

# Maple Street School

## Family Handbook

### 2023-2024

*The Maple Street School (“Maple Street” or the “School”) Family Handbook (the “Handbook”) is published and distributed to members of the Maple Street community for the purpose of providing information on aspects of student and campus life to help students and families gain as much as possible from their experience at the school. Students, parents, faculty, administration, and staff should all read and be familiar with the contents of the Handbook, so that each member of the community knows and understands our community expectations. Please understand that no set of rules or guidelines can cover every conceivable situation that might arise at a school. While policies in this Handbook will generally apply, the school may take actions that it determines to be in the best interests of the School, its faculty, and its students. This Handbook does not limit the authority of the School to alter, interpret, and implement its rules, policies, and procedures, before, during, and after the school year. This Handbook is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to create, nor does it create, a contract or part of a contract in any way, including, but not limited to, between Maple Street and any parent, guardian, or student affiliated with or attending the School. Maple Street may add, revise, and/or delete School policies before, during, and after the school year.*



Dear Parents and Students of Maple Street School,

A warm welcome to all new and returning families as we celebrate Maple Street School's 25th year of operation in beautiful Manchester, Vermont. Please take a moment as a family to sit down and peruse the following pages together. Our goal is that this "Family Handbook" will serve as a helpful explanation of the principles and practices of our school.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me at [dskoglund@maplestreetsschool.com](mailto:dskoglund@maplestreetsschool.com) or call me at (802) 362-7137.

The staff, faculty and I are very much looking forward to another great year of learning and growth at Maple Street.

Go Moose!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Skoglund'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dan Skoglund  
Head of School

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Mission**

The Maple Street School Mission Statement was reviewed extensively during the 2016-2017 academic year based on input from students, faculty, parents, and members of our Board of Trustees. After much discussion, we made subtle changes to the School's Mission Statement. These changes honored the strong sentiments of the previous Mission while also providing a narrower focus on who we are, what we do, and what we seek to instill in our graduates. The following Mission Statement was approved by the faculty and the Board of Trustees in July of 2017:

*Maple Street School is a joyful academic community that cultivates personal and social responsibility. We nurture intellectual and creative growth through an engaging curriculum. Our culture of respect inspires confident learners.*

From recess to academics, our Mission drives what we do here on a daily basis. As we focus on the educational and social emotional outcomes we look for in a Maple Street student we reflect on our curriculum, our teaching, and our goals for the next 20 years. We all agree that Maple Street is a special place – to be a student, to be a parent, and to be a staff member – and this Mission Statement emphasizes the kindness, curiosity, and inspiration that we see in our community day in and day out.

### *Core Values*

After much thought and discussion, the School adopted “Community, Respect, and Responsibility” as the three key words from our Mission that encapsulate our Core Values. Throughout the 2023-2024 academic year we will continue to explore the meaning behind these words and how these concepts apply to the lives of our students both here on campus and also outside of the school day.

### *Core Beliefs*

The following statements also apply to a wide variety of important beliefs that we hold dear for all our students:

- We value the student experience and respect each child's individual progress as a student.
- We believe that developmentally attuned classroom settings encourage effective group interaction, individual focus, and concentration. Teachers encourage each individual student to do the student's best, understand learning patterns, skillfully direct effort, and offer the support that builds confidence and self-esteem.
- We ask students to help create a dynamic learning atmosphere by supporting classmates and interacting in a thoughtful manner with students of different ages.
- We believe a strong social skills curriculum emphasizes responsibility to the group, respect for others, and cooperation.



- We are committed to developing environmental awareness and an appreciation of the natural world in order for our students to become informed, responsible stewards of the land.
- We believe the visual and performing arts are vital and that creativity in art, music, movement, and drama enhances a young student's capacity to synthesize all knowledge and concepts.
- We believe a solid physical education program promotes skill growth, a sense of teamwork, fair play, and lifelong healthy body awareness.
- We believe community service through age-appropriate outreach activities is viewed as both a contribution to the school environment and to the broader community.
- We believe that our student body should not be limited to those children whose families can afford a Maple Street education and are committed to a substantial need-based scholarship program.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Maple Street School admits qualified students of any race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any other status protected by applicable law, and extends to them all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. The School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any other status protected by applicable law in the administration of its educational, admissions, financial aid, athletic, and other policies or programs.

### **Diversity Statement**

We believe that there are many ways to understand and experience life and that these ways are shaped in part by gender, class, ethnicity, race, religion, and sexual orientation. We also believe that a diverse and inclusive community strengthens, expands, and empowers us all. By teaching young students to appreciate and respond to differences, we are preparing them for the complex and multicultural world in which we live. By exploring similarities and differences, by examining stereotypes, and by acknowledging the range of perspectives that comprise any truth, we create a learning environment that validates each student, promotes community, and provides an honest framework for understanding the world. Within the school day, our faculty regularly seek ways to make each student feel welcome and to share with all students the beauty of a diverse planet by promoting the following classroom practices:

- Celebrating the connections we make through our similarities
- Honoring our differences
- Debating intelligently
- Honoring different perspectives
- Learning throughout our lives
- Promoting curiosity
- Studying different cultures, family traditions, and celebrations
- Asking questions
- Sharing authentic experiences

- Self-reflecting
- Problem-solving
- Moving beyond our apprehensions, to identify the source of our fears and biases
- Teaching empathy

## **The Organizational Structure**

Maple Street School is a nonprofit independent school operated by the Maple Street Board of Trustees. The School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and approved by the State of Vermont.

The Board of Trustees of an independent school has three primary functions: 1) complete fiscal oversight, budget monitoring, and fundraising; 2) setting overarching policy, such as annual tuition, and determining the amount of financial aid to be offered; and 3) strategic planning to chart the future course of the School, define the School’s mission, and develop strategies for advancing the mission. The Board also has the responsibility for hiring and overseeing the Head of School.

The ideal Board deliberately works at a high strategic level, to ensure the School is healthy for the next generation of students. The Board generally does not get involved in the operational aspects of the School.

The Head of School reports directly to the Board of Trustees. The Head of School is responsible for enacting the policies of the Board and delivering a school experience based on the mission. The Head of School manages the hiring and oversight of the faculty and staff.

Intermittently, the Head of School and the Board of Trustees engage an Advisory Council made up of community members. This group’s advice is non-binding, but is helpful in informing policy.

*The Maple Street School Board of Trustees for 2023-2024:*

Peter Hershberg, Board Chair

H. William “Rusty” Davis

Amanda Baer

Sara Garay

Chris Howe

Rocco Maggiotto

Daphne Powell Markcrow

Mel McManus

David Pollock

Bob Van Degna

Kathy Zilkha

**Trustee Emerita:**

Janet Turnbull Irving

## THE SCHOOL DAY

### Drop Off and Pick Up

#### *Drop-Off and Pick-Up Times*

The K-8 school day starts with the traditional Head of School greeting and handshake, high five, or elbow/fist bump at 8:00 am. Students are expected to arrive at school on time and must wait outside between 7:50 am and 8:00 am if they are early. Classes begin promptly at 8:10 am.

The class day ends at 2:55 for grades K- 4, and 3:10 pm for Upper School. We ask that students be picked up by 3:15 pm, unless they have a specific after-school activity at Maple Street School.

Pre-K dropoff begins at 7:45, and the class day begins at 8. Pre-K pickup is at 2:30.

#### *Arrival and Dismissal Procedures and Expectations*

Arrival and dismissal times are by nature busy times for a school. The majority of students and their families convene in a central place in a small window of time, which can create congestion and confusion. Although this will likely always be a busy time, Maple Street School, along with the guidance of VT Safe Routes to School, has taken steps to improve the efficiency and safety of our students, drivers, and educators during arrival and dismissal.

Please be mindful of the policies and procedures outlined in the two options below. Please also note that all families are expected to complete the Maple Street School Safe Driver Pledge, which is included in the Appendix.

#### **Option 1: Circular driveway–“The Circle”**

This option is best for students who are able to independently carry all their belongings in and out of the car with them and for patient drivers who are committed to keeping the line of traffic moving safely and efficiently.

- **Students must exit/enter the vehicle on the passenger (sidewalk) side only! STUDENTS ARE NEVER TO BE IN THE PASSING LANE OR BEHIND THE CAR IN THE CIRCLE.**
- **Drivers are required to remain in the vehicle at all times** and follow the lane closest to the curb to the top of the circle, or until traffic is fully stopped immediately in front of them, to allow more vehicles to enter the circle.
- **Drivers must be aware** of the other cars that are moving through the circle, and of direction from the arrival crew.
- **Cell phone use is discouraged.**

**Morning:**

- Arrival moves quickly; DO NOT PASS other vehicles during arrival.
- Use common sense when granting your child permission to exit the vehicle; if students in the vehicle in front of you just closed the car door, chances are the line is about to start moving again.

**Afternoon:**

- If you arrive early for dismissal, wait in the parking lot so as not to “clog” the circle for drivers whose students are already awaiting pickup.
- Vehicles may pass within the traffic circle; please look for direction from the dismissal crew. Drivers must always be aware of the other cars in the circle and move forward when space becomes available to allow waiting cars to enter the circle.
- No one should exit the vehicle during dismissal.
- Please turn off your car while waiting in the circle.

**Option 2: Park and Walk**

This option is best for students who need to access the back of a vehicle for larger belongings: sports bags, skis/snowboard, musical instruments, class projects, etc. Any access to the car that requires a student to move to the back of the vehicle, another person to get out of the car, or will take extra time must be done in the parking lot.

This option is also best for families that are more comfortable walking their child to the front doors of the school. This applies even if the adult walking them in is not the driver.

This is the best option for touching base with other parents.

**Morning:** Park in the parking lot and walk with students to the safety of the Maple Street sidewalk/lawn.

**Afternoon:** Park in the lot and meet students on the Maple Street sidewalk/lawn before walking to the vehicle.

**Southshire & Winhall Bus Riders**

Arrival: Students who plan to take the bus in the morning should be at their designated pick-up place and time. The Winhall Bus schedule is available on the BRSU website.

Dismissal: Students who plan to take the Southshire or Winhall Bus at dismissal should know their dismissal plan at the beginning of the day. **Parents are required to communicate this plan with their child, their child’s homeroom teacher, and the School Operations Manager by establishing a weekly dismissal plan or informing the School of any changes to plan before NOON.** Understanding how your child is to get home from school is essential in managing dismissal and ensures that each student arrives at their intended destination safely and without incident.

We understand that dismissal plans will change with the athletic seasons, weather, doctor appointments, and other unexpected developments. When plans do change, it is important to email this information to both the School Operations Manager and the homeroom teacher immediately. If the School Operations Manager does not respond by 1:00 pm, please follow up with a phone call. Students may not ride the bus without clear parent permission.

Any student traveling home as a guest with a scheduled bus rider must provide written parental permission containing the student's name and parental contact information.

### **Rideshare Services**

Parents should be aware that many rideshare companies, such as Uber, have policies that prohibit transporting unaccompanied minors. The School prohibits the use of these services by students, and will not take responsibility for calling car services for students.

### **Tardy or Absent**

If the student is expected to be tardy or absent, please communicate with the School Operations Manager and the student's homeroom teacher.

### **Religious and Cultural Observances**

Various holidays are recognized and discussed with stories, plays, and special foods that convey the cultural significance of the holiday. The School recognizes, but does not celebrate, holidays from a religious perspective. If a particular holiday or its traditions are important to a parent's heritage, and the parent would like to share information with students at the School, the parent is invited to contact a student's teacher to make arrangements for a presentation about the holiday and its traditions.

If a family celebrates a holiday for which a student will miss school for religious observance and worship, the family/student is asked to contact the teachers at least one week in advance to coordinate appropriate support for the student. As a general practice, teachers try to avoid scheduling major activities, assignments, or assessments on religious holidays. Long-term assignments (assignments scheduled before the day immediately preceding a holiday and due on a day other than the day immediately following a holiday) may be assigned.

### **All-School Meetings**

Parents are welcome and invited to participate in the All School Meeting on Monday morning at 8:15 am. This weekly meeting typically includes a student or faculty speaker and announcements that highlight certain academic, artistic, and/or athletic achievements. We also celebrate birthdays and holidays during this time.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities and Other After-School Programming**

#### Athletics

In the fall, soccer is the sport at Maple Street School, and we are proud to field as many teams as

our school population and student interests allow. In the winter, basketball is the official school sport in the afternoon. Both fall and winter see multiple home and away contests against many local school teams. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to attend games on campus. Home soccer games on a beautiful fall day are a highlight of the first few months of school. In the winter, we are grateful to be able to escape the cold weather in Hunter Hall as fans pack the gym for spirited hoops contests. There is no official school sport in the spring.

### Student Council

The Maple Street School Student Council consists of two student representatives elected from each upper school grade. The Council will elect a President and Vice President. The members of this Council, elected by the student body, are dedicated to serving the entire K-8 school community. By sharing ideas and boosting school spirit, the Student Council is responsible for coordinating student activities, organizing fundraisers, and holding regular weekly meetings.

The mission of the Student Council is to create and encourage a sense of community and school spirit amongst the students and faculty. The Student Council will:

- Recommend and promote activities for students.
- Plan and take responsibility for social events.
- Organize, recommend and communicate community service opportunities.
- Sponsor fundraising activities to raise money for those in need.
- Provide a forum for students to discuss issues and concerns affecting student life.

### After School Program

This year, the school will run an after school program 3:00-5:00 for grades K-4 on Monday - Thursday afternoons. Students may drop in or sign up for a weekly schedule. Upper School students are welcome to stay on campus and work on homework, but will not have a formally supervised after school program.

### **What to Wear**

Students are expected to dress respectfully, sensibly, and appropriately at all times but are encouraged to express their individuality.

With the exception of rainy days and extremely cold weather, recess will always be outside. Therefore, appropriate attire should be worn and preparations taken each day to make sure that each student has the clothing, footwear and gear necessary for outside play.

### **What to Bring to School**

We ask that each student bring a healthy nut-free snack for morning break, as well as a nourishing lunch and a wholesome drink. Students are encouraged to have their own water bottles at school since we have two water fountains / refilling stations where they can be refilled throughout the day. We also encourage parents to send healthy food to school as research has shown that children who eat healthy food have more focus and energy. Creativity in regard to food preparation counts as we do not refrigerate student food. Many

families have found insulated lunch boxes and containers work well.

Regarding school supplies, the School provides most of what each student needs for the academic day. Please refrain from providing your child with a “desktop toy.” We encourage you to coordinate with the teacher after the first few days of school as to what your child really needs versus what your child may want. Students in the older grades may be asked to buy loose-leaf binders at the start of the year.

We ask that parents help Maple Street maintain its learning atmosphere by reminding students to leave toys, candy, gum, and large sums of cash at home. Please review our Community Expectations policies in this Handbook for additional information regarding cell phones, other electronic devices, and weapons.

### **School Communications**

School information and calendars can be found on our public website and on our parent portal, ParentSquare. ParentSquare is not public-facing; it is only for Maple Street families and requires a login. Each Friday that we have classes, we email a “Friday News” that details upcoming events and updates families on Maple Street and community news. Homeroom teachers and specialists also send out a monthly news feature that goes into much greater detail about what is happening in each respective classroom. We ask that you read each publication carefully and add key events to your own calendars immediately. After reading the news, you can email your child’s teacher or any person in the administration with any questions you may have. Maple Street also maintains Facebook and Instagram accounts. Daily events and trips may also be covered on these social media platforms, or on the School’s photo blog on SmugMug.

### **Visitors to Campus**

For the safety of our students, our Visitor Pass policy includes parents, family members, alumni, and visitors from outside of the School community. Upon arrival, all visitors are requested to check in with the School Operations Manager at the front desk to obtain a Visitor’s Pass. Special events for an entire class and All-School Meetings are exceptions to this policy.

### **Surveillance Cameras on Campus**

The School has installed video cameras at certain open and public spaces on campus, such as all official entrances to the School’s campus, as well as at key campus crossroads. The School seeks to balance the security, safety, and other benefits derived from the use of video surveillance with any privacy concerns of the School’s employees, students, families, and guests. In all cases, security equipment is used in a manner that adheres to legal statutes and ethical standards where the right of privacy is concerned and is not used where there exists a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as in restrooms. In addition, all entrances to the School’s campus are posted with signs notifying School community members and other visitors that there are video surveillance cameras actively in use on campus. These surveillance cameras record visual footage, but do not record any sound.

### **Lost and Found**

Please be sure to mark students’ clothes with the student's name in indelible ink or with sewn-on

labels. All unmarked clothing will be put into the lost and found box. Anything left unclaimed past a two-week period will be donated to charity or used at the staff's discretion.

## **Graduation**

Graduation is a wonderful celebration of student achievement and our school's growing history. We hope that everyone can attend this afternoon ceremony and participate fully in one of the most important traditions of our academic year.



## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

### **Moose Pride**

Perhaps the most important lessons learned in schools are moral in nature. Our character education curriculum has become a core part of Maple Street School's program, and it is inextricably tied to our students' intellectual development, citizenship, and personal growth. Our Moose Pride program is a K-8 social-emotional program that seeks to teach students about respect, teamwork, responsibility, service to others, goal setting, citizenry, and integrity.

### **Homework Expectations**

Nightly homework for students begins in first grade and continues through eighth grade at progressively increasing levels. More information on assignments, projects, and teacher expectations on homework is shared with parents at our Parent Information Night in September.

### Grade 5

Students in Grade 5 experience a transition year from a self-contained homeroom to a middle-school experience with multiple teachers in different classrooms. In addition, the fifth graders are required to care for their textbooks and notebooks in all their classes, and they become a part of the upper school athletic program. In addition, we ask fifth graders to be responsible for their own homework and for communicating directly with their teachers on all assignments. All fifth graders receive academic grades and effort marks for the fall and spring semesters. These transitions are significant, and we work with the fifth graders to help them adjust to a much busier and more robust academic day.

### **Study Habits**

It is important that students develop a responsible approach toward their schoolwork, planning their time outside of school so that they complete their assignments to the best of their ability. The School asks that parents help in the developing students' healthy study habits by encouraging students to study in a quiet room and by discouraging television viewing, recreational computer use, and telephone calls during the school week.

In the event of a student's absence from class, classroom teachers will coordinate with families/students to help them manage homework and classroom assignments.

### *Parental Guidance*

Parents play a key role in helping students with organization and time management. Of course, students should complete the homework independently so teachers can accurately assess individual academic achievement and needs. The School anticipates that, at times, students will struggle with their homework. Below are a few ways for parents to support students:

- **Find a steady study spot.** This should be the same spot each day, and if possible, outside the hustle and bustle of family life, with all the necessary materials on hand such as a dictionary, thesaurus, calculator, pencils, paper, graph paper, calendar, etc.
- **Set a time.** Work together to set and live with a definite study time.
- **Diminish distractions.** Television, telephone, family members, etc. can interrupt concentration.
- **Build in a breather.** Breaks can increase productivity. If necessary, use a timer to signal the beginning and the end of a break. Snacks are excellent study breaks.
- **Sharpen focus.** Students should develop an awareness of time by estimating how long an assignment will take prior to starting it.
- **Watch for homework overload.** If the student seems to be overloaded, limit the student's time-on-task and encourage the student to talk with or write to the teacher the following morning, explaining the problem.
- **Stick to a regular bedtime.** A good night's sleep enhances school success.

### *Active Studying and Homework Strategies for Students*

- **Organize, organize, organize.** Write down your assignments, organize your school supplies as suggested by your teachers, and provide yourself with a consistent place to carry your completed homework to school for every subject. If you have a question about an assignment, call a reliable classmate.
- **Skim over** any reading assignment before reading it closely.
- **Look it up**, if you do not know the definition!
- **Plan your time.** If a teacher has given you three weeks to complete an assignment, work on it a little each day. Please do not leave it to the last minute.
- **Learn to outline** and to rely upon your outlines. The outline is a valuable tool for helping you to organize your thoughts and review material.
- **Recite, describe, and explain** aloud the topic in your own words.
- **From memory**, draw and label a diagram, map, sketch, or chart, and then check the information for accuracy.
- **Write questions** you think will be on a quiz and recite the answers aloud, make a list of important concepts, or write a set of flashcards.
- **Practice, practice, practice.** Just like sports, you can practice academics, especially math and science problems, or speaking in another language.
- **Enlist your family.** Perhaps your parents will learn something new by quizzing you!

### **Device Program**

Because so much of our curriculum is integrated with technology, each student in Grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 is responsible for an iPad. The technology responsible use policy is reviewed at the beginning of each year, and students learn about digital citizenship in advisory/homeroom. Even so, we will not send computers home with fifth graders (during the week and over the weekends) until the end of September, based on prior experience. The goal for all upper school grades is to make sure they understand their responsibilities as well as have the discipline to focus on homework.

## **Accommodations**

The School does not discriminate against qualified applicants or students on the basis of disabilities that may be reasonably accommodated. The School will discuss with families of applicants with known disabilities whether the School will be able to offer their children the appropriate accommodations to help them be successful at the School.

The School is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities are provided with equal access to the School's programs and services, in accordance with applicable laws. For students who seek additional support or curricular adjustments, the School requires documentation indicating that the student's disability substantially limits a major life activity. Students who present the School with appropriate documentation of disability will be granted those requested academic accommodations that are supported by the documentation and considered reasonable in this educational setting. Any adjustments to the academic program would be made through an interactive process between the student's family and the Head of School and the Learning Center. No waivers of academic graduation requirements will be granted.

Even after supportive services and accommodations have been put in place, a student may still not be able to satisfactorily fulfill the School's academic requirements. In such instances, the student's homeroom teacher, advisor, the Head of School, Learning Center, and/or other support personnel may decide that the accommodations put into place may not suffice to ensure the student's success at the School. At that time, the Head of School and/or Learning Center will decide whether it is appropriate for the student to remain at the School.

## **Learning Center at Maple Street School**

We believe each learner is unique, and we work to differentiate our instruction for our students. Maple Street School's Learning Center operates through a Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS). This is an evidence-based system that is inclusive, equitable, and beneficial to all students within the Maple Street school community. Maple Street School's MTSS is both preventative and proactive, providing early academic and behavioral interventions to students at Tiers 1 and 2. In addition, Tier 3 support provides individualized and specialized instruction based on the individual needs of students.

The following is a detailed description of the MTSS that Maple Street adheres to:

### Tier 1

- Universal instruction
- Delivered through general in-class support to address academic and behavioral concerns
- Includes "Accommodation Only" plans (EST and 504 plans)

### Tier 2

- Targeted group instruction in class
- Team teaching models or targeted in-class support
- Includes EST Plans for in-class support and accommodations

### Tier 3

- Specialized individualized instruction in addition to in-class support
- 1:1 or small groups in the Learning Center
- Includes EST Plans and IEPs

If it is determined that the student needs a referral for special education, the School will generally do so, consistent with the Vermont Special Education Rules and Regulations that are applicable to independent schools. BRSU is responsible for locating, identifying, and evaluating all students with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in independent schools located in this supervisory union. This includes schools in the towns of Sunderland, Rupert, Pawlet, Dorset, Manchester, Danby, and Mt. Tabor. It is important for parents of students who are not placed or funded by their school district to be aware that although they do not live in the town where their school is located, the BRSU (where Maple Street is located), and not their home district, is responsible for considering special education referrals made on behalf of their child.

Maple Street School will work closely and in concert with parents and the Bennington Rutland Supervisory Union (“BRSU”) to identify students potentially in need of services and to put specific support plans in place.

Our Learning Center Coordinator is employed by the School as a licensed special educator, directs our Educational Support Team (“EST”), and is our 504 Coordinator.

### **Student Evaluation and Teacher Conferences**

Student progress is assessed by the teachers relative to the goals and objectives of each subject area throughout the year. Teachers maintain their own records, which serve as a reliable basis for assessment. This assessment is then communicated to parents through written reports and in conferences.

The structure of conferences and reports is designed by the School to facilitate the working partnership between parents and teachers. Parents receive two written reports a year. Parents will also receive regular periodic updates from their child’s teachers via email. The School sets aside two parent teacher conference days in November and March. Because we schedule all parents into the same day for conferences, it is important to stay on schedule that day. However, parents who would like more time should never hesitate to schedule a conference with a teacher after school on any day. Teachers may also request and schedule additional conference time when they feel it is necessary to communicate important information on a student’s progress.

### **School Trips**

Educational trips are important components of Maple Street School’s program, when public health conditions allow. We seek to take students off campus to expose them to events and places that provide a worthy experience. Teachers have the responsibility of selecting and organizing trips and defining the programming.

### **Our Library**

We are proud of our beautiful library and its collection. We seek to encourage reading for scholarly pursuits and for pleasure. We have an electronic system for checking books in and out

of the library. Each student and each book has a barcode and students scan the books to check them in and out. Parents are welcome to sign books out under their child's name. There are no fines for late book returns, but we do ask parents to help get the books back to the library within two weeks so that others can also enjoy these great books.

### **Student Records**

Student records are maintained in the administrative area in a locked, fireproof file cabinet and stored on a secure server in the cloud. These records contain health data, standardized test scores, and academic reports. The School is responsible for sending these permanent records to the student's next school. Teachers and administrators have access to them.

Parents are always welcome to a copy of their child's records. **Progress reports are released twice a year through the BigSIS portal. Current assignments/grades can also be accessed through BigSIS.**

## COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

### Honor Code

The Maple Street School Honor Code is a part of the Student Covenant, which all students sign at the beginning of the year. The Student Covenant states:

1. I promise to be respectful, kind, and caring to myself and to others.
2. I will take steps to include others.
3. I will take responsibility for my words and actions.
4. I will help make Maple Street a safe and clean place.
5. I will be honest about my schoolwork.
6. I will try my best in all I do.
7. I will tell the truth.
8. I will obey the rules of Maple Street as stated in the Family Handbook.
9. I will always use computers ethically at school and at home.

### Rules and Behavior

One of our most important goals as a community is to be the safest school possible. In addition, we want all our students to feel comfortable and confident in their unique learning and social environments. Therefore, we feel it is important to be clear with all students about our expectations for proper decorum while on campus. The following is a non-exhaustive list of rules and expectations of students at the School, some of which are addressed in more detail in standalone policies throughout this Handbook:

1. Violence, bullying, or harassment will not be tolerated at Maple Street School.
2. Maple Street School students may not lie, cheat, or steal.
3. The fire alarm signals a quiet (no talking), calm departure from the building through the nearest exit door and gathering on the blacktop with teachers.
4. Students may not go beyond sight and sound of a teacher during recess and may not go off the Maple Street property during school hours without a teacher or parent.
5. When eating lunch outside, it is a time to sit and relax with classmates; it is not an active playtime.
6. Students must use play equipment (swings, ropes, slides, etc.) properly and safely.

7. No weapons of any kind are allowed on school grounds (including Swiss Army knives and fake weapons), nor is play with simulated weapons (sticks, ropes, branches) allowed.
8. Students are to walk in the halls and stay to the right when passing other classes.
9. Students are NOT to touch the walls or mark the art/pictures that are hanging in any way.
10. No gum.
11. Students may not use the school phone without permission from a teacher or staff member.
12. Respectful language is the only acceptable kind at Maple Street (including recess and sports time).
13. Non-school issued devices are not allowed during school hours (8:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.)
14. Respect one another's work and play.
15. Shoes are to be worn at all times.
16. Fighting, threatening to fight, or physically and purposely hurting another will not be tolerated.

Every student is expected to contribute positively to the Maple Street School community of learners. We want our students to take responsibility for their own learning. We ask our students to respect the right of others to learn and to foster a safe environment by respecting School property and using it responsibly. To avoid confrontation, students are expected to choose positive alternatives such as communication with those involved and/or the help of a teacher.

### **Speech and Respect for Community Members**

The School seeks cultural competency for all community members and expects all community members to respect others, especially around race, gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, ability, and other aspects of people's identity. We strive to combat prejudice in all forms, including in speech. We recognize that words have the power to negatively impact others and we prohibit speech that discriminates, attacks, disparages, demeans, intimidates, or deliberately mischaracterizes an individual or group based on their identity. Offensive speech can take many forms, including, but not limited to, negatively biased categorical statements, stereotypes, and epithets.

The School invites sincere discussion and questions, and recognizes that there will be moments when insufficient information, erroneous belief, or faulty presentation will create opportunities to review statements and clarify impact. We encourage students to address those incidents directly when they occur, but we recognize that not all students may feel comfortable doing so. Students who have concerns about another's speech, whether in person or online, should contact the Head of School so that the School can respond appropriately.

## **Attendance and Absences**

Students must attend and be on time for every class. Our curriculum and pedagogy are anchored in the belief that learning is enhanced by continuity and effective group interaction; each student's presence is integral to the classroom environment in a small school. Regular class attendance also increases a student's probability for successful performance and fosters the development of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. We therefore take attendance seriously and maintain accurate attendance records for each student.

We are only in school for a limited number of days. Therefore, any absences without approval from the school will be considered unexcused. Family vacations during school days will generally be treated as unexcused absences. In addition, PLEASE try to schedule medical appointments and dental visits only after consulting our school calendar.

If your child needs to miss school due to illness, we ask that you email their homeroom teacher and the School Operations Manager as early as possible in the day. When a student arrives late, the student is expected to sign in with the School Operations Manager at the front desk upon arrival. Students who miss school for multiple days are expected to get their assignments from their teachers or classmates and make up the work they have missed. Please note: teachers are not responsible for providing assignments to students if planned absences are not approved in advance.

In general, if a student is absent for more than 10 school days in an academic year, the student's teacher and the Head of School will meet with the student's parents/guardians to discuss the issue. If a student is absent for more than 20 days in an academic year, that student's enrollment contract for the following year may be suspended pending a review of the absences and the student's current academic standing. The goal is for the School and the family to work together to limit unnecessary absences and promote attendance at school.

### Absences and Competitive Athletics

Maple Street School has always supported families and students who wish to pursue a serious commitment to their sport of choice. We recognize and celebrate that we are a school located in a region rich with athletic opportunities. In recent years, we have been fortunate to have students pursue higher-level athletics, which sometimes takes them out of the classroom. Each student/family wishing to pursue athletic absences or an extended family vacation will be required to submit an official letter requesting permission to miss school for multiple days. The letter should be addressed to the homeroom teacher and the Head of School and include specific information on the proposed activity and submitted at least two weeks prior to any planned absence. The School will make the determination whether any such requested leave will be treated as an excused absence. If a student is in good academic standing and able to handle the rigors of independent study while training/competing, we will generally approve the absence as excused and begin the important task of planning for time away from the classroom. However, if the teacher(s) and the Head of School view the request as not in the best academic interest of the student, the trip will generally not be approved as excused.



## **Bullying, Harassment, and Hazing**

Maple Street School seeks to maintain a healthy and safe environment for every member of the School community. Members of the Maple Street School community are expected to treat each other with mutual respect and to accept the rich diversity that makes up the community.

To that end, the School does not tolerate verbal or physical behavior that constitutes bullying (including cyber-bullying), harassment or discrimination, or hazing (collectively referred to as “interpersonal misconduct”) or retaliation against a community member for bringing a claim of interpersonal misconduct or cooperating in an investigation into interpersonal misconduct. Any community member who is found to engage in interpersonal misconduct or retaliation will be disciplined in accordance with the Disciplinary Guidelines section of this Handbook. Interpersonal misconduct or retaliation may also be a violation of state law.

The School is dedicated to preventing interpersonal misconduct by fostering a positive school culture and providing a curriculum that encourages social skills development. We work to enhance students’ abilities to develop healthy relationships and to take positive action when they witness or experience any form of interpersonal misconduct. The School is also committed to promptly addressing any behavior that impedes the learning of any student or interferes with the experience of any other member of the School community

### Definitions

Bullying is defined as:

Any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or groups of students and which:

- A. is repeated over time
- B. is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
- C. (i) occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity or (ii) does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student’s right to access educational programs.

Harassment is defined as:

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

B. “Harassment” includes conduct which violates subdivision (A) above and constitutes one or more of the following:

(1) Sexual harassment, which means conduct that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur:

(I) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education.

(II) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.

(2) Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to racial customs.

(3) Harassment of members of other protected categories, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, gender identity, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

Hazing is defined as:

Any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with an educational institution; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of a student. Hazing also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off the campus of an educational institution. Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extracurricular, or military training program goals, provided that:

(i) the goals are approved by the educational institution; and

(ii) the activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the educational institution, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

### Reporting Complaints of Interpersonal Misconduct

The School annually designates two employees to receive complaints of interpersonal misconduct. For the 2023-2024 academic year, these employees are Joy Stewart and Conor Welch. The contact information for these designated employees can be found on our website. A student who is the target of interpersonal misconduct, or a student or a parent/guardian who has

witnessed such an incident or any incident of retaliation, or who otherwise has relevant information about conduct prohibited by the School, is expected to report the matter promptly (either orally or in writing) to either of these two designated contacts, or to any other administrator or faculty member with whom the student or the parent/guardian is comfortable speaking.

The School expects students and parents/guardians not to make anonymous reports. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously and disciplinary action will generally not be taken against an individual solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The School cannot promise absolute confidentiality to those reporting interpersonal misconduct, as there may be a need to share information during an investigation or otherwise; however, the School will disclose such information with discretion, on a need-to-know basis.

All persons involved in a complaint or investigation should understand that false or exaggerated accusations can be extremely damaging to innocent persons; therefore, the School expects and requires the honest and full disclosure of facts by all involved. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation of interpersonal misconduct or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action.

#### Response to a Complaint of Interpersonal Misconduct

- A. Notification: Upon receipt of a complaint of interpersonal misconduct, the designated employee will immediately notify the Head of School of the complaint. Upon receiving a complaint, the School will promptly notify the parents/guardians of both the alleged target and the alleged perpetrator of the complaint, and will provide to the parents/guardians a copy of this policy.
- B. Investigation: Unless the School determines that special circumstances are present, the School will conduct an investigation into reports of interpersonal misconduct as follows:
  - a. No later than one school day after the reporting of the complaint, the School will initiate or cause to be initiated an investigation of the allegations. The School shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; however, no person who is the subject of a complaint shall conduct such an investigation. All relevant parties and witnesses are expected to cooperate with the investigation.
  - b. No later than five school days from the reporting of the complaint, the School will make an initial determination with respect to whether the allegations have been substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes interpersonal misconduct.
  - c. All internal reviews of the School's initial determination, including the issuance of a final decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the School, be completed within 30 days after the review is requested.

### C. Consequences for Violations of This Policy:

- a. If, after investigation, the School finds that the alleged conduct occurred and that it constitutes interpersonal misconduct, the School may take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the interpersonal misconduct and prevent any recurrence of the interpersonal misconduct. Examples of remedial action include: mediation between the parties, education and counseling for the perpetrator, and safety planning.
  - b. Violations of this policy shall be based on relevant surrounding facts and circumstances, including, but not limited to, a consideration of prior instances of similar behavior and the student's overall disciplinary history.
  - c. Information about consequences or other corrective action will be shared with the School community as deemed appropriate by the Head of School. Such announcements may be made in person, by electronic communication, or otherwise.
  - d. Resources such as counseling or referral to appropriate services are available to all students – including the alleged aggressor(s) and the alleged target(s) – during and after an investigation.
- D. Parental Notification of Results of Investigation: Upon completion of the investigation, the School will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the complainant and accused individual(s) of the outcome of the investigation.
- E. Alternative Dispute Resolution: At all stages of the investigation and determination process, the School encourages relevant parties to engage in alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, for resolving complaints.

### Independent Review

A complainant may request an independent review if the individual: (1) believes that the School did not correctly analyze the complaint and failed to conduct an investigation of the incident because the School believed the alleged conduct did not constitute interpersonal misconduct; (2) is dissatisfied with the final determination following an investigation as to whether interpersonal misconduct occurred; or (3) believes that although a final determination was made that interpersonal misconduct occurred, the School's response was inadequate to correct the problem. The complainant shall make such a request in writing to the Head of School. Upon such request, the Head of School shall promptly initiate an independent review by a neutral person as described under 16 V.S.A § 570a(b)(1) and shall cooperate with the independent reviewer so that the review may proceed expeditiously.

The review shall consist of an interview of the complainant and relevant School officials and a review of the written materials from the School's investigation. Upon completion of the independent review, the reviewer shall advise the complainant and School officials in writing: (1) as to the sufficiency of the School's investigation, its determination, and/or the steps taken by the School to correct any interpersonal misconduct found to have occurred; and (2) of

recommendations of any steps the School might take to prevent further interpersonal misconduct from occurring. The reviewer shall advise the student of other remedies that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the School for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records. The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the School. The School may request an independent review at any stage of the process.

### Reporting to Other Agencies

In appropriate circumstances, such as when a crime may have been committed or a child may have been subjected to abuse or neglect of the type that is reportable under 33 V.S.A. § 4911, et seq., law enforcement or other appropriate government agencies may be notified. At any point after receiving a report of interpersonal misconduct, the School may notify local law enforcement or other government agencies. If the School receives a complaint involving students from another school, the School may notify the appropriate administrator of the other school so that both may take appropriate action.

### Dissemination of Policy and Annual Training

Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, the School shall send this policy against bullying, hazing, harassment, and discrimination, to parents or guardians, staff members, and contracted employees. In addition, the School develops and implements age-appropriate programs to annually inform students about the substance of this policy and procedures in order to help prevent interpersonal misconduct. The School also implements training for School staff within the context of an annual professional development program. Such training is designed to enable staff to prevent, recognize, and respond to interpersonal misconduct.

### **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices**

Hand-held computer games and all electronic personal listening devices should be left at home.

If a student brings a cell phone to school, the student will need to turn the phone off and store it for the school day. Cell phone use by a student is not allowed during school hours unless in the case of an urgent situation, to communicate only with parents.

### **Lease of School Electronic Devices**

Maple Street Upper School students have the opportunity to use a leased device provided by the school. Each machine comes with three years of Accidental Damage Protection along with the manufacturer's one-year warranty. The Director of Technology takes care of getting the device repaired and, if needed, will provide a loaner device until the student's computer is repaired. **We do not provide a loaner if a student forgets their computer.** All students are given the same educational software and are allowed access to the Internet. Once the student has completed Eighth grade and graduates, the device they received in Sixth grade is theirs to keep. It is our intent to promote continued use of these tools through high school. If students leave before completion of the Eighth grade, they have the option of buying out the device from the School, otherwise they must return the computer to the Director of Technology before their academic

records can be transferred.

### **Technology – Responsible Use Policy**

The primary focus of the Maple Street School Technology Program is educational. Students use technology in the classroom and through responsible and guided self-discovery in creative ways not only to acquire, understand, and apply knowledge, but also to stretch that knowledge through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The Internet, an important source of information about the world and a potent means of communication with others, will be used in a manner that supports collaboration, respect, and lifelong learning. To support students in these pursuits, the School may place reasonable restrictions on the material accessed or posted on the Internet and information maintained on its devices.

The use of Maple Street technology involves the following important restrictions and responsibilities:

- Recognizing that computers and tablets are fragile and expensive resources, students must treat these objects with care. It is every student's responsibility to leave these devices in proper working order. In the event of accidental damage to hardware, the computer will be assessed by the Director of Technology, at which time responsibility for payment of out-of-warranty repair will also be assessed if applicable.
- Students may not make deliberate attempts to maliciously disrupt, destroy or alter the computer system or information data on the technology. Computer hardware and software may not be modified without permission from the teacher. If a problem occurs with the device it should be reported to the homeroom teacher immediately.
- Duplicating copyrighted software, videos, or music is theft and will be treated in the same manner as theft of physical property.
- Students may not copy or download copyrighted or licensed commercial software without permission from the Director of Technology. Students may not copy or download music or videos which they have not purchased or already own.
- The Director of Technology must authorize any software programs added to any device used in school. Any unauthorized programs found on a device will be removed.
- Students may not download any software programs or packages whatsoever (that is any file containing but not limited to: games, enhancement programs, additional software, or those marked .dmg, .exe, or .pkg) without expressed consent of the Director of Technology.
- Students may not plagiarize from works found on the Internet or any other sources. Plagiarism is defined as taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were one's own, or without giving proper credit to the author. In addition, it is not permissible for students to access, copy, modify, destroy, or even read the private works of other students.
- Students using the Internet must follow all School rules, including the Student Covenant.

- Students may not obtain or make public material that is explicitly labeled as not intended for minors, or is pornographic, violent, or otherwise hurtful. Students may not post or send pictures of themselves or others that are explicit.

*Due to the nature of the World Wide Web, parents must understand that their child may encounter material online that may be considered inappropriate (vulgar jokes, statements of belief that some may consider immoral, pornography, etc.). The student is responsible for not pursuing or passing on those materials that could be considered offensive.*

- Students may not give out over the Internet personal information to someone whom they do not know. Students may not post personal contact information about themselves or other people, including their address, telephone number, school address, etc.
- Restrictions against inappropriate language apply to public messages (blogs or social media), private messages (email, texts, or DMs), and material posted on web pages.
- Students may not use obscene or disrespectful language, nor post information that could cause damage or harm to others or a danger of disruption to the network.
- Engaging in harassment or cyber-bullying (as defined in the Bullying, Harassment, and Hazing policy in this Handbook) is unacceptable and strictly prohibited. Students may not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks, harassment, or cyber-bullying.
- Students may not impersonate another person via electronic communication.
- Students may not play non-academic computer games or use any non-academic applications at any time during the school day, unless given permission by a teacher or staff member.
- Electronic communication follows the same guidelines as other kinds of communication. Hurtful, discourteous, and disrespectful electronic communication is inappropriate and will not be tolerated. Additionally, private or public electronic communication should follow ordinary rules of appropriate public language and should not contain any language or content which the author would not be willing to share at a school meeting.
- Students may not send or receive non-academic electronic communication during the school day (8:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.).
- Students should understand that no computer is anonymous in cyberspace. Each transaction and Internet access generates an electronic fingerprint and/or IP address, which can be traced.

*Parents/guardians should understand that:*

- it is the responsibility of all parents/guardians to read this policy and discuss it with the student;
- teachers and administrators will strive to help students understand this policy at a level that is appropriate to their age and maturity; and

- if a student damages the hardware or software of any School-owned technology, the parent/guardian may be responsible for paying for the repair or replacement of that technology.

*The School may:*

- access, view, monitor, and track any information or communication stored on or transmitted over the School's network, on or over equipment that has been used to access the School's network, or School-issued devices, or School-administered accounts and services, and under certain circumstances, it may be required by law to allow third parties to do so. In addition, others may inadvertently view messages or data as a result of routine systems maintenance, monitoring, or misdelivery; and
- restrict the material accessed and not permit devices to be used for anything other than educational purposes.

### Reporting Violations

If a student suspects a violation of this policy, or if a student feels nervous or uncomfortable about another School community member's use of technology, the student should immediately report the student's suspicions, feelings, and observations to a teacher.

Some violations may constitute criminal offenses as defined by local, state, and federal laws, and the School may initiate or assist in the prosecution of any such violations to the fullest extent of the law.

### Sexting and Sexually Explicit Material

The School prohibits students from creating, requesting, sending, or possessing any written message, image, or video that contains explicit representations or references to sexual conduct, sexual excitement, or nudity. Vermont law prohibits anyone (regardless of age) from disseminating obscene or pornographic images of minors, and the School may contact law enforcement should any student violate this policy.

### Social Media

The School understands the desire of students to use social networking websites and other online resources or websites (e.g., TikTok, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, Discord) (collectively referred to as "Social Media"). Whether or not a student chooses to use Social Media is a decision the student should make in consultation with the student's parents and if they meet the minimum age requirements for that application, which for most is 13 years old, per COPPA guidelines. However, to the extent that students, parents, or members of the School community represent the School to each other and to the wider community, participation in such Social Media should be done responsibly with a mind toward how both the forum where one chooses to participate and the content posted reflect on that person individually and on the School. Moreover, issues concerning respect for the privacy of students, copyrights, trademarks, and confidentiality of sensitive information are all important to understand *before* participating in Social Media. With the foregoing in mind, the School encourages students and parents to create an atmosphere of trust and individual accountability when accessing Social Media and the



School's network. Students are expected to comply with the policies outlined in the School's Responsible Use Policy regardless of whether they are using School-provided equipment or their own personal devices.

### **Search and Seizure**

Cubbies are the property of the School. Students exercise control over their cubby with respect to other students, but not from the School and its administrators. As a result, if the School suspects a School rule or law is being violated, the Head of School and designees, as well as law enforcement officials, have the right to search cubbies to ensure school safety and the students' welfare, including, without limitation, to determine if students are harboring stolen property, weapons, or illegal or dangerous substances. School administrators and law enforcement officials have the right to seize such items or other items that jeopardize the safety of the students or the building or constitute health hazards. The School may also search students' possessions, including, but not limited to, backpacks, mobile devices, and personal computers if the School suspects a violation of law or School rule, or student safety is a concern.

### **e-Safety Policy**

The School incorporates online and remote learning programs in its curriculum and program. The purpose of this e-Safety policy is to help ensure a safe, secure, and supportive online and remote learning environment for students, employees, and all members of the School community, consistent with the School's standards, mission, policies, and protocols. The School strives to create such an environment while also making it as effective and user-friendly as possible. At all times, however, the School's online and remote learning environment is subject to the requirements and limitations of the School's online and remote learning technology.

This e-Safety policy is intended to work in concert with the School's other rules and policies, including those set forth in this Handbook. Students and parents are, therefore, expected to continue to comply with all School policies and standards of academic and social behavior as stated in the Handbook and elsewhere, including, but not limited to, the School's interpersonal misconduct, social media, acceptable use, attendance policies. This policy sets forth additional, modified, and/or clarified expectations for the School's online and remote learning environment.

- **Dress Code**: When visible in the online and remote learning environment, and in any related interactions, students are expected to be appropriately dressed, which requires that students adhere to the dress code policy as stated in the Handbook.
- **Cyberbullying and Online Conduct**: When participating in the online and remote learning environment, and in any related interactions, it is of the utmost importance that students maintain and model the highest standards of conduct, respect, and integrity, including by refraining from any activity that might constitute or contribute to cyberbullying or other prohibited interpersonal conduct.
- **Remote Environment**: Students may not use virtual backgrounds while participating in online and remote learning environments unless authorized or directed by the teacher. Backgrounds and physical spaces captured in online and remote learning should not have vulgar or profane words or images. Backgrounds should be appropriate. For example, students should not be sitting in a bed, but should be set up at a desk or table.

- Chat Functions: Students are expected to use any chat functions in an appropriate and respectful manner.
- One-On-One Interactions: School faculty, advisors, and administrators may provide virtual one-on-one meetings with students as appropriate. The School may seek to limit one-on-one interactions to those necessary to support the academic and social well-being of students and families.
- Recording: Online and remote learning sessions and communications should not be considered confidential and will not be recorded. Students are prohibited from (a) recording any part of any online and remote learning program, and (b) sharing, broadcasting, and/or making public any materials created or recorded by the School, its employees, or anyone else in relation to the School's online and remote learning programs.
- Risk Management: All members of the School community are responsible for maintaining a safe online and remote learning environment. In that spirit, while the School will strive to support and ensure students' safety in the online and remote learning environment, students and their families are also expected to employ appropriate safeguards and manage risks appropriately.

## **Social Relations**

We want our students to learn to respect others, to practice thoughtfulness, consideration, and kindness. Not only will this positive attitude toward others help children grow into contributing adults who can get along with others, but it also creates a more productive learning environment in the school.

We ask students to bring their social concerns and grievances to their classroom teacher so that any incident can be discussed at the time it happens. Mean teasing and unfriendly acts are unacceptable in our school community. We ask parents to help teachers by bringing issues to their attention as soon as they hear about them at home. Parents can encourage the development of healthy social relationships by helping their children strive for understanding of others and discouraging attitudes of criticism and dislike.

## **Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco**

A student may not buy, sell, possess, or use alcohol or other unauthorized drugs or substances, including tobacco and tobacco-related products (including e-cigarettes and vaping), and/or any paraphernalia associated with the use of illegal drugs and may not intentionally misuse products that can act as inhalants, while enrolled in the School. Such conduct is also prohibited by all community members while on campus and at School-sponsored events and activities. The School provides information to parents and students about the health and social impact of drug, substance, and alcohol use and abuse. Students are prohibited from using medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, in any manner other than as prescribed or intended by the manufacturer.

## **Inappropriate Items/Weapons**

Students are not allowed to have items at School that pose risk to oneself or others or will disrupt some aspect of the school day (e.g., matches, lighters, slingshots, water pistols, pagers). If in doubt about whether something is allowed, we expect students to ask a teacher or the Head of School; students are expected to exercise good judgment about such matters.

Unless authorized or permitted by applicable law, the School prohibits the possession of any firearm, imitation firearm, pellet gun, knife, Taser, or other dangerous weapon, ammunition or fireworks, or setting fires, on campus, on any School-sponsored off-campus trip or excursion, or in any school bus. This policy applies to students, faculty, staff, applicants, alumni, parents and anyone else who enters the campus, regardless of whether the individual has a valid permit to carry a firearm.

## **DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES**

### **Discipline**

These disciplinary guidelines are based on the School's philosophy and principles regarding good character, and they reflect the School's commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for students. The School strives to promote effective and caring communication among faculty, students, and parents that supports students in their personal growth and provides room for a young person to make mistakes and learn from them. The guidelines in this section apply to all conduct by students, whether on or off campus, as long as they are enrolled at the School.

Because we feel strongly about maintaining a positive learning community, we impose various consequences for student misconduct, including for extreme or repeated behavior. The consequences are designed to place the student in the position of decision-making and responsibility by prompting understanding of behavior and its effect on others. We help the student to make a plan for improved behavior for which he or she takes responsibility.

Consequences of misconduct (and/or attempting misconduct) applicable to all students are detailed below. These examples are intended to provide students and their families with a general understanding of the School's disciplinary approach; however, the School will respond to each situation with a response that the School determines, in its sole discretion, is appropriate.

The teacher may use, at the teacher's discretion, the following levels of discipline:

1. Time out in the classroom followed by a conversation with the teacher.
2. Removal from class for a period of time followed by a discussion with the teacher. In the event that the teacher is not the homeroom teacher, the homeroom teacher may also be engaged in the discussion.
3. Removal from class and a meeting with the Head of School. At this time the teacher and the Head of School will decide on an appropriate course of action. Depending on the age of the student and the seriousness of the student's conduct, parents will usually, but not always, be informed of such a meeting. Action plans could result in a meeting with the student and the parents together, having the student and teacher develop a plan for future behavior, a formal apology, or any combination of the above.

There is never the use of restraint or seclusion at Maple Street School. If behavior is severely inappropriate, the student's parents will be called immediately and asked to take the student home.

### **Suspension and Dismissal**

The School may suspend or dismiss a student at any time for a serious breach of School rules or policy. The Head of School, or the Head's designee, has the final word in any disciplinary decision.

Students who receive a suspension from school for any period of time are considered unexcused for the days they miss. However, they may be allowed to make up some portion of the work missed, at their individual teachers' sole discretion. It is the student's responsibility to discuss the particular circumstances with the student's teachers.

Students who are dismissed from school will be prohibited from being on School grounds and will not receive academic credit for the time after which they are dismissed.

### **Behavioral Expectations While Away from School**

Students should be aware that they represent the School community at all times, both on and off campus. While it is not the School's intention to monitor students in all of their off-campus activities, the School may take disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal, in response to inappropriate conduct occurring outside of campus.

### **Parental Involvement with Disciplinary Matters**

Disciplinary matters and student issues are handled directly by teachers, administrators, and appropriate staff. If a student is having an issue with another student, parents should not attempt to deal with the other student directly about that matter. Doing so may put a student in an intimidating situation and is best resolved, when appropriate, through a School administrator. Please speak to the appropriate School administrator for guidance with respect to any questions about contacting another student or parent about a School-related matter.

### **Disclosure to Community**

For purposes of providing an opportunity for the student body to learn and grow, information about disciplinary consequences or other corrective action will be shared with the School community as deemed appropriate by the Head of School or the Head's designee. Such announcements may be made in person, by electronic communication, or otherwise.

### **Disclosure to Next Schools**

The School works closely with students and families to support the honest reporting of disciplinary matters to next schools. When a student applies to a next school, it is the obligation of the student and the student's parents to notify such school about whether the student has ever been suspended or dismissed from, or experienced any significant change in status at, Maple Street. If a student's disciplinary status changes after applying to or being accepted to a next school, Maple Street similarly expects the student and student's family to notify such school of the student's discipline. Maple Street may also communicate with any secondary or next school, or any other educational institution, regarding the student's disciplinary record.

### **Handling of Complaints**

Complaints should be made to the Head of School and will involve a conversation between the bearer of the complaint and the Head of School. If the issues under discussion are not resolved satisfactorily with the Head, the persons bearing the complaint will be asked to bring their concerns in writing to the Board of Trustees within a two-week period. It is the intention of the

School to structure procedures in such a way that issues can be resolved, or if not, to allow the School-parent partnership, if it is not productive, to be dissolved.

## STUDENT HEALTH AND SUPPORT

### Health Records and Forms

Families are asked to provide the School with information about the student's physical and emotional health. In part, this information is obtained to comply with state law; it is also needed to keep the School well-informed of the health of all students. The School is sensitive to the privacy of this information. Please refer to the "Confidentiality" policy in this Handbook for more information about how this information is used.

Maple Street requires medical information on each child to be maintained in the school health office. It is required that Health Forms be returned to the school at the beginning of each academic year. We recommend an annual screening of eyes and ears as well as an annual physical.

### Immunizations

In accordance with Vermont law, the School requires all students to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or a certificate of exemption before attending school. Proof of immunization should be recorded on a certificate of immunization issued by a licensed health care practitioner. A student with a qualified religious and/or medical exemption must provide the School with an immunization exemption certification, pursuant to state law. A medical immunization exemption certification must be signed by a licensed health care practitioner authorized to prescribe vaccines or a health clinic, attesting that the student is exempt from a specific vaccine(s) because of medical reasons. A religious immunization exemption form must be signed by the student's parent or guardian, attesting that they have sincerely held religious beliefs that are opposed to immunization. Students who do not provide proof of up-to-date immunizations or qualify for an exemption will not be permitted to attend the School or participate in any School activities.

If there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease impacting campus or the School community, the School may exclude non-immunized students, including those with valid religious or medical exemptions, from school and all School activities. Excluded students will not be permitted to return until (1) the danger of the outbreak has passed; (2) the student becomes ill with the disease and completely recovers; or (3) the student is immunized. In determining whether there is a risk of a vaccine-preventable disease, the School may consult with appropriate medical professionals and/or the Vermont Department of Health.

For more information on the Vermont immunization legal requirements, go to:  
<http://www.healthvermont.gov/disease-control/immunization>.

### Communicable Illnesses

The School may exclude any student who (a) has a communicable illness, (b) has been exposed to an infected person, and/or (c) has traveled to an area impacted by a communicable illness, if the School determines that such exclusion is appropriate for the welfare of the student or the School community. The School may also screen students or require students to be screened by appropriate medical professionals to determine whether they pose a risk to the community. The School's decisions shall be based on current and well-informed medical judgments concerning

the illness, the risks of transmitting the illness to others, the symptoms and special circumstances of each individual who has a communicable illness, and an analysis of the identified risks and available alternatives for responding to an individual with a communicable illness.

If and when appropriate, the School will disseminate information to students and families regarding campus health and safety issues through regular internal communication channels. For example, the School may provide families with information about the nature and spread of communicable illnesses, including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an epidemic or outbreak. We encourage all parents and guardians to contact medical professionals with any questions or concerns about communicable illnesses or immunization issues.

### **Medical Leave**

A medical leave from school may be appropriate in case of serious illness, bodily injury, or mental health condition, as determined in accordance with this policy. Decisions about granting or requiring a medical leave, or reinstating a student who has been on leave, rest with the senior administrators and the School Nurse; they will be guided by the principal goal of a medical leave: to give the student the opportunity to regain health and thereby function consistently, productively, and safely at school. In the absence of a treatment plan that, in the School's opinion, meets these needs, the School may decline to grant a medical leave request, and instead require the student to withdraw.

A student's family may request medical leave. The School requires that any request for medical leave be accompanied by sufficient supporting documentation (as determined by the School) to allow the School to evaluate the leave request, including, but not limited to, at least the following information: (a) a recommendation from the student's treating medical professionals that the student would benefit from taking a medical leave; (b) a description of how the student's medical condition limits the student's ability to participate in required academic or extracurricular activities; (c) the plan for treatment of the student's medical condition; and (d) an anticipated date for the student's return.

Additionally, in certain situations, the School may require that the student be evaluated and subsequently placed on medical leave. The School may initiate a discussion of a leave of absence in circumstances including, but not limited to:

- When mental health or physical symptoms are or may be impeding a student from functioning appropriately academically;
- When a physical or mental health condition interferes with a student's attendance at school;
- When a student behaves in ways that may be self-destructive or dangerous to others;
- When a student is not engaged in treatment that the School has made a condition of attendance, after the student has been evaluated by medical and/or mental health professionals, who have deemed such treatment appropriate; or



- When a student exhibits symptoms or behavior that is of concern to the School.

This initial discussion may include, in the School's sole discretion, the student's advisor, senior administrators, the School Nurse, the parents, or the student, as deemed appropriate. The purpose of this initial discussion is to establish the steps that the family is taking to ensure that the student is well enough to participate fully in life at school; and the further steps that the School may require if the situation does not improve.

The School may require the family (parents and student) to enter into a medical leave agreement detailing the parameters of any leave. The agreement may include conditions and requirements for the student's return to school. While a student on leave is excused from attending class, the student must make arrangements to make up missed work either while on leave (if possible) or upon return. While the School will strive to minimize academic disruption, the School may require that a student drop a course or courses if a prolonged absence will make it difficult for the student to satisfactorily complete the requirements of the course. To return to school from a medical leave, a student must provide a thorough, written professional evaluation of the student's current mental health and/or medical condition from the physician, psychiatrist, or other professional who treated the student during the medical leave. The School may require additional evaluation by a physician or mental health consultant of its choosing. The guiding principle of re-admission from a medical leave is the School's confidence that the student can return safely; and that the student's return will not compromise the student's continued recovery, interfere with the School's ability to serve other students' needs, or place an undue burden on the School. The decision regarding any student's return to the School from a medical leave remains in the sole discretion of the School. As a corollary to this principle, a student whom the School determines can safely participate in the regular school day may nevertheless be restricted from participation in overnight field trips or other residential-style School activities.

## **Health Emergencies**

Parents are expected to keep Emergency Forms up-to-date. Please remember, it is most important that the School have current home, work, and cell phone numbers for parents/guardians or others (relatives, friends, or neighbors) who routinely assume temporary care of the student if the student's parent(s) cannot be reached. Children's allergies and other dangerous medical conditions are shared with teachers and administrators on a need-to-know basis, in accordance with the Confidentiality policy in this Handbook. Allergy and special health information should be shared with the nurse.

Parents are asked to give permission to allow their child to be treated in the event of a medical situation requiring immediate treatment while at school or on a school trip. Should there be an injury that requires more than first aid treatment, the School will attempt to contact the student's parents immediately. In the event of a severe injury, the School will contact the Manchester Rescue Squad, followed by the parents. If needed, the student will be transported by ambulance to Northshire Medical Center, Rutland Hospital or Bennington Hospital for emergency treatment.

## **Illness**

We ask parents to keep their children at home if there are obvious signs of illness. Students with

higher-than-normal temperatures should stay home. If a student shows signs of an impending cold, rest and fluids at home can be helpful and more comfortable for a sick student than a school schedule. **Parents should not send a student back to school after a sickness until there has been a normal temperature for 24 hours without fever reducing medicine and/or no vomiting for 24 hours.**

Parents can help us keep the School a healthy place by letting us know if their child has a highly contagious disease such as strep throat or if you find evidence of head lice. If head lice appear, and they do in the best of schools, we will alert the community and help parents find information on how to handle them.

### **Medications at School**

Students may not bring, and will not be permitted to maintain, medicine of any kind with their personal belongings. Parents are expected to attend to students' medication needs outside of school whenever possible; however, if a student must take a daily prescription medication, parents are expected to provide the School with a Permission to Medicate Form signed by the student's doctor and parent(s), and the medication should be brought to the office where the Nurse may administer it. A responsible adult should deliver medications to the School in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container. Medications should be picked up at the end of the school year. Any medications left after one week of School closure in June will be destroyed.

### **No Nuts At Maple Street School**

Maple Street School recognizes that food allergies can be life threatening. We are committed to being the safest school possible for all of our students, especially those members of our community with food allergies.

Children and adults with allergies to tree nuts and/or peanuts can have an allergic reaction through contact, airborne and/or ingestion. A reaction can occur by touching a nut (contact), having the allergen enter through inhalation (airborne) and/or by eating a food item that contains a nut, even trace amounts (ingestion). Some children with nut allergies will have an allergic reaction through ingestion only, while others will include a reaction by contact, airborne and/or ingestion.

Being a Nut Restricted School means that at all times we will be nut-free. We expect that everyone will be extra vigilant to ensure no nut-containing products enter the school for the safety of the people with nut allergies. Each time a student is exposed (even if a reaction doesn't occur), the risk of a more severe reaction increases. Therefore, we make every effort to protect our community.

Food labels that say: "Processed in a facility that also processes nuts" or "Processed on a machine that also processes nuts" (or similar wording) are OK to bring to school for personal consumption. However, food labels that say, "May contain peanut or tree nuts" (or similar wording) are NOT OK to bring to school to eat.

Allergic reactions can range from mild to severe to life-threatening (anaphylaxis). Mild reactions can include a skin reaction like hives, redness or swelling, upset stomach and wheezing. A severe to life-threatening allergic reaction can range from difficulty breathing, to shock and loss of

consciousness. A life-threatening reaction is defined as anaphylaxis, which means a serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset.

Thank you for partnering with us and explaining to your child that nuts are not allowed at school, especially when all your child might eat is peanut butter! Empathy and compassion are the key elements here, and explaining that by not bringing nut products to school, your child is helping to take care of, keep safe, and even protect our community members with nut allergies.

### **Concussion Action Plan**

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even what may seem to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. The School takes concussions very seriously. If any student reports any symptoms of concussion, the School will seek medical attention right away and call the student's parents. After a positive diagnosis, the student will be kept out of play to heal until the student has clearance from the student's family doctor. Students who return to play too soon while the brain is still healing risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Teachers and coaches will be told if a student has had a previous concussion so that they are aware of that injury.

For further information on "Return to Learn" following a concussion this is the CDC Fact Sheet for school professionals and parents:

[https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/schools/tbi\\_returning\\_to\\_school-a.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/pdfs/schools/tbi_returning_to_school-a.pdf)

Gradual "Return to Play" protocol, to be followed with consultation from your child's physician.

Maple Street School has adopted the recommendations made by the Task Force on Concussions at The Fletcher Allen University of Vermont Medical Center:

[https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/Documents/1072CH\\_concussion\\_rackcard-2.pdf](https://www.uvmhealth.org/medcenter/Documents/1072CH_concussion_rackcard-2.pdf)

### **Emergency Response Plan**

The School has established an Emergency Response Plan, which has been filed with the State Police, Manchester Town Hall, and the Fire Department of Manchester. In the case where we have to evacuate the building due to an emergency situation, the teachers and staff will accompany all students to a safe space that we have reserved in Equinox Village. In the unlikely case that we are not allowed back in the building, all parents will be called and asked to arrange pick-up for their child at Equinox Village. The Head of School is responsible for communicating with parents and the public about any crisis situation. The Head of School will also determine when school will resume in the building once any situation has been resolved.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

The School is committed to the highest standards of care for our students, and seeks to ensure that our students are protected from inappropriate or hurtful actions by adults responsible for their care, as well as by anyone else who may mistreat a student. In accordance with Vermont law, all School employees are required to report suspected abuse or neglect of any student under age 18.

Vermont law requires School employees who reasonably suspect that a child has been abused or neglected to report such knowledge or suspicion immediately to the Vermont Department of Children and Families (“DCF”). Suspicion or belief may be based on factors including, but not limited to, observations, allegations, facts, or statements by a child, a victim, or a third party. Such suspicion does not require certainty or probable cause. The responsibility to report rests both on the School and also on all School employees. While a School employee may wish, and is indeed encouraged, to consult with the Head of School prior to making a report of suspected child abuse or neglect to DCF, all employees are required to report their reasonable suspicions to DCF, even if the Head of School may not agree with the employee’s concerns.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

### **Family Comportment and Support for School Policies**

At Maple Street, we believe that a positive relationship between the School and a student's parents, guardians, and other family members is essential to the fulfillment of the School's mission. We ask parents to recognize how important they are to the success of their child's education. In joining Maple Street, parents enter into a partnership with the School and its teachers and staff. The goal is that we all form the nucleus of a supportive team for the child. We recognize that effective relationships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of the goals to be achieved.

The School understands and appreciates that parents and guardians may employ different means to meet the expectations and responsibilities expressed in this policy. Nevertheless, Maple Street, at all times, may dismiss a student whose parent, guardian, family member, or other adult involved with the student fails to comply with this or any other policy or procedure of the School, engages in conduct either on or off the School's property that could undermine the authority of the School's administration, and/or otherwise behaves in a manner that is unbecoming of a member of the School community. The School may refuse re-enrollment of a student if the School believes the actions of a parent, guardian, or other family member, on or off the School's property, make a positive, constructive relationship impossible, or otherwise may interfere with the School's accomplishment of its mission and/or educational goals.

Parents are invited to reflect on what it means to be a part of a small independent school in Vermont. We encourage all parents to partner with the Grade Parent Association and to volunteer their time for school events when able. We also ask that all parents participate in the Annual Fund. These fundraising initiatives directly support the students and teachers of the School. In fact, all monies donated to the School either provide immediate budgetary support or long-term endowment growth. To put it simply, tuition alone does not cover our expenses and every year Maple Street must seek additional revenue to support the experience of our students. Therefore, we encourage all parents to support the fundraising initiatives that they feel strongly about. If you have any questions on how you can best support the school financially, please contact the Head of School.

### **Parent Communication with the School**

As set forth in the Family Comportment policy in this Handbook, good communication between the home and School is critical to make a parent-School partnership work. Both parents and teachers assume responsibility for effective communication. Neither should hold concerns, however minor, over a period of time without voicing them. We make the important request that parents and teachers stay in positive communication so problems are resolved in an efficient manner. We therefore encourage parents to contact teachers, ask pertinent questions, and seek advice. However, these conversations should be done via email, the School's phone number, or, where possible, in person. We also ask for patience with any communication due to the busy nature of our school day and schedule. As a general rule of thumb, a parent should expect a reply

from a teacher or administrator within a 24-hour period of time during a normal school week.

While the School calendar provides conference times for teachers and parents to meet, we want parents and teachers to feel comfortable requesting conferences at any time of the year. Parents are urged to schedule a conference with their child's teacher if they have concerns about any aspect of their child's school life, if they feel that coordination with the teacher will enhance their child's social or academic comfort, or if they wish to discuss any one of the written reports, including the final one in June.

We expect that parents contact the teacher first and then the Head of School before going to the other parents to explore or validate a problem. Should a parent come to you as another parent with concerns, the most productive course of action is to send that parent to the Head of School so concerns can be discussed and problems addressed. When your child listens to adult conversations about your concerns, it takes away from the child's sense of school as a safe place, a place where caring adults are worthy of trust. We seek to be worthy of trust, and parents can help us sustain that effort by working with School personnel in a positive and constructive way.

### **The Parent Association**

The Parent Association was established to create and support a sense of community and school spirit among parents at Maple Street. Throughout the year, the Parent Association sponsors social events for students and parents beginning as early as August. Finally, it is through the Parent Association that volunteers are found to serve on parent committees to organize enrichment activities, community service and other activities. Maple Street's founding parents set the tone of thoughtfully contributing to every aspect of the School community. Volunteer opportunities abound.

The School asks every parent to be an active member of the Parent Association and to make a donation to the Annual Fund each year. Parent participation in the Annual Fund is critical. Other donors and foundations seek to know the level of support the School receives from parents in this way when making gift decisions. Maple Street has consistently high levels of parent participation in the Annual Fund. This is incredibly impressive, and we are extremely grateful for the support.

### Parent Association Mission

To create and support a sense of community and school spirit among parents at Maple Street School and enrich the lives of the students. The Parent Association will serve:

- to enrich the School community by sponsoring community building events for parents and families;
- to assist in identifying parent volunteers to serve on Parent Association committees to organize enrichment activities;
- to consider ways to show appreciation for Maple Street faculty and staff.

### Parent Association Co-Chairs

The primary responsibility of the Parent Association Co-Chairs is to engender and maintain a supportive spirit among the parent body. They will provide a variety of opportunities for parents to be involved in the life of the School and educate all parents about their role as members of the Parent Association.

Co-chairs will:

- Coordinate class parents for each grade.
- Recognize and thank volunteers at all levels, and celebrate the successes of all events to maintain an atmosphere of appreciation and acknowledgement.
- Listen to all parents, respond positively, and channel concerns to the Head of School when appropriate.
- Maintain a respectful relationship with the Head of School, working with the Head on issues that may require major decisions, interpretation of policy, or development of new policies.
- Keep parents informed.
- Record information for future chairs, including maintaining an Event Binder with budget, resource, and planning information, which includes post-event evaluation.

### **Grade Parents**

The Grade Parent serves as the liaison among the classroom teacher, the Head of School, and other parents of the class. The Grade Parent facilitates a community spirit in the School that respects and appropriately utilizes parents' special talents and the time they have available. Each person in the parent community should feel valued as a contributing member; we accept the reality that some parents will have more time and labor than others to contribute. Grade parent meetings are open to all and take place on the first Monday of each month following All-School Meeting.

Specific responsibilities of the Grade Parent include:

- Assist the teacher in organizing and recruiting parent assistance for projects.
- Organize the Back-to-School party in August.
- Organize (with teacher) drivers for class field trips.
- Help with class community service events.
- Meet monthly with the Head of School and other Grade Parents.
- Attend all Parent Association meetings.
- Communicate with parents in the grade.

The Maple Street School Parent Association Co-Chairs for 2023-2024 are as follows:

Amanda Baer (George 2nd, Andy 5th, Cat 7th): gibbybaer@gmail.com

Kristen Jones (Landon 6th): kristenhjones@gmail.com

### **JISP/KAP/MINIKAP**

The Junior Instructional Ski Program, Kids Alpine Program, and Mini Kids Alpine Program are offered by the Bromley Outing Club for a nominal fee. Maple Street parents coordinate our participation in the program. Students may elect to ski, snowboard, cross country ski or skate. A

skating program offered by Riley Rink will also be coordinated by parents. We ask that you help us see that all students enjoy one of these activities during release time. Information is provided in the Friday News.

### **Current Family Contact Information**

Parents are expected to keep the School informed of contact information for emergency situations. If a parent is going to be away from home for an extended length of time, please leave a forwarding address and telephone number where the parent can be reached, as well as information regarding who will be responsible for the student and how they may be reached in case of illness or other emergencies.

### **Multiple Households**

In order for the School to communicate most effectively with parents and support each student, teachers and administrators need to be aware of students who spend time in multiple households. Additionally, information regarding who the primary caregiver is should be communicated to the School, in the event of an emergency, and whether special co-parenting arrangements exist. If there are court-ordered guidelines regarding visitations, picking up a student from school, parent involvement in field trips, or other issues, the School should be informed.

The School expects separated or divorced parents to cooperate and partner with the School with respect to their child's education. For this reason, the School will not get involved in parental disputes or custody issues.

These situations can be stressful for parents and confusing for students, and assistance in minimizing the School's phone calls for clarification is very important. Unless otherwise specified, each parent for whom the School has current contact information will receive a copy of the student's report card, as well as other informational mailings and electronic communications during the year.



## **GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **Admissions Policy**

The following are principles of good practice:

Maple Street School:

- will, during the admissions process, take all reasonable and lawful measures to maintain the confidentiality of reports and information received from other schools concerning students and parents.
- will not offer a place to a student without first receiving an official transcript (or its equivalent) from the student's present school.
- will allow each candidate reasonable time to accept the offer of a place.
- will make clear all dates concerning the admission procedure and ensure adherence to those dates.
- will inform the family of the complete costs of the forthcoming school year.
- will require adequate documentation of family financial resources before awarding financial aid based on need.
- may require adequate documentation of parents' marital status before enrolling any child.
- will ensure that admissions staff speak accurately and comprehensively about the strengths of the School and not allege weakness in other schools.

### **Financial Aid Administration Policies**

Maple Street School:

- shall not discriminate in the administration of its financial aid policies in accordance with the School's Non-Discrimination Policy.
- shall strive through its publications and communications to provide students and families with factual information about the total yearly cost of attending its institution and about its aid opportunities, financing opportunities, policies, and procedures.
- shall recognize that the primary responsibility for financing a student's independent school education rests with the student's family.
- shall use a uniform methodology to assist annually, in a consistent and equitable manner, each family's ability to pay for education.
- shall require adequate documentation of family resources when determining need.
- shall not use financial need as a consideration in determining a student's eligibility for admission.
- shall notify accepted aid applicants of financial aid decisions before expecting a binding reply to the offer of admission. (See Tuition Policy for procedures.)
- shall allow applicants sufficient time to select from the offers of financial aid from all the schools to which they have applied.
- shall make every effort to meet the demonstrated need of all admitted or enrolled financial aid applicants within the limits of the funds allocated by the Board of Trustees.
- shall not set different standards of behavior and academic performance for its financial aid recipients.
- shall review students' family need annually.

- shall have a review procedure for families who wish to request additional funding.
- shall refrain from and discourage others from making any public announcement of the amount of financial aid awarded to a student.
- shall safeguard the confidentiality of all financial information supplied by a family.

## **Enrollment**

In February, the School offers admission to returning students for the following year. On March 1st, returning students' places should be secured by completing the enrollment and securing a deposit. After this time remaining admission spots will be offered to qualified applicants. If a class is filled, qualified candidates for admission are placed on a wait list. If a class is not filled, admissions will remain open.

## **Enrollment and Tuition Policies**

In compliance with Vermont State Rule 2229.1, we explicitly state that:

- The student or the parent of a student seeking to attend Maple Street School shall voluntarily submit an application;
- Students shall not be disadvantaged in the admissions process based on their membership in a protected class, their actual or suspected disability, or their socioeconomic status;
- When the number of applicants exceeds capacity, qualified applicants are placed in a "wait pool" to be offered admission if a place becomes available;
- Students will be accepted for enrollment in a non-discriminatory manner and consistent with the school's written enrollment policy. No student shall be denied acceptance for enrollment if the reason for denial is that the student is disabled as defined in section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended or that the student is eligible for special education or undergoing the comprehensive evaluation process for special education. No student shall be denied acceptance for enrollment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or any other classification protected by federal or State law.

In addition, our enrollment and tuition policies include the following:

1. A signed Enrollment Contract and Deposit (10% of tuition paid in current school year, or a minimum of \$100 ) are required for enrollment. This deposit will be deducted from the tuition and will not be refunded.
2. Standard Enrollment Deposit - The obligation to pay tuition and fees for the entire academic year is unconditional. The obligation to pay tuition and fees will not be affected by illness, withdrawal, suspension, dismissal or absence of the student from School for any reason. No portion of such tuition and fees paid or outstanding shall be refunded or canceled, notwithstanding absence, withdrawal, or dismissal of the student from the School for any reason. Where a town pays tuition, if absence, withdrawal, or dismissal of the student causes the School to return the tuition payment to the town, or causes cancellation of unpaid future town tuition, the parents are obligated to pay the School an amount equal to the returned and/or unpaid town tuition in addition to the differential parent tuition.
3. The remainder of the tuition is paid either in two installments: the first 60% is due on July

1, and the balance on December 1, or through a 10-month payment plan. In order for a child to attend classes, tuition must be paid on time. If there is a delinquency prior to the December break, the family must rectify the delinquency before the student can return from the December break. If there is a delinquency prior to the February break, the family must rectify the delinquency before the child can return from the February break.

4. Enrollment commits the parents to the payment of the full year's tuition unless written notice of withdrawal of the Student(s) enrollment from the School is received by the Director of Finance on or before May 1st in order to receive a full refund of tuition, but no portion of the deposit will be refunded for any reason whatsoever at any time. If the Student is separated from the School after May 1st, but on or before June 1st, the family is obligated to pay the deposit in addition to 50% of the remaining tuition. Families' obligation to pay tuition and fees for the full academic year is absolute and unconditional after June 1st.
5. Parents of applicants who wish to apply for financial aid must indicate this on the application form. Financial aid information can be obtained on our web page. It is up to the parents to apply for financial Aid at <https://sssandtadsfa.force.com/familyportal/FamilyLogin>.
6. Parents notified of a Financial Aid award must inform the School within the indicated deadline of their decision to accept or reject the offer. After this time, the funds offered may be allocated to another applicant.
7. If a family qualifies for a tuition voucher from their town, this payment will be used for tuition obligations before the School's financial aid allowance is used for the remainder of the tuition due.
8. Students are invited to return for the following year in early winter, at which time re-enrollment materials are sent to parents. The School may dismiss a student without tuition reduction or refund, at the Head of School's discretion, at any time it is deemed in the best interest of either the student or Maple Street community.
9. No student may receive a diploma, nor academic credit given, nor will a transcript be issued to any other educational institution, until all financial obligations to the School have been met.

### **Town Tuition Voucher**

If a family resides in a town that issues a tuition voucher, the family is obligated to request their tuition from the town. The required forms from Bennington Rutland Supervisory Union (BRSU) for the town of Winhall can be obtained through your specific town clerk. Request forms must be filled out annually.

Please contact your town clerk if you reside in a town or supervisory union that provides a voucher. Town voucher credit will be removed from your tuition bill if the voucher is not established 45 days after student(s) start school. In this case, the family will be responsible for the entire tuition.

The School will bill the town or supervisory union twice a year, and this payment will be used toward your tuition. Parents are responsible for the remainder of the tuition payment. Financial aid is available to those families who need assistance covering this difference. Please refer to our Enrollment and Tuition policy in this Handbook for details on a family's obligation to pay tuition.

### **Leave of Absence**

Should a student's extended absence from school be necessary or desired, a leave of absence may be appropriate. A leave for medical reasons will be handled in accordance with the School's Medical Leave policy in this Handbook. The School may recommend or grant a request for a voluntary leave of absence for other compelling reasons. The initial request for a voluntary leave of absence should be made to the Head of School. The School requires sufficient supporting documentation prior to the approval of any leave. The sufficiency of any supporting documentation will be determined by the School in its sole discretion.

The School makes the final determination as to whether to grant a leave of absence, as well as the duration of the leave and the conditions necessary for a student's return (including, but not limited to, whether the student must reapply for admission). Whether the period of leave is counted towards academic requirements for promotion and graduation will be determined by the School in its sole discretion.

Leaves of absence may be noted in the student's educational record, including on the student's transcript. A leave of absence will not be used in lieu of disciplinary action to address violations of the School's standards of behavior, rules, or policies. Additionally, a student granted a leave of absence while on academic and/or disciplinary status may return on that same status.

Families remain financially responsible for tuition and other fees while the student is on a leave of absence.

### **Student Media Information**

In order to portray its program accurately and vibrantly, the School makes a concerted effort to highlight the accomplishments of our students and faculty, as well as to publicize the strength of the entire program offered by the School, in a variety of media formats. Student Media Information—including student names, photographic images (for example, portrait, picture, video, or other reproductions), audio recordings of students' voices, video recordings of students, and/or reproductions of students' work and likenesses—may be used for educational and/or promotional purposes in print and electronic media. Outlets for publication of Student Media Information may include, but not be limited to, the School magazine, marketing materials, the School website, press releases, social media outlets (including, but not limited to, Facebook and Instagram), newsletters, and local newspapers.

If you do not wish us to feature your child in an individual setting, please indicate this preference on the Back to School forms.

## **Background Checks**

With student safety as a priority at the School, the School conducts state and national criminal history and sex offender registry checks on all current and prospective faculty and staff of the School who may have direct and unmonitored access to children, including any individual who regularly provides School-related transportation to students.

A background check is typically not necessary for parent volunteers involved with larger School functions at which many adults are typically present or in instances where there is only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with students in commonly used areas of the School grounds.

These background checks require the completion of a brief application form and verification of a government-issued photographic identification, and are only conducted with the consent of an individual employee or volunteer. A volunteer's service, and an individual's employment, is contingent upon successful completion of the checks, which may take several days or weeks to process.

## **School Directory**

The School has a directory of class lists and contact information for families, faculty and staff, and other members of the community. The Directory is updated each September and made available to families online through the portal. The Directory may only be used for School-related purposes, and not for personal or commercial purposes. Failure to properly use the Directory may result in restricted use and other consequences, as deemed appropriate by the School.

## **Confidentiality**

Members of the School community commit themselves to maintaining appropriate professional tact and discretion with regard to confidential information they receive. However, confidential information may be disclosed to the Head of School, appropriate administrators, outside professionals, law enforcement officers, parents/guardians, and others when there is a compelling reason for doing so, including, without limitation, in cases of health and safety emergencies (when students or others are in imminent danger of harm); when there is concern about a student's ability to function academically, emotionally, physically, and/or mentally within the School environment; or when legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed.

## **Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act**

This notification is required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, 40 CFR Part 763 of Title II of the Toxic Substances Control Act). Asbestos Management Plans have been developed for the School. These plans are available and accessible to the public at the School's business office.

This notification is required by law and should not be construed to indicate the existence of any hazardous conditions in our school buildings.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS AND TRADITIONS**

### **Summer Event**

Before school begins there is one large communal gathering (“potluck dinner” or “pizza and popsicle party”) on campus to welcome back returning students and meet/greet all the new students. Hosted by parents and organized by the Grade Parent Association, this is a fine opportunity for everyone to catch up after the summer and meet any new families in the Maple Street community.

### **First Day of School/Opening the Doors Ceremony**

On the first day of school there will be an official “Opening the Doors” ceremony. This is a wonderful school tradition at Maple Street that includes song, poetry, and speeches. Through the first couple of weeks of school, specific activities are planned to help students get to know each other and make new friends.

### **Information Night with Parents (September)**

A few weeks after school starts, we have a “back-to-school” event to welcome parents, meet faculty, share curriculum, and present to families our expectations and aspirations for the upcoming school year. Teachers use the time to show parents the classroom, outline specific academic plans, and explain special class activities.

### **Halloween**

Maple Street loves Halloween, especially the faculty. However, we do ask that students not come to school dressed in costume on October 31st. Instead, students are encouraged to bring their costumes to school so that they can dress at the end of the day for our annual Halloween Parade when Halloween falls on a weekday.

### **Winter Concert and Holiday Break**

Every December right before the holiday break we hold our annual Winter Concert. It is always a festive evening filled with music and song. Please come celebrate the holidays with the entire Maple Street community in Hunter Hall. In appreciation for a job well done at the concert, the following day at school is the ever-popular Pajama Day.

### **Library Birthday Party**

This special spring day is great fun! The students and faculty come to school dressed as their favorite literary character and gather in the library at the end of the day to read a story together and have a special snack. It is a school-wide celebration of reading and literature.

### **Spring Concert/Arts Night**

The Spring Concert and Arts Night is another opportunity for the performing and visual arts to shine at Maple Street. Everyone participates in the music and our hallway is transformed into an

impressive art gallery with art from each student in the school on display for everyone to appreciate.

### **Grandparents and Special Friends Day**

In May, we celebrate Grandparents and Special Friends Day and invite all grandparents to attend classes and enjoy an afternoon at school with their grandchildren. There is a special schedule, and we look forward to having grandparents join their grandchildren in school lessons and activities.

### **Field Day**

Another favorite day on the calendar for students and faculty alike, Field Day is held in the final week of the school year and features multiple events where students of all ages compete together for fun. Everyone cheers each other on during Field Day, but the eternal question is: can the 8th grade beat the 7th grade in the tug of war competition one more time?

### **Shakespeare Fest**

The themes of Shakespeare are timeless and help us to understand many modern day experiences and emotions such as anger, love, jealousy, integrity, courage, and leadership. Fortunately, we are able to see these themes play out on the stage of Hunter Hall as the 8th grade class at Maple Street has a long-standing tradition of performing a work of Shakespeare the night before graduation. Past adaptations have seen Macbeth transformed into a musical, Othello portrayed as a wild western, and The Tempest set in a casino.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Accreditation And Professional Memberships**

Maple Street School participates in a number of independent school organizations. We are officially accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and have recently been approved by the State of Vermont for general education and certain special education categories.

We are members of the:

Association for Independent Schools of New England (AISNE)

Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)

Elementary School Heads Association (ESHA)

Independent Schools of Northern New England (ISANNE)

National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)

Vermont Independent School Association (VISA)

Vermont School Board Association (VSBA)

### **CDC Guidance For Influenza**

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) publishes information to help schools promote a safer environment for their students and staff and reduce exposure to influenza during the school year. We want Maple Street School to be a safe and healthy environment for all, and we plan to follow these recommended guidelines designed to decrease the spread of regular seasonal flu and other flu strains, while limiting the disruption of day-to-day activities and the vital learning that goes on.

CDC and the medical community will stay in close touch with Maple Street as we approach flu season. We will follow their recommendations. For more information on CDC influenza recommendations and how to best prevent the spread of the flu, visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/preventing.htm>.



**Maple Street School & Community**  
**Safe Driver Pledge**

As a Maple Street parent, or other designated driver, I want to keep all children safe, so I pledge:

- To obey the Arrival & Dismissal Procedures & Policies:
  - o In the circular driveway
    - Students enter/exit/access the vehicle on the passenger side only
    - Drivers remain in the vehicle at all times
    - Drivers must always be aware and use common sense to keep traffic moving
    - DO NOT pass the car in front of you during arrival
    - Pass with caution and guidance during dismissal
  - o Choose the Park & Walk option when needed
  
- To obey all traffic laws while in the vicinity of **Maple Street School**, for example:
  - o Making complete stops at stop signs as you drive through our community
  - o Driving the 15 mph speed limit
  - o Refraining from texting while driving
  - o Yielding to pedestrians
  
- To honor the “No Idling Zone”
- To pay extra attention while driving in the vicinity of **Maple Street School & Community**
- To not talk on my cell phone while driving in the vicinity of **Maple Street School & Community**
- To set a good example as a safe driver!

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Parent Name	Parent Signature	Date
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Student Name	Homeroom Teacher
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