

Swift River Elementary School

Student / Parent Handbook

2021-2022

Peace Builders Community



Belchertown Public Schools

Respect ~ Responsibility ~ Relationship ~ Rigor ~ Reflection ~ Resilience

The Belchertown School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Section I
General Information

WELCOME

Swift River Elementary School

September, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Belchertown Schools. The learning community of Swift River Elementary School consists of dedicated teachers and staff, engaged and motivated students, and a community of parents/guardians and citizens who have pride in our past and aspirations for our future. In order to strengthen the educational foundation of our children, we strive to provide: a positive learning environment, a curriculum to maximize each student's potential, and a support system for families and community.

We are committed to student achievement and individual success of each learner. The students are our primary concern and we take their growth and development very seriously. We strive to provide a quality education to all students by meeting their individual needs and addressing their strengths, weaknesses, and learning styles, and assisting them with reaching their fullest potential. We try to create an environment that fosters an appreciation of individuality, diversity, and citizenship, while pursuing academic excellence and creating within each student the desire to become a lifelong learner. In collaboration with faculty, staff, families and town businesses Belchertown Public Schools can ensure the success of all learners.

This Handbook has been designed to provide you with valuable and important information regarding district wide policies and procedures. All policies are located on our district website at www.belchertownps.org. Although the Handbook is meant to be a reference, it is in no way meant to be a substitute for regular and ongoing communication with our staff. Please feel free to call us at 323-0471 if we can be of further assistance, or if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Educationally yours,

Robert Kuhn
Principal

Ivy Peritz-Smith
Assistant Principal

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Special Note - COVID-19

During the 2021-2022 school year, The Belchertown Public Schools will follow any new requirements/regulations/recommendations around COVID-19 that may be issued by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and/or the Department of Public Health. All other policies in the normal handbook that are unrelated to the Covid-19 pandemic remain in place. Therefore it is imperative that parents/guardians read the standard handbook, stay informed, and sign the signature page provided.

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III. Selected School Committee Policies-also located on Website

BELCHERTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Ms. Heidi Gutekenst (Chair)	
Mrs. Ruby Bansal (Vice Chair)	Dr. Amy Wilson-LaMothe (Member)
Ms. Diane Brown (Secretary)	Mr. Michael Knapp (Member)

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent of Schools	Mr. Brian Cameron
Assistant Superintendent	Dr. Shawn Fortin
Director of Student Support Services	Ms. Rebecca Kudron
Director of Finance and Operations	TMS Services

SPECIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

School Nurse Leader	Mrs. Phyllis DuComb
Director of Buildings & Grounds	Mr. Eric Lebeau
Director of Food Services	Ms. Barrett Brazioso

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Principal	Mr. Robert Kuhn
Assistant Principal	Mrs. Ivy Peritz-Smith

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNCIL

Mr. Robert Kuhn, Principal, Co-Chairperson
 Mrs. Brenda Kruse, Teacher Representative
 Mrs. Heather Morra, Teacher Representative
 Mrs. Erika Fisher, Parent Representative
 Sadie Dyzbizbanski, Parent Representative
 Mrs. Jennifer Torna, Community Representative Co-Chairperson

<u>Administration, Faculty, and Staff</u>		
<u>Swift River Elementary School</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>
Mr. Robert Kuhn	Principal	main office
Ms. Ivy Peritz-Smith	Assistant Principal	main office
Ms. Catherine Peterson	Administrative Assistant	main office
Ms. Susan DeTorrice	Administrative Assistant	main office
Ms. Diane Janas, RN	School Nurse	B-11
Ms. Rebecca Adams	Guidance Counselor	B-15
Mrs. Shannon Berte	Guidance Counselor	B-16
Mr. Michael Fitch	School Psychologist-Elementary Level	C-8
Ms. Bianca Schliemann	Grade 1 Teacher	A-17
Mrs. Gail Whitney	Grade 1 Teacher	C-6
Ms. Susan Kenney	Grade 1 Teacher	C-5
Ms. Meghan Mazzaferro	Grade 1 Teacher	A-3
Ms. Heidi Oldenburg	Grade 1 Teacher	A-2
Ms. Melissa Roy	Grade 1 Teacher	C-4
Mrs. Anielia Dakers	Grade 1 Teacher	A-16
Ms. Cassandra Hancock	Grade 2 Teacher	C-17
Ms. Brenda Kruse	Grade 2 Teacher	C-2
Mr. Darryl Clark	Grade 2 Teacher	A-6
Ms. Christine Niquette	Grade 2 Teacher	A-5
Ms. Kirsten Holden	Grade 2 Teacher	A-4
Ms. Meaghan Otto	Grade 2 Teacher	C-16
Ms. Kristie Zielinski	Grade 2 Teacher	C-3
Ms. Paige DuPilka	Grade 3 Teacher	C-14
Ms. Elizabeth Robert	Grade 3 Teacher	C-15
Mrs. Carey Southwick-Fink	Grade 3 Teacher	C-13
Ms. Erin Kemp	Grade 3 Teacher	A-14
Ms. Pamela Davis	Grade 3 Teacher	A-15
Ms. Alison Carey	Grade 3 Teacher	A-12
Ms. Jessica Jindela	Grade 3 Teacher	C-12
Ms. Pam Pieciak	Grade 3 Teacher	A-13
Mrs. Amy Stanek	Reading Interventionist	C-20
Ms. Susan Nelson	Special Education Teacher	A-1
Ms. Lisa Hussey	Special Education Teacher	C-7
Ms. Jennifer Harris	Special Education Teacher	C-7
Ms. Jennifer Gurney	Special Education Teacher	C-7
Mrs. Cassie Fitzpatrick	Special Education Teacher	A-1
Mrs. Karen Misiaszek	SAILS Teacher	C-11
Mrs. Regina Magarian	Pathways Teacher	A-11
Ms. (Heather) Alison Morra	Special Education Teacher	A-7
Mrs. JennyKate Marble	Library/Media Specialist	Library

Ms. Casey Kibbe	Physical Education/Health Teacher	C common
Ms. Kierra McCarthy	Physical Education/Health Teacher	A common
Mr. Geoff Gould	Music Teacher	B-10
Ms. Jillian Majka	Art Teacher	B-7
Ms. Carolyn Girard	Title 1 Teacher	A-26
Ms. Susan Stebbins	Title 1 Teacher	C-19
TBD	Lunch/Recess Paraprofessional	
Mrs. Jenny Ferguson	Lunch/Recess Paraprofessional	
Paige Sevivas	Lunch/Recess Paraprofessional	
Ms. Bonnie Bird	Lunch/Recess Paraprofessional	
Ms. Jen Torna	Lunch/Recess Paraprofessional	
Ms. Shannon Sullivan	Lunch/Recess Paraprofessional	
Timothy Leone-Forgette	Lunch/Recess Paraprofessional	
Ms. Miranda Phipps	Lunch/Recess Paraprofessional	
Mrs. Kelly Almeida	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Mrs. Kelly Fulmer	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Mrs. Toni Conkey	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Mrs. Amy Corbin	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Ms. Jennifer Frasier	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Ms. Christine Jones	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Mrs. Tracey Lewis	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Ms. Kristy Kubacki	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Ms. Karen Alves	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Ms. Melissa Roy	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Ms. Angela Della Croce	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Mrs. Diane Blais	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Ms. Sarah Berthier	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Amanda Litz	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Erin Lylis	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Courtney Sullivan	Special Education Paraprofessional	
Mr. Hunter Methot	Custodial Supervisor	
Mr. Cody Ryder	Custodian	
Ms. Donna Roberts	Custodian	
Mr. Jacob Santos	Custodian	
Ms. Nicole Ritter	Food Service	

Swift River Elementary School District Support Staff


Ms. Johanna Hammer	Behavior/Autism Specialist
Ms. Rachael DesJardins-Smith	School Adjustment Counselor
Mrs. Maria Philpott	Occupational Therapist
Ms. Kim Sarnacki	Physical Therapist
Mrs. Pam Wentworth	Speech and Language Pathologist

Ms. Laura Bourdeau
Mrs. Catherine Collette
Mrs. Mary Roy
Ms. Caitlin Walker

Speech and Language Pathologist
ELL
Speech and Language Pathologist Assistant
Speech and Language Pathologist Assistant

Important Telephone Numbers, Addresses And Websites

Central Office	323-0423	14 Maple Street, P.O. Box 841
Superintendent's Office	Press 2	
Business Office	Press 3	
Name Directory	Press 4	
FAX	323-0448	
Website	www.belchertownps.org	
Special Education Office	323-0425	14 Maple Street, P.O. Box 841
FAX	323-0892	
Website	http://belchertownps.org/specialed	
Cold Spring School Early Childhood Ctr.	323-0428	57 South Main Street
Website	http://www.belchertownps.org/css	
Swift River Elementary- Office	323-0471	57 State Street
Student Absentee Number	323-0455	
FAX	323-0492	
Website (CSS & SRE)	http://www.belchertownps.org/swift	
Chestnut Hill Community School	323-0437	59 State Street
Website	http://www.belchertownps.org/chcs	
Jabish Brook Middle School	323-0433	62 North Washington Street
Website	http://www.belchertownps.org/jabish	
Belchertown High School	323-9419	142 Springfield Road
Website	http://www.belchertownps.org/bhs	
First Student Transportation Management	323-8316	227 North Liberty Street
Food Service	323-0442	59 State Street
Belchertown Day School		

After School Program (ASP)	323-8108	90 Front Street
Belchertown Police Department	323-6685	70 State Street
Belchertown Fire Department	323-7571	10 North Main Street
School Physician	323-1155	Dr. Kim Dewey 
		Wing Memorial Hospital
Department of Social Services	1-800-698-3935	

Belchertown Public Schools Vision and Mission Statement

VISION STATEMENT

Belchertown students, both individually and collaboratively, will be innovative thinkers, problem solvers and unique, creative contributors to their community and the world.

MISSION STATEMENT

In the pursuit of excellence and the development of lifelong learners, it is the mission of the Belchertown Public Schools to challenge and engage all students in a respectful, positive learning environment that fosters personal, social and academic growth in order to achieve success in a global society.

Swift River Elementary School Vision and Mission Statement

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment that encourages and celebrates the efforts, interests, and abilities of all individuals to reach their personal best.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to prepare our students to become creative, independent, resourceful, lifelong learners ready to meet the challenges of the future. We will strive to accomplish this by setting high standards of expectations and attainable goals within a positive, respectful, and stimulating learning environment that reflects local, state, and federal requirements and works in a collegial partnership with parents, guardians, and the community.

SCHOOL CALENDAR
School Hours 8:45 AM -3:00 PM

BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2021-2022 PARENT CALENDAR		
2021		2022
August 17.....BHS New Student Orientation August 20.....New Employee Orientation August 20.....JBMS Visiting Day August 23-24.....Full Day PD August 25.....First Day for Students August 25, 26, 27.....Kindergarten Screening August 30.....Kindergarten & Pre-K Visiting Day August 31 & Sept. 1.....Kindergarten Staggered First Day August 31.....Pre-K First Day September 2.....All Kindergarten Students Report September 6.....Labor Day: No School October 8.....Early Release: PD October 11.....Columbus Day: No school October 29.....Grs. 7-12 First Term Grades Close November 2.....Full Day PD: No school November 10.....Grs. 7-12 First Term Report Cards November 11.....Veteran's Day: No school November 19.....Grs. 1-6 First Term Grades Close November 24-26.....Thanksgiving Recess: No school November 30.....Kindergarten Grades Close December 3.....Grs. 1-6 First Term Report Cards December 7.....K. Progress Reports go Home December 23-January 3.....Winter Recess: No school	 <p>Open House Schedule:</p> CSS- September 30, 2021 SRE- August 24, 2021 CHCS- September 2, 2021 JBMS- September 28, 2021 BHS- September 30, 2021	January 14th.....Early Release: PD January 17.....M.L. King Day: No school January 21.....Grs. 7-12 Second Term Grades Close January 28.....Preschool Progress Reports Go Home February 2.....Grs. 7-12 Second Term Report Cards February 21-25.....February Recess: No school March 11.....Grs. 1-6 Second Term Grades Close March 11.....Kindergarten Grades Close March 18.....Grs. 1-6 Second Term Report Cards March 18.....Early Release: PD March 18.....K. Progress Reports go Home April 8.....Grs. 7-12 Third Term Grades Close April 15.....Good Friday: No school April 18-22.....Spring Recess: No school April 27.....Grs. 7-12 Third Term Report Cards May 27.....Early Release: PD May 30.....Memorial Day: No School June 2.....BHS-Class of 2022 Graduation June 10.....Last Day (No Snow Days) June 17.....Last Day (5 Snow Days) Grs. 7-12 Fourth Term Grades Close last day of School

Section II

Swift River Policies

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Students are expected to do their own work. Plagiarism (copying) of material from any source, for a paper or report, submitting someone else's work as one's own, copying "crib sheets," the unauthorized removal of test/exam documents/materials from a classroom, photographing test/exam documents, are all considered forms of academic dishonesty. Any form of academic dishonesty, as determined by the teacher, will result in contacting the parent(s)/ guardian(s) to inform them of the incident. Disciplinary action will be discussed with the teacher and/or administrator.

Arrival Procedures

Students should not arrive at school before 8:30 AM. Allow your children to walk to their classrooms by themselves so that they can greet their teachers, interact with their peers, and prepare for the school day without parental assistance. Students need to learn the routines and procedures established by their teachers, and they can do this best if they have the opportunity to practice independently. Teachers are not available during arrival time to conference with parents/guardians. If you need to speak with a teacher, please make an appointment.

Detailed arrival procedures will be distributed to all families prior to the start of the year.

Attendance

Absences and Excuses

Regular classroom attendance is necessary for student success. Students are expected to be present daily and on time each day. When sickness or legitimate family obligations necessitate an absence, a phone call of explanation from the parent or guardian to the school attendance line is required (413-323-0455). The following information is necessary when leaving a phone message: **student's name, grade, homeroom, reason for absence, caller's name and relationship to the student.** In order to assure the success of this procedure, emergency notification cards must be accurate and kept up-to-date at all times. Follow up phone calls may occur to verify absences.

Parent(s) or Guardians will be notified when a student has 5 or more unexcused absences in a quarter(45 school days). Unexcused absences may result in parental contact, further investigation, and appropriate action as determined by building administration. More than 8 unexcused absences will be subject to administrative review and possible action.

Parent(s)/Guardians are encouraged to contact the school staff and work collaboratively with them to correct the reasons that the student is missing school.

Family Vacations

Parents/guardians and students are reminded that Massachusetts Law requires compulsory attendance for students. We strongly discourage family vacations when school is in session. In addition to compromising the attendance law, family vacations interrupt the educational process of each course in ways that make-up work cannot reverse. Teachers are not required to give out homework assignments prior to a family vacation.

Missed Assignments

It is the responsibility of the student to make up all missed assignments, tests or quizzes. Unless arrangements are made, the student may have as many days as missed in order to make up the work. For example, if a student is absent for two days, the student will have two days to make up the required work. A minimum 24 hour notice is required to prepare materials should the parent/guardian wish to make a request for student assignments prior to an absence.

Tardiness and Early Dismissals

Tardiness and Early Dismissals from school impact student learning. Therefore, we ask that students be on time for school and remain at school the entire day. If a student will be late, please call the absentee number to report them as tardy.

Swift River Elementary School Absentee Line 323-0455

Students who arrive after **8:45 AM** will be considered tardy and must report to the office upon arrival. Parents/guardians must accompany their child to the office to “sign in”. Tardiness due to school delay via school buses will be automatically excused by the front office. Repeated tardiness may result in disciplinary action.

Students who need to be dismissed early, for a variety of legitimate reasons, must present a note signed by a parent or legal guardian indicating the time and reason for the dismissal plus a phone number where the parent or legal guardian may be reached. Please indicate if the student will return to school and approximate time of return. The note must be given to the Main Office prior to the first period in the morning. Only in emergencies will phone calls to dismiss students be accepted: and such dismissals must be followed by a note from the parent/legal guardian. For safety reasons, parents/guardians with a picture ID are expected to pick up their student in the front office at the designated time in order to dismiss the student.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council

The Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is a volunteer organization of parents, guardians, teachers and other members of the community concerned with the delivery of appropriate special education services in Belchertown Public Schools. The BPAC meets monthly and all meetings are open to the public. Public notices of meetings are posted within the schools and on the website. Special education parent advisory councils are a requirement of the current Massachusetts Special Education Regulations.

Building Security and Safety Plan

In order to support facility safety and security within the Belchertown School District for all school personnel, students and visitors, the following district-wide and school-site procedures shall be followed during regular school hours:

1. After all school personnel and students arrive in the morning and are in their classrooms or work areas ready to begin the regular school day, all exterior doors shall be closed and locked for the duration of the regular school day.
2. After the doors are locked, individuals wishing entry into the school building must enter through the front doors only and immediately proceed to the main office.
3. Individuals must report directly to the school office upon entering the buildings. Individuals may not leave the school offices for other areas of the building without permission, and must sign-in and wear badges (e.g. volunteer badges, visitor badges). Prior to leaving the building, individuals must report back to the main office,

return the badges, and sign out.

4. All students arriving late, leaving early, or being taken out and brought back during the school day (e.g. for medical or dental appointments) must report to the main office in the company of parent, guardian or designated person, in order to be signed out/in by the office secretary or other designated individuals. Parents/guardians or other individuals entering the building in order to dismiss or return a student must report to the main office. No one may go directly to a classroom without authorization from the main office and issuance of identification badges.
5. At dismissal time, students or other individuals must leave or enter the building through the front doors. Available school personnel shall be assigned to supervise specified areas at dismissal time (e.g. the bus loading area and the student parking lot).
6. Police canine teams shall be used from time-to-time in order to identify controlled substances, explosives, and weapons. Searches shall be limited to school lockers and storage spaces, general areas of the buildings and grounds and vehicles parked on school property. The identification of any controlled substances, explosives, and weapons by canines shall be dealt with directly by school administrators prior to involving local police.
7. In order to ensure the safety and security of all school personnel and students, and as deemed necessary by school administrators, hand-held metal detectors shall be utilized to check for weapons. Any weapons so identified shall be dealt with directly by school administrators prior to involving local and State Police. Individuals who refuse to submit to such a screening will be refused entry into the building.
8. Individuals are encouraged to report information which could help keep our schools safe and prevent potential violence. Information should be reported directly to a school administrator.

Care of School Property and Textbooks

Students are responsible for all school property loaned to them, including electronic devices, library books, textbooks, laboratory equipment, athletic uniforms, band uniforms, musical instruments, and the like.

- Any student who deliberately marks, damages, loses, or destroys textbooks or library books are liable for the cost of repairs or replacement.
- Any student who fails to return school property that has been issued to them for academics, laboratory equipment, athletics, or the music program is liable for the cost of repairs or replacement.

Any student who willfully damages or destroys any school property is liable for the cost of repairs or replacement, including labor and materials.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct in the elementary schools emphasizes mutual respect - the respect for ourselves, others and property/environment. In conjunction with the *PeaceBuilders Program* our students develop skills which lead to a high level of respect, cooperation, responsibility, empathy for others and verbal and physical self-control. The School is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and staff may deliver quality educational services without unnecessary disruption or interference.

Students are continually encouraged to further develop the skills they have learned in the *PeaceBuilders Program* on the six guiding principles. To protect the rights, safety, and welfare of each person in our school community, rules and consequences have been established. Consequences for misconduct can include, but are not limited to, loss of privileges within the school day and further disciplinary action according to the school district's guidelines.

Behavior Expectations

Appropriate classroom, bus, lunch, and recess behavior and interactions are expected from all students at all times at the elementary school. Valuable interpersonal and appropriate communication skills are taught continually. These skills are being fostered, defined, and refined during both formal classroom time and casual situation settings. Respect for self, the school facilities/authority, the environment, and one another outlines proper and appropriate school guidelines, rules, and regulations to ensure the safety and dignity of all individuals at all times. The elementary school adheres to and utilize when needed the School Committee's policy on suspension and expulsions that is contained in Belchertown Public Schools' Policy.

These principles provide essential skills for students that will last a lifetime and will serve to support not only these student's behavioral expectations, but strengthen the communities where they reside and the families that support them.

Participation in PeaceBuilders reduces aggression, promotes language development, teaches pro-social skills, creates inclusion for special needs children and fosters safer communities. In the school setting, PeaceBuilders increase academic achievement by allowing teachers to spend more time teaching and less time disciplining. In all settings, the program creates a peaceful environment by increasing positive, respectful, thoughtful behavior, while decreasing violence and disruptive behavior. The six guiding principles are:

Praise People

Give-Up Put-Downs

Seek Wise People

Notice Hurts

Right Wrongs

Help Others

Working with parents/guardians in a partnership to keep our schools a place where everyone can learn is vital at our level. Parental involvement concerning discipline is dependent on the extent of the inappropriate behaviors and the disruption to the school environment. An important goal is to continually teach and model acceptable, respectful behaviors.

Respect	I will respect myself, others and property/environment.
Cooperation	I will cooperate.
Responsibility	I will be responsible for my own actions and accept the consequences.
Empathy	I will care about others feelings. My actions will reflect my feelings.
Self-Control	I will practice verbal and physical self-control.

To provide a positive learning environment in keeping with our school mission statement and goals, all students are expected to behave in a way that promotes a safe and secure school climate for everyone involved in the educational process. There are specific behaviors which will not be tolerated and which will lead to disciplinary action. These behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying, teasing, name calling, cultural or ethnic slurs
- Fighting, pushing, shoving
- Vulgar or profane language, aggravated insolence, insubordination
- Theft or destruction of property
- Disruption of classes, disruptive behavior
- Inappropriate displays of affection
- Possession of a weapon or dangerous item

Student discipline is one area, which has a direct effect on the ability of the school to fulfill its purpose. There are specific offences that may be referred to when disciplinary action is taken. These offences include, but are not limited to:

1. Academic Dishonesty
2. Arson: The intentional setting of a fire
3. Assault/Battery/Fighting: The un-permitted application of force.
4. Bus Misconduct
5. Bullying & Harassment
6. Communicating a Bomb Threat
7. Communicating a Physical Threat to Fellow Students, Faculty or Staff: Threats considered genuine to any member of the school community or guests.
8. Dangerous Acts: Throwing objects or Food, Pushing or Shoving
9. Disturbing a Class or Educational Activity: Characterized by loud outbursts, unnecessary or inappropriate actions, disruptions in the hallways, etc.

10. Electronic Device Use: The inappropriate use or perceived use of electronic devices in classrooms.
11. Failure to Follow Reasonable Administrative Requests
12. Failure to Report to Office Detention
13. Failure to Report to Teacher Detention
14. False Accusation or Claim
15. False Fire Alarm
16. Food Fight
17. Forgery/Lying or Misrepresentation of Parent/Guardian's or School Personnel's Name
18. Indecent Exposure: The term refers to exhibition of those body parts which instinctive modesty, human decency or self respect require shall be kept covered in the presence of others.
19. Initiation/Hazing
20. Insubordination: Characterized by repeated acts of insolence directed towards faculty members or school personnel.
21. Leaving School Grounds Without Authorization
22. Lewd Conduct or Behavior: Characterized by sexual acts, or acts of a sexual nature, carried out in the school environment or at a school function.
23. Possession of a Controlled Substance, (including prescription and illicit drugs).
24. Possession or Consumption of Alcohol
25. Possession of Tobacco Products
26. Possession of E-Cigarette Products and Devices
27. Possession of Drug Paraphernalia
28. Possession of Weapons
29. Public Display of Affection
30. Skipping School or Class or Detention
31. Smoking/Vaping
32. Snowball/Rock/Stick Throwing
33. Tampering with Safety Equipment or Emergency Exits
34. Tardiness to School or Class
35. Theft of Personal and/or School Property
36. Under the Influence of Alcohol
37. Vandalism, Defacing or Damaging Personal and/or School Property, Including Computers and Their Record Files and Systems
38. Vulgar or Inappropriate Language or Gestures Directed at Staff
39. Vulgar or Inappropriate Language or Gestures Not Directed at Staff

The school is empowered, within the constraints of the Law, to administer disciplinary procedures, or punishment/consequences to assure compliance with its rules, policies and regulations. These procedures range from simple warnings to suspension, expulsion and even court action. In some instances, disciplinary procedures are prescribed by School Committee Policy.

The following is an outline of disciplinary sanctions implemented at Swift River Elementary School. This outline is not a step-by-step procedure and is not all inclusive. The seriousness of the offense, the student's previous behaviors, and what is required to correct the offending

behavior influences the course of action to be taken. School discipline is the concern of all school staff involved in the supervision and safety of students. In consideration of restorative practice, students are encouraged to reflect on and take responsibility for their actions and come up with plans to repair harm. Certain disciplinary sanctions may only be imposed by the Principal and/or Assistant Principal. The administration is required to maintain a discipline record on all students, which includes the date(s), description of offense(s) and action(s) taken.

Continuum of Consequences (from least severe to most severe):

- A. Warnings: Oral or written notice to the student and/or parent/guardian
- B. Lunch/Recess Detention: Oral notice to the student and/or parent/guardian
- C. Teacher Detention: Oral notice to the student and parent/guardian
- D. Office Detention: Oral and written notice to the student and parent/guardian
- E. Loss of Privileges (at the discretion of administration): During this time the student will not be allowed to participate in or attend extra-curricular activities, field trips, school assemblies or other school sponsored events held after school hours or during vacations
- F. In-House suspension: Oral and written notice to the student and parent/guardian
- G. Suspensions: Out of school suspension is described in detail under School Committee Policy on Suspensions and Expulsions
- H. Expulsions: Expulsion is described in detail under School Committee Policy on Suspensions and Expulsions

The standards outlined above are intended to provide for consistency and fairness. However, the **Principal has the authority to deviate from the above standards when appropriate**. In all cases of behavior requiring administrative disciplinary actions, mitigating and unusual circumstances will be considered and appropriate action taken.

In the interest of maintaining order and discipline in the school, consequences will be addressed on a case by case basis following a progressive pattern, starting with a verbal warning, up to more serious consequences such as possible suspension from school.

Belchertown Public Schools uses a restorative justice approach to discipline. It is a reflective system that focuses on the rehabilitation of offenders through reconciliation with victims and the community at large. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that allows all willing stakeholders to meet, although other approaches are available when that is impossible.

Court Orders

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to inform and provide appropriate paperwork to the School Administration immediately of any special court orders (i.e. restraining, custody, etc.) that must be adhered to due to a court injunction that is in place or occurs during the school year. The safety of your child is very important to us and we want to ensure that the school is following legal guidelines concerning any custody issues.

Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal begins promptly at 3:00 pm. If there are any changes to your child's typical dismissal routine, please remember to **send a note to your child's teacher** with the time of dismissal and identify who will be picking up your child. Unless it is an emergency situation, we cannot accept phone calls to change a dismissal routine. If there is a change in your child's typical dismissal routine, please send in a note or email the administrative assistant (**sdetorrice@belchertownps.org**) no later than 2:00 pm identifying the change. When picking up your child, it is imperative that you come into the school's office and sign your child out in the appropriate dismissal book/log. Remember, your child's safety is our primary concern!

Detailed dismissal procedures will be distributed to all families prior to the start of the year.

Electronic Devices

Swift River Elementary School recognizes that cell phones may be viewed as a necessity by parents/guardians for safety and that they are necessary for communication with the family after school and during after school events. Therefore, cell phones may be brought to school as long as the following conditions are met:

- Cell phones are not to be used during the school day.
- Cell phones must be off and stowed away during the school day, (i.e. in a backpack, or locker).
- Students may not receive or make phone calls, receive text messages or photographs on their cell phones at any time during the school day. Should these occur, the cell phone will be confiscated.

Elementary students who ride the school bus and carry electronic devices must keep their devices in their backpacks during the bus ride. If students have them out or use them on the bus the devices will be confiscated by the bus driver and handed over to the school building Principal.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Emergency evacuation routes are posted within each classroom and procedures will be reviewed periodically with students. Emergency evacuation drills will also be held periodically. The function of these drills is to create a rapid, safe and organized method of evacuation of the building. All persons present during a drill or actual emergency should follow the established evacuation routes and procedures. Any visitor or student that is not with their class at the time the alarm sounds should leave the building by the closest exit. Students should report to the nearest adult for further instructions. All individuals in the school building at the time are expected to evacuate and move away from the building according to the requirements of the Fire and Police Departments.

ALL DRILLS MUST BE CONSIDERED AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY. No one should return to the building until the all clear signal has been given.

Firearms and Dangerous Weapons

Any individual, not being a law enforcement officer, and notwithstanding any license obtained by him/her under the provisions of chapter 140, carrying on his/her person a firearm, loaded or unloaded or other dangerous weapon in any building, on the grounds of any Belchertown School, or at any school related event without the written authorization of the board or officer in charge of such school, shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. Firearm shall mean any pistol, revolver, rifle or smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet or pellet can be discharged by whatever means.

Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal. See individual school-site's sanctions for such violations.

Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.

Guidance Counselor

There will be two full-time guidance counselors available to service the students at Swift River Elementary. These professionals are trained to assist all students in maximizing their intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development, which further enables students to become responsible, respectful, and productive learners. Support and consultation is available to students, staff, parents/guardians, and the school community.

Health Services

The role of the school nurse is to strengthen and facilitate the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of children. A school nurse is assigned to each school during school hours. In the event of accident or illness, emergency care and first aid will be provided until a parent or parent-assigned adult is contacted and arrangements are made.

Under Massachusetts State Law, students entering Belchertown Public Schools must have up-to-date immunizations, evidence of a recent physical examination within the past twelve months and proof of lead. Children whose immunizations are not up-to-date will be excluded. Talk with your school nurse about requirements.

Students in pre-K through grade 12 will be administered over-the-counter medications with written parental permission. The permission and medications available are listed on the back of the emergency card. Tylenol will only be given after all palliative measures have been tried. If a student requests Tylenol more than three times in a month, a parent/guardian may be notified and requested to seek further medical consultation. Emergency cards **MUST** be filled out before medication is given. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO CARRY THEIR OWN MEDICATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL.** A parent/guardian or a responsible adult must bring the prescription to their child's school nurse.

If your child needs to be on medication during school hours, the following criteria must be met:

- A signed permission by the parent must be on file
- A signed medication order by the licensed prescriber must be on file
- Medication must be hand-carried to the child's school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container by you or a responsible adult

DO NOT SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD

- No narcotics will be administered at school
- Parental requests for your child to stay inside for recess cannot always be honored due to limited staff. A doctor's note will always be honored
- For after school hours, a parent/guardian is responsible for providing medication
- Children who have had a communicable disease are required to present a physician's slip for re-entry into school. Students being treated for Strep Throat or Conjunctivitis (pink eye) must remain out of school for 24 hours **AFTER MEDICATION HAS BEGUN.** This will prevent reinfection
- Students with live lice will be sent home for treatment and checked by the nurse before re-entry into the class
- Several students have severe allergies and/or asthma and are allergic to animal dander, fur and feathers. For this reason, animals are not allowed in the classroom
- Aerosol containers of all types are forbidden in school or in the bus
- Emergency information cards will be sent home in a health packet at the beginning of the school year. This information is our link to locating a parent/guardian in case of an accident or illness. Please fill this card out completely on both sides, noting areas concerning legal custody issues, allergies and medications. Also, please update this information as it becomes necessary.
- Please keep the school nurse informed of any health changes throughout the year. The early detection and correction of health problems and the prevention of illness and disability is the main focus of school nursing
- We urge you to avail yourself of the protection afforded through school insurance. You will be given information regarding various insurance plans during the first week of school. If you do not have health insurance, please contact your school nurse about Mass Health Insurance for your child

- The school nurse is available for any student who becomes ill, has a health related problem or is injured during the school day. Except in an emergency, any student who wishes to see the nurse should first get permission from his/her classroom teacher
- The school is responsible only for immediate first aid. The School Committee does not pay any medical or hospital bills incurred as a result of an accident to the pupil at school. The parent/guardian is responsible for the payment of such bills
- In case of an accident, no matter how minor, the student should report the accident to the staff immediately. In the case of severe accidents or acute illness, emergency care will be given and the parent/guardian will be notified.
- The Department of Public Health has granted trained staff members of Belchertown School System the right to administer prescription medications to students on field trips when a school nurse is not present. Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing medications on field trips, after school hours, and on weekends. Please refer to your school nurse

Illness and Injury

The focus of school nursing practice is the enhancement of a student's capacity for learning, growing and developing. Students with signs and symptoms of any contagious illness will be sent home. With school inclusion, more medically fragile and chronically ill children are mainstreamed into the classroom. All students are entitled to a healthy and disease-free school environment. Thank you for your cooperation.

All children have recess (unless environmental factors exist). It is important for children to go out to play, socialize, exercise, and have fresh air. If your child needs to stay in for medical reasons, please provide a note from your healthcare provider.

If the school nurse determines that a student is unable to remain in school, a parent/guardian will be contacted to make arrangements for dismissal.

When a student returns to school after surgery, injury or extended illness over 5 days, a doctor's note is required indicating any restrictions, accommodations, physical education that a student may require.

Please keep your child home if temperature is over 100 degrees, diarrhea or vomiting or illness related.

Yearly Mandated DPH Screening

Kindergarten requirements: Up to date Immunizations
Up to date Physical
Hearing Screen done by school nurse

Under Massachusetts State Law, students entering Belchertown Public Schools must have up-to-date immunizations and evidence of a recent physical examination, within the past 12 months. Children whose immunizations are not up-to-date will be excluded. Talk with your school nurse about requirements.

Homework

Homework has a variety of purposes; practice to improve knowledge and enhance skills, feedback for teachers regarding both the understanding of and ability to utilize the taught curricula, and a planned tool to extend the school day to allow students increased opportunity for discovery and applications.

Even though the number of minutes each night that a child may spend on homework may be influenced by factors such as level of difficulty, the assignment of special projects, and whether or not some work was left to the last minute causing the amount of homework to backup, the Belchertown School District feels comfortable with the following average per day homework ranges per grade level:

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Average per Day</u>
1	15 – 20 minutes
2	20 – 30 minutes
3	20 – 40 minutes

Hopefully knowing these average ranges of homework will be helpful to you as you help your child plan his/her daily schedule to successfully complete homework assignments. You are always encouraged to keep in contact with your child's teacher regarding difficulties that he/she is having regarding completing homework assignments.

Library Media Specialist

Mission

The Swift River Elementary School Media Center supports the school's mission to encourage the efforts of all individuals to become lifelong learners. The mission of the media program is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of information. This mission is accomplished:

- a. by providing intellectual and physical access to literacy materials in all formats.
- b. by providing materials and instruction that stimulate interest in reading, viewing and using information and ideas.
- c. by working with educators to design learning strategies to meet the needs of individual students.

Goals

The goal of the Swift River Elementary School Media Center is to implement, enrich, and support the education program of the school. It will provide the materials, services and facilities for the instructional program needs of the students and faculty. The media center provides access to a collection of skillfully selected, organized and managed resources thereby providing all members of the school community with the broadest possible range of information and ideas.

Collection

The media center collection is selected and developed cooperatively by the media specialist and the faculty to support the school's curriculum and to contribute to the learning goals of the teachers and students. The selection of materials at the media center is based upon the education suitability of the resource for its intended use. The resources must represent diverse points of view, stimulate growth in critical thinking, and be appropriate to the educational program's intended audience.

Operation

The media center is open every day during regular school hours, and all students are encouraged to utilize the resource frequently. The media center will be supervised by a school librarian. Schedules will be created so that all children have the opportunity to work with the librarian on projects, lessons, book readings and discussions. In addition, the teachers are encouraged to bring their students to the library to do research, use the computers and to check out books of interest. Students are expected to behave in a manner conducive to quiet study and research. Group study is encouraged, providing that it does not interfere with the library instruction, or individual study. Staff members may borrow as many items as needed, but should be considerate of the needs of other staff members and students. Fines will not be charged to students or staff.

The student agrees to be responsible for the materials borrowed. If a student loses or damages an item, that student will be required to pay the replacement cost of that item, before being allowed to borrow other items.

Lost and Found

Lost and found articles are stored in a designated area at each school. If your child has a missing item, please send in a note with a description of the lost item to your child's teacher, or feel free to come

to school yourself and ask for the "Lost & Found" area. Unclaimed articles are distributed and donated appropriately during the summer. It is strongly recommended that all clothing, especially boots, snow pants, jackets, etc. be marked with your child's name on an inside area.

MEAL PROGRAM

Belchertown Public Schools participates in the USDA National School Lunch and Breakfast programs and is required to follow all USDA policies related to these programs.

Free meals for all children have been extended to the end of school year 2022. How and where we serve school meals next year depends on DESE guidance, which has not yet been released. Although meals are free for children, parents are still encouraged to submit an application for free or reduced price meals if you think your household may qualify based on income. Proving eligibility for free or reduced price meals at school can qualify families for reduced cost utilities, p-EBT, fuel assistance, and other benefits. 2021-2022 Free and reduced price meal applications will be available on the district website **after July 1**.

Students will have the opportunity to eat a home-prepared snack during morning snack time. Milk can be purchased for \$0.40 or parents/guardians may provide a water bottle or a milk or juice box. No glass bottles are allowed.

Registering for a FREE mySchoolBucks Account:

- You will first need your student's pin number assigned to them and sent home via mail/email in August.
- Go to the district website at www.belchertownps.org, then click on the quick link for lunch menus, click on the link to mySchoolBucks OR go directly to www.myschoolbucks.com.
- Click REGISTER FOR A FREE ACCOUNT and enter the required information.
- Click FINISH to complete the initial registration process.

Adding Students to Your Account:

- Once you are logged into your new account, click MY HOUSEHOLD from the left-side navigation bar.
- Click LOOK UP YOUR STUDENTS.
- Select your child's school from the drop-down box.
- Enter your child's first name.
- Enter your child's last name.
- Enter your child's student ID number.
- Click FIND STUDENT.
- Click ADD STUDENT.
- Click FINISH or click ADD ANOTHER STUDENT to repeat the process for additional children.

Making a Deposit:

- From the My Household page, click MAKE A PAYMENT.
- Enter the deposit amount for each student/staff account, then click ADD TO BASKET.

- Review the amount(s) you have entered and click CHECK OUT NOW. If you need to adjust an amount click CONTINUE SHOPPING.
- Enter your payment information and click CONTINUE.
- If paying with a credit or debit card, enter the three or four digit Verification Code that appears on your card, then click CONTINUE.
- Review your order and make sure all deposits are correct, then click PLACE ORDER.
- Click PRINT ORDER to generate a receipt of your transaction in a new window. We recommend that you keep a copy for records.
- Click FINISH to complete the transaction

MCAS Schedule

All grade 3 students at Swift River Elementary School will be participating in MCAS testing for English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Those dates have not yet been released by DESE. We will update you when that information becomes available. We ask that you, as parents and guardians, help us ensure that all students are prepared for the MCAS testing dates. Your child's attendance at school is vital during the MCAS testing period. Please do not schedule any vacations or appointments during the testing period. In addition, we request that during the testing sessions you take additional care to make sure that your child gets a good night's sleep and a substantial breakfast in the morning on the test dates. The department of education at this time has not released the MCAS dates for the 2021-2022. Once identified a notice to 3rd grade families will be notified.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The CSSR PTO believes that working together makes a difference in our schools. The PTO strives to help the home, school, and community work together to provide the best possible learning environment for our children. We believe that this partnership will improve and enrich our children's education. We hope that you will join the PTO and support this important partnership to help Belchertown children be their best.

Our goals continue to offer family programs, support teachers and school improvement goals, and effectively involve parents/guardians.

To become involved with the PTO, call Swift River School for the name and number of the president. Also, look for our membership forms were sent home with your child(ren) in September.

BE A MEMBER OF THE PTO BECAUSE WORKING TOGETHER DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Parties

The individual classroom will adhere to the school district's wellness policy and decide upon

additional activities. For more information in regards to the school district's policy on celebrations/parties, please refer to the full text of the Wellness Policy on our website: www.belchertownps.org under the District tab, District Policy Manual, then search for policy ADF.

Personal Information

Class lists and related information cannot be distributed to parents/guardians due to the implementation of our new security regulations and student record regulations promulgated by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Placement of Students

Beginning in March, all teachers along with the Guidance Department begin the process of student placement for the following year. Placement of students is a very involved and complex process as many factors must be taken into consideration, such as, but not limited to:

- Teacher input
- Special needs consideration
- Title I
- Class size (both pupil and building considerations)
- Placement of new students
- Parental/Guardian input/teaching and learning styles
- Heterogeneous classes/balance between boys and girls
- 504 and/or DCAP Accommodation Plans

Constructing "well-balanced" classrooms that are diverse, stimulating, and educationally sound helps to foster an enriched learning environment for all children. We appreciate the fact that each child brings their own unique talents and interests to the classroom. Please know we will make a concerted effort to provide a good placement for your child while developing well-balanced and diverse classrooms. Parents and guardians wishing to provide additional input are requested to adhere to the guidelines as stated in this handbook. All parents/guardians will receive a letter that gives them an opportunity to provide pertinent information within a given time frame. Parental input must be submitted in writing, within the timelines given, to either the Guidance Office or Principal's Office at Swift River Elementary School. Any parental input should allow for placement flexibility while being informative. Please do not name a specific teacher for your child. Confidential concerns should be addressed to the Guidance Office. Please remember that final placement decisions rest with the placement team as they have all the information necessary to make a good placement for your child for the upcoming year. There will be a hold on student placement changes until September 28, 2018. This gives the students, teachers, and staff a chance to settle in, develop relationships, and establish routines before determining if the placements are successful.

Progress Reports/Report Cards

Report cards will be issued 3 times throughout the year. Progress reports are not issued for grades 1,2 and 3 at the midpoint of each term unlike secondary level. Report cards must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the homeroom teacher. In the fall, teachers will

meet with parents/guardians for a fall conference regarding your child's progress during the first term. See the School Calendar (p. 10) in this handbook for dates that report cards will be issued. (December 6th, March 20th, Last Day of School)

Publicity

Video, media, and voice publicity

It is the practice of the Belchertown School District to give permission for school personnel and the media (e.g., cable television, newspapers, commercial television, radio, and the world wide web) to develop and present in the classroom, in the school hallways, on web sites, to the public, print, pictures, and voice related to school programs and students for the purposes of public relations and the dissemination of non-confidential information (i.e., news stories). The Belchertown School District gives such permission without the prior individual approval of parents and guardians.

Students at the schools are occasionally photographed and/or videotaped by local newspapers and/or television stations while participating in school-wide and/or classroom events. If you do not wish for your child's name to be released, or to be photographed, and/or videotaped on such occasions, or for any reason, please inform the Principal at the individual school your child is attending, in writing, prior to September 15 of the school year. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to notify the school in writing, prior to September 15th, if there are any concerns and or restrictions regarding the publicity of their child's picture, name, voice, or representation in the classroom, school building, newspaper, television, radio, or videotape for teacher/student evaluation purposes. If we do not receive written documentation to the contrary, then we will assume that the school has your permission.

Special Needs Referrals

The parent/guardian of a Belchertown resident who is between the ages of 2.5 years and 22 years old may contact the school guidance office or the Office of Special Education for concerns and/or evaluations related to a known or suspected disability. Areas of concern may be in: academic skills, behavior, social skills, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, speech and/or language skills, and/or emotional health.

Title I /Reading Intervention

Title I is a federally funded educational program which mandates that funds be used to pay for supplemental instruction to eligible children. If you have any questions regarding this program, please call the Assistant Superintendent Dr. Shawn Fortin at Central Office, 323-0425 extension 116.

Students are selected by a weighted multiple criteria checklist that includes: classroom

performance, teacher assessment, achievement levels and achievement test scores. The results of these criteria are weighted on a point system. Students with the greatest number of points are considered first. The academic goals of the Title I Program this school year call for strengthening the English/Language in Grades 1 and 2.

Students may receive extra help from Title I Teachers, who work with them individually or in a small group. The classroom teachers *work closely with Title I staff* to provide an integrated program which will help all students meet the high expectations set forth in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

If your child is selected for the Title I Program, you will receive a permission slip at the beginning of the school year.

Vision: The primary goal of the Belchertown Title I program is to help all students attain the high standards set forth in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks by providing instruction which supplements the regular curriculum.

Mission: It is our mission to provide evidenced based programs and practices in early literacy development that will aid those students who are considered to be most at risk for failure. We believe that students need to become successful in school from the very beginning of their educational journey. Therefore it is our mission to concentrate Title I services in the elementary grades in order to provide students with a solid foundation that will set the stage for success and a lifelong love of learning.

During supplemental lessons, Title I instructors are able to work in the five areas identified by the National Reading Panel as essential for early reading success:

- *Phonemic Awareness: The ability to hear and identify sounds in the spoken word.
- *Phonics: The relationship between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language.
- *Fluency: The capacity to read text accurately and quickly.
- *Vocabulary: The words students must know to communicate effectively.
- *Comprehension: The ability to understand and gain meaning from what has been read.

It is essential to develop these skills early on so that students most at risk will become proficient in reading by third grade.

Parent/guardian involvement is another important component in our Title I program. Parents/guardians are involved in several ways; first and most importantly we help parents/guardians understand how they can help in their child's achievement. There are many meetings and workshops for parents/guardians. Secondly, we help parents/guardians to understand the program and the legal requirements of NCLB. Parents/guardians are involved in all aspects of developing the Title I plan from student selection, program design and

implementation, to rewriting Parent Involvement Policy and Parent Compacts. Thirdly, parents/guardians are involved in evaluating the effectiveness of the Title I parental involvement component.

Toy Guidelines

Please do not send students to school with toys that may be lost, stolen, and/or broken. Many children are upset when their toys are lost or when trading of toys occurs. The best way to avoid this is to keep all toys at home.