. Please make every effort to schedule appointments when they will not interfere with school. All requests must be in writing and should include the student's name, teacher, date, time and reason. Parents should report to the office to sign for the arrival or release of the student.

Regular dismissal time is at 3:10pm. For the safety of your child, parents are strongly encouraged to pick up their children promptly at that time.

ATTENDANCE

It is important that students be present each day that school is in session in order to maintain a high standard of achievement. These are the steps to follow when a student is absent:

- a) On the day of the absence, the parent/guardian will phone the Main Office by 8:30am.
- b) An automated call will go out by 9:30am informing the parent of their child's absence.

DELAYED OPENING

If serious weather conditions force us to close the school, notice of such closing will be announced by our **School Messenger Emergency Call System** and posted on our website/social media.

Lunch will be provided when we have delayed openings.

EARLY CLOSING

Should we have to close school while in session, you will be notified through our **School Messenger Emergency Call System** and posted on our website/social media.

Upper grade students may be dismissed to the address we have on file in our Oncourse data system. Please make sure your child knows how to reach that destination and have an emergency plan in place should school close early and you are not available. Younger children's families should arrange for someone to pick them up immediately.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In order to best serve you and your child during an emergency, we **MUST** have updated contact information for our on-line Oncourse system.

If any of your contact information changes, please remember to contact the Main Office immediately so that we may update your data on file.

VISITS

All visitors must be admitted to the school by pressing the buzzer located on the front door. For security reasons, all outside doors are kept locked while school is in session. Please report to the office, sign in upon entering and receive a visitor pass. All visitors must sign in indicating the time of entry, their name, and the reason for the visit. When the visit is over, they must sign out indicating the time of exit. As a professional courtesy, we ask that all visitors schedule an appointment with the teacher prior to their arrival. Visitor badges must be worn at all times while in the building.

WHAT TO DO IF...

- you have a problem or question: Call the Main Office or email the teacher.
- you want to meet with a teacher: Call the Main Office or email the teacher.
- you want homework assignments for an ill child: Call the Main Office by 9:00 am for that day's assignments or email the teacher.
- you have an emergency message for your child: Call the Main Office.
- your child forgets something at home: Bring it to the Main Office.
- your child loses something: Check the Lost & Found outside the APR.
- you change your address, email or telephone number: Please notify the Main Office immediately so we may update this information in our Oncourse system.
- you plan to move to another district: Call the Main Office.

APPEARANCE

At all times, students should be neat, clean, and dressed appropriately for school. Appropriate dress is defined as that which is safe and not disruptive to learning. Students have physical education twice a week and are outside for recess. Proper clothing and footwear are required for these activities.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Effective discipline defines how to prevent misbehavior from occurring (Restorative Justice), what to do when it does occur (action), and how to handle students who chronically break the rules (resolution). We consider all aspects of the educational environment when dealing with discipline issues. What are the 4 key values of the restorative justice program?

The definition of restorative justice cited in the Key Terms of this Module, includes a range of key values, such as 'voluntary' participation, 'truthful' speaking, the creation of a 'safe and respectful' environment, a positive commitment to 'repair' and a concern to 'clarify accountability for harms'.

The key to a good plan for discipline are good expectations and consequences organized from sound principles. Good principles provide guidelines for behavior. Principles are reasons for individual expectations. Enforceable expectations should be consistent with these sound principles:

- *Be respectful *Be courteous *Try your best at all times
- *Treat others as you wish to be treated *Be honest *Be prepared

CODE OF CONDUCT

General Rules

- Follow all directions
- Show respect for others and their property
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Use appropriate language – profanity is forbidden
- Always use good manners
- Move about the building in a quiet and orderly fashion
- Respect and care for school property
- Leave items which interfere with learning, including electronic items and collector cards at home

Lunchroom Rules

- Display acceptable table manners
- Act respectfully and courteously toward peers and adults
- Clean up tray, table area and floor around you
- Use an inside (quiet) voice
- Patience is expected while waiting your turn
- Refrain from bringing glass containers or carbonated beverages

Playground Rules

- Stay in assigned areas
- Play fairly and share
- Use equipment appropriately and safely

POSSIBLE SCHOOL RESPONSES

School responses to violations of behavioral expectations are listed below:

1) Admonishment / Reprimand

- a. A school staff member in authority may admonish or reprimand a student's unacceptable conduct and warn the student that additional misconduct may warrant a more severe penalty.

2) Temporary Removal from Classroom

- a. The classroom teacher may direct the student to report to the office of the administrator in charge of student discipline.
- b. The teacher will complete a form that indicates the student's name and the conduct that has caused the student's removal from the teacher's classroom.
- c. The administrator in charge of discipline will interview the student and determine which, if any, additional consequences shall be imposed.

Possible School Responses (cont'd)

3) Meeting Between School Administration and Parent

- a. The student's parent may be required to attend a meeting with the principal or designee and the student to discuss the student's conduct and to ensure the parent and the student understand school rules and expectations.

4) Deprivation of Privileges

- a. Students may be deprived privileges as disciplinary sanctions when designated to maintain the order and integrity of the school environment. These privileges may include, but are not limited to:
 - i. moving freely about the school building;
 - ii. participation in co-curricular or inter-scholastic activities;
 - iii. attendance at a school related social or sports activity;
 - iv. participation in a graduation ceremony;
 - v. transportation to and from school on a school bus (if applicable);
 - vi. any other privilege the building principal or designee determines may be appropriate and consistent with Policy and Regulation 5600 and N.J.A.C 6A:16-7.1 et seq.

5) Detention

- a. A student may be required to report before or after the school day to detention. The teacher, the principal or designee may assign this detention.
- b. Transportation to detention before school or to the home once after-school detention has concluded will be the responsibility of the parent.
- c. A student may be excused from detention only for an unavoidable commitment previously made. Any such excused detention must be made up on an alternate day.

6) Grade Adjustment

- a. A student who has cheated on a test or assignment, plagiarized material, falsified sources, refused to submit assignments or otherwise indulged in academic dishonesty or negligence may suffer a reduced grade by virtue of the disqualified work. In no other instance may a student's grade be lowered as a direct penalty for misconduct.

7) In-School Suspension

- a. If the school operates an in-school suspension program, a student may be removed from his/her regular classes and required to report to the in-school suspension program.
- b. In-school suspension will not be imposed without the due process procedures set forth in Policy and Regulation 5610.

8) Suspension from School

- a. A student may be denied the right to attend school for a period of time pursuant to N.J.S.A 18A:37-2, N.J.A.C 6A:16-7.2 and 6A:16-7.3 as well as Policy 5610.
- b. Suspension from school will be imposed without the due process procedures set forth in Policy and Regulation 5610.

9) Expulsion

- a. The Board may expel a general education student from school, pursuant to N.J.S.A 18A:37-2, N.J.A.C 6A:16-7.4, and Policy 5620.
- b. Expulsion is an extremely serious disciplinary measure and will not be imposed without the due process set forth in Policy and Regulation 5610 as well as Policy 5620.

Possible responses do not necessarily have to be sequential and will ultimately be determined by the school administration or designee. Should an incident occur on school property that falls under the jurisdiction of the local law enforcement agency, administration may be required to contact that agency.

HOMEWORK

The Board of Education acknowledges the educational validity of homework as an adjunct to and extension of the instructional program of the school. Briefly, the policy recommends daily homework assignments as follows:

- Kindergarten.....Not to exceed 10 minutes
- First Grade.....Not to exceed 10 minutes
- Second Grade.....Not to exceed 20 minutes
- Third Grade.....Not to exceed 30 minutes
- Fourth Grade.....Not to exceed 40 minutes
- Fifth Grade.....Not to exceed 50 minutes
- Sixth Grade.....Not to exceed 60 minutes

Long-term projects and reading assignments should not be construed as daily homework.

We recommend the following to parents:

- Provide a quiet, well-lighted place for your students to study. A desk is ideal, but a corner of the kitchen table is fine too.
- Establish a regular homework time in your home. During this time, there should be no electronics or other distractions.
- Make sure that your student has the “tools of the trade”: sharpened pencils, papers, and an age appropriate dictionary.

- Be sure that you understand the teacher's homework expectations. Opportunities are available to discuss these expectations at back to school night, teacher conferences, phone calls and informal notes. Take advantage of these opportunities.
- Encourage and support your child's efforts. Be available for questions but remember...practice makes perfect. Your child will learn the best when the work is his/her own.
- When your child is absent for only one day, please do not contact the school for the homework assignment. Your child will be allowed time to make up missing schoolwork / homework upon his/her return to school.

COMPUTERS

Although the potential exists for student exposure to inappropriate or illegal materials via the Internet, the district has purchased numerous safeguards to block that material. Students never use the Internet without a teacher present and supervising. Please review and acknowledge the Internet Use Agreement and 1:1 Device Agreement located in the OnCourse Connect parent portal and review our linked Board Policy which can be found on our District website in the Technology section

(<https://www.shrsd.org/district/technology>). The agreements will be valid for the current school year.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Charged lunches **MUST** be paid for the following day. Breakfast is served from 7:55-8:15am in the cafeteria. Late students will be offered a breakfast upon arrival which will be eaten in their classroom. Milk is included as part of both these meals. Additional milk, water or other beverages are available for purchase during lunch.

The Food Advisory Committee meets as needed to review the program and offer recommendations. This committee is comprised of students, staff and parents.

LOST AND FOUND

Please remember to label clothing and lunch boxes to avoid confusion.

SCHOOL SPIRIT DAYS

School spirit is an integral part of the learning environment in the Lambertville Public School. Student Council members meet regularly to suggest, discuss and decide upon “special event” days.

SAFETY PATROL

Through this work, safety patrols learn to assume responsibilities and assist the other children to play safely. Being a safety patrol member establishes good traits not only for safety but also for building character, citizenship, respect for property and the rights of others.

INSURANCE

Student insurance coverage for accidental injury or death is not provided by the South Hunterdon Regional School District Board of Education and therefore should be secured through each family’s own life, health, and accident insurance.

PARKING LOT

When dropping off children, please pull all the way up to the end of the driveway so as not to block incoming cars. Please do not park or leave a car in the driveway. This is a fire lane only. In the event of an emergency, rescue vehicles would not be able to attend to the needs of our children if this lane is blocked. There is a designated area for vehicles of school personnel. No parking or standing is permitted in these areas during school hours. ****NEVER LEAVE CARS RUNNING.**

SMOKING AND VAPING

As per state law, please refrain from smoking or vaping anywhere on school premises.

PARTIES

Celebrations are held for Halloween, winter holidays, Valentine's Day and the end of the school year. We respectfully request that unless every child in the class is invited to a party outside of school, invitations should not be handed out in school.

PRESCHOOL SERVICES

SHRSD offers an integrated preschool program. Enrollment is based on a lottery system. You may call the Main office to have your child's name placed on a waiting list. For special education needs, the Child Study Team conducts free evaluations for any child 3-5 years of age who is a resident of the district and who might have a developmental delay or potential learning disability. Parents having concerns about their child's development should complete a Child Study Team Request for Evaluation form in order to determine if special education services will be needed. If you have or know a preschool aged child who will be 3 years of age or older during the school year, and may need special services, please contact the SHRSD Child Study Team Coordinator for further information: (609) 397-1311.

TECH / SMART DEVICES

Personal tech devices/gadgets should not be used at any time during the school day, as defined as the time period from arrival until dismissal. They may not be taken to lunch or recess and must remain "turned off" in the backpack if brought to school. If tech devices/gadgets are used during school time, they will be confiscated. If you need to contact your child while they are in school, please call the Main Office, (609) 397-0183. All messages will be delivered to students.

HEALTH RELATED INFORMATION

The administration of prescribed medication to a student during school hours will be permitted only when failure to take such medicine would jeopardize the health of the student, or the student would not be able to attend school if the medication were not made available to him/her during the school day. Medication means any prescription drug or prescribed over-the-counter medicine or nutritional supplement.

A written order of the prescribing physician is required for all medications, which shall include the following information:

- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Time at which medication is to be administered
- Reason for the medication

A written request of the parent giving the nurse permission for administration of medication is required. Medication must be kept in the nurse's office in the original labeled container. No medication will be accepted if it is not in the original container.

If a student needs medication on a field trip, the child's parent or nurse will administer it.

If your child is not allowed to go outdoors at recess time for medical reasons, a doctor's note is required.

If your child is to be excused from gym, a doctor's note is required.

It is important to have written communication of any changes in your child's health on file. Please inform the school nurse of any operations, injuries, communicable disease, etc. You may email the school nurse at kimberly.berls@shrsd.org.

Parents should be certain that a child is in good health before coming to school. Attendance during illness may be harmful to the child and expose other children to possible infection. Please do not send your child to school if you are doubtful of his/her physical well-being.

Children who have a fever, diarrhea, or are vomiting should rest at home for 24 hours before returning to school. We ask for your complete cooperation in this matter.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be notified and asked to transport your child home. If the nurse is unable to contact you, she will call the emergency contacts you have included in your Oncourse Parent Portal or have notified the main office about.

HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

The Board of Education requires students of this district to submit health examinations:

- To protect the school from the spread of communicable disease.
- To insure that the student's participation, health, safety and physical education courses meet his/her individual needs.

- To insure that the learning potential of each child is not lessened by remedial physical disability.

Each student attending school for the first time and each student transferring into this district shall present evidence of a physical examination. Students enrolled in PreK, Kindergarten, 2nd and 4th grades shall submit a physical examination performed by their own primary physician.

Vision screenings and audiometer testing will be conducted on students in grades K through 6. Scoliosis screenings will be done every other year after the age of 10. Scoliosis is a condition in which there are one or more curvatures of the spine. If discovered early, it may be treated conservatively to prevent further impairment.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The Board of Education has developed a policy regarding substance abuse for the benefit of the individual student, for the welfare of the school in general, and with the concern for our society. The Board acknowledges the assistance of interested and knowledgeable members of our community including representatives from the Hunterdon Medical Center, National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Hunterdon Drug Awareness Program and law enforcement personnel in the development of this policy. The Board recognizes that drugs and alcohol interfere with the education process, and so it is the philosophy and policy of the Board to prevent and control the use/abuse of alcohol and other drugs on or in school facilities and at all times when the students are under the jurisdiction of the school.

The Board recognizes that it must proceed according to code and statute that provides for legal action to be taken to those who possess, sell, distribute, or misuse alcohol and other drugs.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

The board of education believes that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Therefore, the school district will not tolerate acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

The board of education expects all students to treat each other with civility and respect and not to engage in behavior that is disruptive or violent. The board expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their level of maturity, with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, for school

personnel, for the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The standards of character education are an essential component of the District's Code of Conduct. The board believes that with the appropriate infusion of character education into the school curriculum, modeling of appropriate behavior by adults; support and assistance of students in school, the community and home; our students will achieve the above standards of character education.

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" is defined as any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus, or off school grounds, in accordance with law, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students, and that:

- a) A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
- b) Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or
- c) Creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with the student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

"Electronic communication" means a communication that is transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager.

To view this policy in its entirety, please visit our district website at:

http://www.shrsd.org/for_parents/anti_bullying

Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying



Bullying Vs. Normal Conflict

The following behaviors may be inappropriate and should be addressed, but alone are not considered bullying:

- Arguments with peers
- Changing peer groups/relationships
- Differences in personality/opinion
- Refusing to be friends with someone
- Teasing each other
- Being bossy
- Rivalry
- “Mean moments”-an isolated incident in which someone’s feelings may have gotten hurt but efforts are made by the other child/student to apologize and resolve the situation

What is the law?

Under New Jersey law, “Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying” (HIB) means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act or any electronic communication, whether it is a single incident or a series of incidents that:

- a. Is reasonably perceived as being motivated by either an actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or
- b. By any other distinguishing characteristic; and that
- c. Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupils; and that
- d. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil’s property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
- e. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils; or
- f. Creates a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with a pupil’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.



HOW ARE BULLYING ALLEGATIONS HANDLED?

Lambertville Public School prides itself on being a safe and caring environment for all learners. If there is a suspected act of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB) the following procedures are followed:

1. In a situation where a staff member or parent witnesses an act of HIB, he/she should first take the appropriate actions to stop the behavior.
2. The individual who witnesses or learns of an alleged act of HIB is required to make a verbal report to the Principal or Anti-Bullying Specialist the same day.
3. A written report is completed and submitted to the Principal within 2 days of the verbal report.
4. Following the written report, an investigation is conducted and all parents of students involved are notified.
5. The investigation is completed within 10 school days, and all parties are notified of the outcome of the investigation.
6. Appropriate intervention and remedial services are provided for all students involved as decided by school administration.

*For more detailed information regarding our district's Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying policy please visit:

www.shrsd.org

Melissa Cortina- Anti-Bullying Specialist

Wanda Quinones-Principal

What are we doing to address and prevent bullying in our school?

-We have a School Safety Team in place comprised of an administrator, staff members, and parents to develop, foster and maintain a positive school climate

-We have a character education program in place which promotes positive peer interactions, emphasizes conflict resolution skills, and teaches students how to effectively handle a situation in which bullying is witnessed or suspected.

-We have school-wide programs and initiatives aimed at promoting kindness, responsibility, and acceptance among all students including:

Week of Respect

Red Ribbon Week

Random Acts of Kindness Week

Classroom guidance lessons at all grade levels

Group counseling focusing on social skills, managing emotions, positive behavior, etc.

Character education emphasized and incorporated into the curriculum by teachers within their individual classrooms.



AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

South Hunterdon Regional School District takes Affirmative Action steps necessary to provide equal employment/harassment free environment for its employees and educational opportunity for all its students regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender, religion, disability, or, socio-economic status. The school system's Affirmative Action plans for employment/contract practices and school/classroom practices are on file within our district. Staff development is available to community members upon request. Please call the school office to obtain dates for in-service and/or to contact the Affirmative Action Officer.