

**SCHOHARIE  
ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL**



**Student-Parent-Teacher  
HANDBOOK**

**2023-2024**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<b>Message from the Principal and Mission Statement</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>District Calendar</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Information and Procedures</b>	<b>4 - 7</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>7 - 8</b>
<b>Daily Time Schedules</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Discipline Procedures</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Student Rights and Responsibilities</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Code of Conduct</b>	<b>11-15</b>
<b>Bullying and Cyberbullying</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>17-18</b>
<b>Important Resources and Liaisons</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>SCS Electronic Technology Acceptable Use Procedure</b>	<b>20-22</b>
<b>Personal Items</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Food Services</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Health Services</b>	<b>23-25</b>
<b>Special Program Offerings</b>	<b>25-26</b>
<b>Physical Education Requirements</b>	<b>27</b>

## **Dear Schoharie Families,**

Welcome to Schoharie Elementary School: “A collaborative learning community, supporting the whole child.” We hope you find the educational experience here to be positive, supportive, and successful for students and you.

This handbook has been developed to serve as a guide and a resource for you. The handbook addresses our school procedures, programs, services, and behavioral expectations. We hope that you find this guide helpful and informative.

We are always striving to improve communication between parents, the local community and the school community. Please contact us with any suggestions or information you may have which will help us improve the effectiveness of our communication and everyone’s experience.

Parents are the child’s first and most important teacher. The teachers, staff and administration of Schoharie strive to support you in your role as a parent. We invite you to become an active member of our school community. Please contact your child’s teacher, or the EPTSO if you have an interest in volunteering with the school. We look forward to working with you in the creation of a learning environment which is caring, nurturing and supportive of your child’s hopes and dreams.

Andrea Polikoski  
Elementary Principal

*“We strive to be a compassionate, culturally proficient, positive community of lifelong learners working to our fullest potential”*

### **Mission Statement**

The community of Schoharie Elementary is dedicated to creating and sustaining a learning environment which supports and values individual growth and accomplishment in an environment which is collaborative and nurturing. The core values of honesty, fairness, perseverance, responsibility and patience are actively discussed, modeled, encouraged and recognized daily.

## 2023-2024 District Calendar

### INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

#### School Messenger

Schoharie Central School District uses an automated call, text and email system called School Messenger to strengthen communications with all families. School Messenger will be used for routine calls and reminders, such as attendance; to share district and school news; and to inform about emergencies including school closings, cancellations and delays.

School Messenger will automatically integrate contact information from the district's SchoolTool student management system for parents/guardians of enrolled students. This means that parents/guardians will be automatically connected to School Messenger through SchoolTool, and if their information is up to date in SchoolTool, it will be up to date in School Messenger. There is no separate School Messenger account for parents/guardians to register for or maintain.

#### School Closings and Delays

In the event that school/after school activities are canceled due to inclement weather or other emergency situations, in addition to utilizing School Messenger, the information can be found on local media including television, radio and newspapers and via postings on the [Schoharie CSD Website](#).

**EMERGENCY EARLY DISMISSAL PLAN:** In the event that school is dismissed at an unscheduled time due to unforeseen circumstances, you will receive an automated notification from School Messenger. Students will be dismissed following their normal dismissal plan for that day.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN:** In the event of an emergency evacuation of the school, you will receive an automated notification from School Messenger with all pertinent information. Students will be transported to a safe location following the district safety plan where you may pick up your student.

**STUDENT MEDICAL EMERGENCY:** In the event that the student has a medical emergency, every attempt will be made to contact a parent/guardian/emergency contact person. If the school nurse deems it necessary, an ambulance will be called to the school and the student will be transported to the nearest hospital as deemed appropriate by emergency medical services.

## **Parent/Guardian Contact Information**

It is important for your child's safety that we have accurate information on file. This information includes:

- Current home address, mailing address, and telephone (home and/or cell phone) numbers
- Parent(s) work phone numbers
- Parent(s) email addresses
- Emergency contact person(s)/phone number(s)
- Custody arrangements (**please be aware that court documents must be on file with us to be honored**)

Changes to any of the above information should be submitted in writing to the elementary office. In the event that you change your home address, three new (3) proofs of residency must be submitted to the elementary office along with written notification.

## **Early Release for Medical or Dental Appointments**

Whenever possible, please schedule medical and dental appointments after school hours. Understanding that this is not always possible, please follow this procedure:

- When you or a designated individual from your approved pick up list arrives, please come to the elementary office with a valid photo id and sign the student out.
- We will call your child from the classroom.
- Before leaving, please be sure that your child has both the in-class assignments and the homework assignments for that day.
- If your child returns to school later that day, please return to the office and sign him/her back into the school.

## **Phone Calls to and from Home**

Please refrain from calling school with a message for your child unless it is an emergency. A learning environment free from interruptions is optimal.

Teaching students to be responsible is an integral part of the educational process at Schoharie Elementary. Therefore, we discourage students from making phone calls home because they forgot lunch money, homework assignments, books, and personal items.

It is our desire that the student, parents and staff will work together to promote responsible behaviors in our students. We encourage students to organize their belongings the evening before for the following school day. Included in these needs are:

- Books and homework assignments
- Lunch or lunch money
- Permission slips and money for field trips or special events
- Musical instruments
- Notes from home: Absence excuses

- Sneakers for gym
- Appropriate dress for winter (boots, hats, gloves/mittens)

### **Visitor's Policy**

All visitors are required to report to the elementary office with a valid photo id to sign in to an electronic database and receive a visitor's pass. Please be sure to state the purpose and location of your visit as it is noted on your pass. All visitors are required to wear this pass while in the building; the pass will be removed when the visitor signs out of the building.

In order to ensure only authorized persons are in the building, all staff members will ask visitors not wearing a pass, or in an undesignated location, to report to the office to sign in and receive one.

Only school personnel are permitted to be on the playground during the school day. Parents, community members and other non-school personnel are not permitted to observe, play or interact with students and/or staff during recess or instructional periods. Exceptions to this protocol include special school-wide events and special classroom events (picnics/parties) to which parents have been specifically invited to attend. On such occasions, parents and other visitors should follow sign-in procedures as outlined above or sign-in procedures established for the specific event. We thank you for your cooperation.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents play a vital role in the education of children. Children excel when their parents are actively involved in the educational process and emphasize the importance of learning to their children. This involvement may take many different forms, from reading to your child each evening to becoming an active parent volunteer through our Elementary Parent Teacher Student Organization (EPTSO). The EPTSO organizes fundraisers and events throughout the year and volunteers are always needed. Reach out to an EPTSO representative or attend one of the monthly meetings. We would love to have you involved! Email: SchoharieEPTSO@gmail.com

### **Reporting to Parents**

Reporting your child's progress in the elementary school is accomplished through progress reports and report cards. Parent conferences are also used, as appropriate, to reinforce the progress reports and report cards. Parent conferences may be arranged at the request of either the parent or teacher. Please feel free to contact the teacher with any concerns you may have regarding your child's progress.

Parents will be notified as soon as possible regarding difficulties and/or lack of expected progress your child may be experiencing. It is our goal to work together with you to support your child's learning and provide opportunities for success.

Progress reports will be sent home to update parents on their child's progress. Trimester report cards will be sent home with students and will also be available in the [Parent Portal](#) for parents to view. A copy of the report card is filed in your child's cumulative academic file.

Non-custodial parents may request a copy of their child's report card and progress reports, discipline, attendance, testing results and field trip information. You can contact the elementary office for more information.

### **Reporting Schedule - Kindergarten-Grade 5**

#### **Progress Reports sent home with students:**

- October 20, 2023
- January 26, 2024
- May 5, 2024

#### **Report Cards posted in the [Parent Portal](#) and sent home with students:**

- December 13, 2023
- March 20, 2024
- June 26, 2024

### **Homework Policies**

Schoharie Elementary School's homework policy aims to support students in the forming of routine homework habits and strong study skills. Please check the [District Website](#), or with your child's teacher for the specific supplies needed by your child for this school year. The level of responsibility increases as your child progresses through the grades.

Parents play a vital role in homework support. Parents are asked to check student agenda books daily in grades 2-5. In these grades, parents will be asked to sign the agenda books daily to ensure the students develop and practice productive homework habits. A copy of the District calendar can be found in the front cover of the agenda.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Absences**

In the event your child is absent from school, please send in a written note of excuse with them on the day they return to school, as required by NYS law. Please include in the note the date of absence/tardiness and the reason for the absence. It is school policy that if an excuse is not received **within three days of the absence**, it will be recorded as an unexcused absence.

According to NYS law, excused absences include:

- Student sickness

- Death in the family
- Doctor's appointments
- Religious observations

According to NYS law, unexcused absences include:

- Oversleeping
- Visiting
- Going on vacation
- Missing the bus

Research shows that student achievement drops significantly when students miss more than 10% of the school year due to absences. While we understand there are often specific medical needs that impact attendance, and we work closely with those families impacted, the following procedures have been established for unexcused absences:

- 1) After being absent, tardy 5 times and/or early leaves:
  - a) Phone call home
  - b) Written notification will be sent home
  
- 2) After being absent, tardy 10 times and/or early leaves:
  - a) Phone call home
  - b) Written notification will be sent home
  - c) The parent will call the school nurse each subsequent time the student is absent or tardy
  
- 3) After being absent, tardy 15 times and/or early leaves:
  - a) All of the above & a home visit by school personnel
  
- 4) After being absent, tardy 20 times:
  - a) All of the above & a conference with the administration, school nurse, and guidance counselor or social worker in order to decide upon a course of action, which could include filing a PINS (Person in Need of Supervision) petition with Family Court/Hotline call to Child Protective Services (CPS)
  - b) A letter from your child's physician will be required for each future absence.

Each case will be determined on an individual basis according to the existing circumstances. Legitimate absences because of chronic medical illness will not be considered as an attendance problem.



## **DAILY TIME SCHEDULES**

### **Daily Schedule**

7:45 - Building opens, student arrival

7:55 - Instruction begins, all students arriving after this time must be signed into the elementary office

2:00 - Students dismissed, Afterschool Activity period begins

3:20 - Afterschool Activity period ends, late bus run

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

Behaviors that are hurtful and/or dangerous are outlined specifically in the Discipline Code. Behaviors are divided into three levels and the corresponding consequences for each level of offense are stated.

The Schoharie Elementary learning community believes that all children are entitled to be treated fairly and with dignity. Discipline issues are initially addressed at the classroom, bus, and cafeteria or playground level. Unresolved or ongoing issues and more serious offenses are referred to the elementary office for administrative action.

Discipline is a shared responsibility between home and school. Parental notification of disciplinary action may be written (discipline referral form) or verbal (telephone call). If deemed necessary, the development of an Individual Behavior Plan (IBP) will be a collaborative effort involving the parent, student, supervising adult (teacher, bus driver, and teaching assistant), counselor, and the principal.

All disciplinary procedures taken are in accordance with Schoharie Board of Education policies and NYS Education statutes and regulations.

### **Video Cameras in Common Areas and on Buses**

Video cameras are used to monitor student behavior in common areas such as hallways, cafeteria, and gymnasiums, and also on school vehicles transporting students to and from school or extracurricular activities. Video is used by administration only and, due to its confidential nature, is not shared with anyone else. Students found violating bus conduct rules will be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with the District's Code of Conduct.

## Student's Rights and Responsibilities

### IT IS THE STUDENT'S RIGHT TO:

- Attend school in the district in which his/her parents or legal guardian resides
- Express his/her opinion
- Dress in such a way as to express his/her personality
- Expect that the school will be an orderly place for all students to gain an education
- Be fairly disciplined according to the Code of Conduct
- Receive information about solving personal problems and to have a chance to receive help to solve problems that cannot be solved alone
- Be treated equally and fairly
- Be respected as an individual

### IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Attend school daily, except when ill, and arrive on time.
- Express opinions and ideas in a respectful manner so as not to offend, slander, or disrupt the rights of others.
- Dress so as not to endanger the physical health or safety, to limit participation in school activities, to be offensive, distracting.
- To know all rules and expectations and to behave accordingly.
- Be willing to give information in disciplinary cases.
- Be aware of the information and services available and to ask for help when needed. Learn about serious and dangerous wrong doings and to try to get help to solve problems.
- Treat others equally and fairly.
- Respect the rights of others.

## **Schoharie Elementary Code of Conduct**

**Be Respectful. Be Responsible. Be Safe. Be a Community.**

### **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

Schoharie Central School students, faculty and staff have united behind these expectations: Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe, and Be a Community to develop a positive school environment through PBIS, a proven, research-based program. PBIS helps students learn positive and appropriate behaviors. Schools can maintain a safe learning environment where teachers can teach and students can learn. A positive school culture supports and promotes educational growth, achievement and academic success for all students.

In all locations, students are to show pride in learning and demonstrate respect, compassion and patience for their peers. These expectations developed by the PBIS team are taught to the whole school twice a year and reinforced by staff and students consistently in the appropriate settings.

In addition to our school-wide PBIS program, classroom teachers also implement the Responsive Classroom approach. We believe it is our professional responsibility to establish an environment and culture that reflects and supports the Responsive Classroom core beliefs.

The Responsive Classroom approach develops students' intrinsic motivation to choose socially and morally responsible behavior. Responsive Classroom operates on the belief that social-emotional learning is just as important as academic learning, and that social-emotional skills need to be explicitly taught and modeled.

The entire approach is positive, not punitive. Logical consequences are directly from the Responsive Classroom philosophy and should be determined from the behavior. These are examples of the logical consequences:

- Loss of privilege
- If you break it, fix it
- Time away

**Schoharie Elementary Code of Conduct (cont.)**

<b>Level 1 Behaviors</b>	<b>Level 1 Consequences (within classroom)</b>
<p>Verbal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Calling out, inappropriate statements, yelling/screaming, crying, making noises, tattling, side conversations, complaining/whining, bossy, arguing</li> </ul> <p>Physical:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Out of seat, fidgeting, lacking personal space, frequent/unnecessary trips to the bathroom or nurse, pushing/shoving, hands on others (no intent to harm)</li> </ul> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Defiance, non-compliance, lagging response time, not submitting work in a timely manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relate to classroom management system</li> <li>● Reteach rules, routines, and procedures</li> <li>● Pre-sets</li> <li>● Planned ignoring</li> <li>● Proximity</li> <li>● Prompting/scaffolding</li> <li>● Redirection</li> <li>● Specific language</li> <li>● Talk to student 1:1</li> <li>● Add humor (not sarcasm)</li> <li>● Change tone of class (play music, switch teaching method)</li> <li>● Offer breaks</li> <li>● Provide choices</li> <li>● Utilize peer helpers/teacher assistants</li> <li>● Apologize</li> <li>● Provide a caring gesture</li> <li>● Change classroom arrangement</li> <li>● Visuals</li> <li>● Teach students how to decide when to “tell an adult, handle it yourself, or let it go”</li> <li>● Parent Contact</li> </ul>

**Schoharie Elementary Code of Conduct (cont.)**

<b>Level 2 Behaviors (in general, level 1 behaviors, but increased in frequency, intensity, and/or duration)</b>	<b>Level 2 Consequences (handled in classroom, but if chronic, refer to IST)</b>
<p>Verbal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Swearing</li> <li>● Threats</li> <li>● Continued rude/disrespectful statements, or crying (15 minutes or more)</li> <li>● Use of slurs</li> </ul> <p>Physical:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Property destruction of their own items</li> <li>● Elopement from classroom (student within proximity of classroom, no risk of eloping from field of supervision if teacher is able to stand in doorway. ex: student walks out of class and sits in hallway)</li> <li>● Pacing around the room (15 minutes or more)</li> <li>● Rolling on carpet or ground (15 minutes or more)</li> <li>● Throwing small or soft items (not at people)</li> <li>● Climbing desk, chair, or other furniture</li> <li>● Hitting/kicking (light force or intensity)</li> <li>● Spitting</li> </ul> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Non-compliance/defiance (more than 15 minutes)</li> <li>● Low intensity theft (ex: pencil)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review of logical consequences</li> <li>● Goal-setting</li> <li>● Modeling</li> <li>● Role play</li> <li>● Structured reflection</li> <li>● Class meeting</li> <li>● Collaborative planning/problem-solving</li> <li>● Active listening</li> <li>● Flat affect</li> <li>● Modifications (demands, setting)</li> <li>● Offer breaks</li> <li>● Sensory tools</li> <li>● Individual schedule</li> <li>● Self-monitoring plans</li> <li>● Guidelines of where to pace/where and how to take a break</li> <li>● Calming space in room</li> <li>● Private notes</li> <li>● Social story</li> <li>● Provide space</li> <li>● Talk with student (do not remove them for non-compliance/refusal)</li> <li>● Parent contact from teacher</li> <li>● Office discipline referral when limit of classroom management system has been reached</li> <li>● IST referral if behaviors chronic               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ May result in individual reinforcement/behavior chart</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Schoharie Elementary Code of Conduct (cont.)**

<b>Level 3 Behaviors</b>	<b>Level 3 Consequences (require team support outside the classroom)</b>
<p>Verbal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Specific threats (health and safety)</li> <li>● Swearing (continuous)</li> <li>● Use of slurs (continuous and already addressed)</li> </ul> <p>Physical:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hitting/kicking (with intensity and intent to harm)</li> <li>● Self-injurious behaviors (intent to harm or could cause harm)</li> <li>● Throwing large items; throwing items that could be harmful (at people)</li> <li>● Property destruction (school property, continuous)</li> <li>● Elopement from visual supervision/building</li> <li>● Biting</li> <li>● Climbing bookshelves, windowsills, or high structures</li> <li>● Possession or use of a weapon with intent to harm</li> <li>● High intensity theft</li> <li>● Inappropriate touching or showing of body parts or images with intent</li> </ul> <p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Non-compliance/defiance (continuing more than 15 minutes and disrupting from the learning environment after exhausting individualized interventions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Remove peers (often easier and safer to remove class than student)</li> <li>● Allow time and space</li> <li>● Flat affect and limit to non-verbal</li> <li>● Planned ignoring</li> <li>● Administrative assistance (handle with care)</li> <li>● Parent contact from teacher/administration</li> <li>● Mobile crisis support</li> <li>● Behavior Support Plan (BSP)</li> <li>● Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)</li> <li>● Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)</li> </ul>
<p>Level 3 behaviors may result in an office referral. Logical consequences will relate to the specific behavior and may include; temporary, short term removal from class, work in an alternate location/time, in school suspension, suspension of extra-curricular privileges, suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion, reimbursements, restitution, or referral for legal action.</p>	

**Dress Code:** Students must dress in a way that allows each student to learn. Private parts must be covered. Clothing cannot have any hate/violent symbols, or images related to drugs or alcohol. Clothing and accessories should not pose a threat to another individual.

### **Glossary of Terms**

**Envisioning Language-** Envisioning language gives children a vision of what is possible.

**Reinforcing Language-** Reinforcing language occurs when educators encourage students to continue academic and social behaviors that students are doing well.

**Reminding Language-** reminding language is any prompt you give students to remind them of what they should be doing.

**Proximity-** Proximity control is a strategy in which the teacher reduces the physical distance between herself and a student as a way to remind that student of behavioral expectations.

**Elopement-** a student leaving an assigned area without permission from or knowledge of staff, often to escape and/or avoid a school-related situation or task.

**Sensory Tool-** An object that helps calm or stimulate a child's nervous system.

**Social Story-** Social Stories are a social learning tool that supports the safe and meaningful exchange of information between parents, professionals, and children of all ages.

**Behavior Support Plan (BSP)-** is a plan that assists someone in building positive behaviors to replace or reduce a challenging/dangerous behavior.

**Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)-** Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is a process for identifying problem behaviors and developing interventions to improve or eliminate those behaviors.

**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)-** A behavior intervention plan (BIP) is a written improvement plan created for a student based on the outcome of the functional behavior assessment (FBA). The FBA should identify what is maintaining or causing a challenging behavior, and the BIP specifies the actions to take to improve or replace the behavior.

### **Bullying and Cyberbullying:**

For the purposes of this code of conduct and its implementation, “bullying” is defined as the repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse, or through attacks on the property of another that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or that takes place off school grounds but is designed to or has the effect of interfering with one’s ability to be educated in a safe, non-hostile environment.

Bullying can take three forms:

- a) Physical (including, but not limited to, hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, taking personal belongings);
- b) Verbal (including, but not limited to, taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, making threats); and
- c) Psychological (including, but not limited to, spreading rumors; manipulating social relationships; or engaging in social exclusion, extortion, or intimidation).

As with other forms of bullying, cyber bullying is an attempt to display power and control over someone perceived as weaker. Cyber-bullying involving District students may occur both on campus and off school grounds and may involve student use of the District Internet system or student use of personal digital devices, such as cell phones, digital cameras, and personal computers to engage in bullying.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology; harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings (including blogs).

Any student who believes that he/she is being subjected to bullying/cyber-bullying behavior, as well as any other person who has knowledge of or witnesses any possible occurrence of bullying/cyber-bullying, shall report the behavior to any staff member or the Building Principal.

The Schoharie Learning Community is committed to protecting the physical and emotional safety of all of our students. All reports of bullying and/or threatening behavior will be investigated and addressed, appropriate to the child’s age and the severity of the situation.



## Transportation

Please use the [Transportation Google Form](#) to indicate your transportation needs for your student. Whether your student requires busing, will be walking/biking, or will be driven by an adult, please submit one entry for each student so that we can have the most up to date information on file. **Please note that busing will not be provided to students who live within one mile from the school.** If you have any questions regarding your child's transportation needs or need to change them during the school year please feel free to contact the transportation department via email [transportation@schoharieschools.org](mailto:transportation@schoharieschools.org) or by phone at (518) 295-6684.

### Parent/Guardian Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures:

**Drop Off:** Please pull into the Drop Off Lane and stay in your car. Drop off begins at 7:45am. Should you need to assist your child with their seatbelt, please do so quickly so that we can keep the line of cars moving. Staff members will be stationed there to assist and safely escort your child across the crosswalk. We appreciate your assistance in managing traffic and staying in the line up. Pulling out and around parked vehicles is a safety concern, please stay in line and proceed only when the cars in front of you have pulled ahead.

**Pick Up:** Please pull into the Pick Up Lane and remain in your car. Your child will be escorted to the parking lot sidewalk.

### Bus Safety:

#### **Students riding a school bus should always:**

- Arrive at the bus stop five minutes early.
- Stand at least 5 giant steps (10 feet) away from the edge of the road.
- Wait until the bus stops, the door opens, board carefully.
- Stay in your seat and sit quietly so that the driver is not distracted.
- Be careful that clothing with drawstrings and book bags with straps or dangling objects do not get caught in the handrail or door when exiting the bus.
- Check both ways for cars before stepping off the bus carefully and crossing the road.

#### **Crossing students should:**

- Walk in front of the bus; never walk behind the bus.
- Walk on the sidewalk or along the side of the road to a point at least 10 giant steps ahead of the bus.
- Be sure the bus driver can see you, and you can see the bus driver.
- **Wait for the driver's signal to cross.**

- The bus driver and others cannot see you if you are standing closer than 10 feet to the bus. Stay out of the danger zone!
- If something falls under or near the bus, tell the driver. NEVER try to pick it up yourself!
- While waiting for the bus, stay in a safe place away from the street. Headphones and earbuds can keep you from hearing the instructions and warnings from the driver, take them off when entering or leaving the bus.
- When you get on or off the bus, look for the bus safety lights and make sure they are flashing.
- **Be alert to traffic. When you get on or off the bus, look left, right, left before you enter or cross the street.**

### **Bus Conduct:**

When reviewing these behavioral expectations with your child, please emphasize to him/her that riding on a school bus is a privilege. Safety is our top priority. Students are expected to:

- Show respect for all persons in authority
- Be reasonably quiet and orderly
- Demonstrate consideration for people and property at the bus stop and on the bus
- Enter and leave the bus only when it is motionless
- Remain in their seats while the bus is moving
- Keep all body parts and other objects inside the bus window
- Behave in a manner which protects the safety of all of the other passengers. Fighting, threatening others, use of abusive or offensive language/actions and smoking are not permitted and are subject to disciplinary action.
- Refrain from eating and/or drinking on the bus.
- Oversized items: Please use a plastic shopping bag as a guide for determining if an item can be safely carried on the bus. Only musical instruments of a reasonable size may be carried on the bus.
- Animal specimens are not allowed on the buses and must be brought to and from school by parents/guardians.

Any consequence for misbehavior will be implemented by an administrator and will be consistent with the severity of the infraction. Misbehavior on the bus will be addressed through the tiered level of infractions and consequences (Level 1, 2, 3) and may result in a suspension of bus privileges. In the event of a suspension off the bus, parents/guardians are responsible for providing/arranging for transportation to and from school.

## **Important Resources and Liaisons**

### **SCHOHARIE COUNTY OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

The Children and Family Services Division has responsibility for adults, children, and family services (other than financial and medical support) designed to keep families together and to protect children and adults from abuse and exploitation. Please see the following website for more information: [Schoharie County Office of Children and Family Services](#). **To report a child abuse/maltreatment situation you need to call the Child Protective Services Hotline at 1-800-342-3720.**

### **DASA**

Schoharie Elementary School is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law, such as the “*Dignity for All Students Act*,” which prohibits harassment against students in school, including harassment based on real or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and expression) and sex, and to prohibit discrimination based on these same characteristics. In addition, to promote a safe, healthy, orderly and civil environment, all students have the right to:

- Take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender or sexual orientation or disability.
- Present their version of the relevant events to school personnel authorized to impose a disciplinary penalty in connection with the imposition of the penalty.
- Access school rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.
- Be in an environment that fosters mutual respect and encourages the acceptance of diversity.

#### **DASA coordinator for Schoharie Elementary School:**

Andrea Polikoski, Elementary Principal

Email: [apolikoski@schoharieschools.org](mailto:apolikoski@schoharieschools.org) Phone: 518-295-6651

**[DASA Complaint Form](#)**

### **McKinney-Vento**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is a federal law created to support the enrollment and education of homeless students. McKinney-Vento is intended to provide homeless students the same educational opportunities as housed students by removing as many barriers to learning for homeless students as possible.

#### **McKinney-Vento Liaison:**

Matthew Wright, PPS Director

Email: [Mwright@schoharieschools.org](mailto:Mwright@schoharieschools.org) Phone: 518-295-6657

## **SCHOHARIE CENTRAL SCHOOL ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE PROCEDURE**

The purpose of the Schoharie Central School District's local and wide area networks is to advance and promote education in all of its school buildings within the district. It is intended to assist in the collaboration and exchange of information among all who are concerned and involved with education. The goal of infusing technology into daily operations of our classrooms, libraries, and offices is to promote high quality technological resources in an equitable, efficient and cost effective manner. Such technology includes and is not limited to electronic mail and local computer networks, and other on-line services.

The benefit of being connected to the internet and other on-line services is that it expands classroom teaching dramatically by making many fascinating resources, including original source materials from all over the world, available to students, teachers, parents and administrators. These services bring information, data, images and even computer software into the classroom from places around the globe, and it does this almost instantaneously. Access to these resources can involve students in individual and group projects, cross-cultural collaborations, and idea sharing not found in schools that lack Internet and on-line-services access.

While the benefits of the internet and other on-line services are enormous, parents need to be aware that they are open systems, which contain pockets of material that many people would disapprove of and keep away from children. The Schoharie School District will make an effort to prevent student's access to inappropriate material on the Internet and other on-line services, but we cannot guarantee that they will not encounter text, pictures, or references that are objectionable. The District asks parents for assistance in developing responsible attitudes, reinforcing appropriate behaviors and observing security practices on the network. System users should have no expectation of privacy with respect to files saved or maintained on the Districts computer systems. Network administrators and District officials will have access to all files in order to ensure system integrity and compliance with this procedure.

The use of the Local Area Network, Wide Area Network, and Internet is a privilege, not a right. Users are responsible for what they say and do on the networks. Because communication with thousands of others is so quick and easy, it is important to think before communicating and show respect for other people and for their ideas. The use of computers must be in support of education and research, and consistent with the educational objectives and the mission of the Schoharie central schools. Use of the Schoharie Districts network or that of another organization's connected network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for each network.

It is imperative that staff, students and visitors conduct themselves in a responsible, decent, ethical and polite manner while using such equipment and networks. This procedure does not attempt to articulate all required or proscribed behavior by its users. The following general guidelines are provided to illustrate appropriate conduct and use. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather indicative of the type of conduct which will be considered by the district.

## Use Regulations for Students

These regulations must be reviewed and signed by students and parent(s)/guardian(s). These guidelines apply to all including administrators and teachers.

1. Student safety is important to the district. Students are not to reveal personal information about themselves or others, including personal address or phone numbers on the internet.
2. Accessing or distributing inappropriate material i.e. obscene, abusive, threatening, harassing, or material specifically prohibited by district policy, local, state or federal law or regulation is prohibited.
3. Students are to respect others' privileges. Attempts by a user to log on to the system in the name of another individual, with or without the individual's consent, will be considered a security violation. Students are not to disrupt the use of the network by other users. They must not access files of any business, person, or agency to steal, subvert, destroy or view information that is not appropriate.
4. Students need to cite sources. If students use the ideas or works of others, they must give them credit. Not citing where information came from, or copying it directly, is plagiarism and will be dealt with as an academic violation. Unauthorized duplication or other forms of infringement are not appropriate. District users must recognize and observe applicable copyright laws and regulations.
5. Students may only use email and other outside communications, i.e. instant messaging, personal webpages, etc. for school projects after receiving approval from their teacher.
6. Prudent use of the district's finite resources and shared technological resources is expected. Downloading videos, music or playing games is prohibited except for instructional purposes.
7. All student files will be deleted at the end of each school year.
8. Students must immediately inform a teacher or parent(s) or guardian(s) if they find something on-line that is inappropriate.
9. If students identify a security problem on the internet, students must notify a system administrator. Attempts to log on as a system administrator will result in cancellation of privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history with other computer systems may be denied access to the district's computers.
10. Students and their parents/guardians will be held responsible for any costs due to damage to computers caused by the student such as uploading or creating computer viruses, reprogramming the computer to damage system files, hacking into the system to change or delete student/teacher files or system files, attempting to try programming or installing programs without permission or damaging components of the computer. Such vandalism will result in cancellation of a user's privileges.

## **Consequences for Violations of the Technology Use Policy**

Inappropriate use or intentional misuse of the school's hardware or software that isn't included in the categories listed above will result in consequences of 30, 60 and 90 day restrictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd infractions respectively. Teachers will provide students with alternative assignments to meet class requirements. Consequences listed above are separate from those additional consequences considered as a result of harassment or insubordination. Infractions which result in physical damage or the need for significant manpower to repair damage could result in financial restitution being required. Students are given alternative assignments by their teachers which do not require the use of computers during the loss of privileges period.

### **Electronics:**

In accordance with District Policy, students with personal cell phones in their possession at school must keep them turned off and out of sight from the beginning of the school day through the end of the day. Cell phones must be kept out of sight and are never to be used at any time in areas where an individual has a reasonable expectation of privacy. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, showers, locker rooms, and rest rooms. Students may not use a cell phone in a manner that interferes with instructional activities or to inappropriately message others. The school may take the phone and make it available in a reasonable amount of time if a student violates this policy. Students may also be subject to further discipline for continued infractions.

Parents are asked to refrain from text messaging or calling their children during the school day. Should an emergency arise during the day, please contact the elementary office at 295-6651. Students are permitted to use the school phones (in the case of emergencies).

## **PERSONAL ITEMS**

### **Toys from Home**

Children are discouraged from bringing toys, games, trading cards and electronic devices from home unless they are specifically requested by a teacher. The school cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to the item.

### **Lost and Found**

We ask parents to encourage their child to check the Lost and Found Department (located outside of the 52 Gym and/or in the back of the cafeteria). Each year many articles go unclaimed. Please label your child's belongings for ease of return.

## FOOD SERVICES

We are pleased to inform you that all schools in the Schoharie Central School District will be once again participating in a meal certification option available to schools participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. It is called the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).

All students enrolled at Schoharie Central School District are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch at school at no charge to your household each day of the 2023-24 school year. Your child(ren) will be able to participate in these meal programs without having to pay a fee or submit a meal application.

Our school is eligible to receive additional state and federal funds based on the number and/or percentage of students enrolled who reside in households that meet established federal income guidelines. We use the [Household Income Eligibility Form](#) to collect household information. The form also helps our school district qualify for education funds and discounts. Please help our school district by completing and submitting the form linked above. Paper copies are available upon request.

**School Breakfast-** Breakfast is offered to all students upon arrival and students are able to eat breakfast within the classroom as part of morning arrival routines.

**School Lunches-** The daily lunch menu will be sent by school Messenger during the last week of each month. It is also posted on the [Schoharie CSD Website](#).

### **Purchasing Extra Snacks-**

Students are able to purchase extra food during their lunch time. Options include snacks like chips and ice cream. The school cafeteria uses a point of sale cash register system called [LINO Connect](#) (previously called TITAN) and every student has an account, accessed by their student I.D. number. Parents and guardians can [register for an account](#) to add funds online and view menus, including nutritional information. If you previously had a TITAN account, your login information is the same and all remaining balances have been rolled over. Cash or check is also accepted, **please be sure to send in cash or check in a labeled envelope.**

## HEALTH SERVICES

### **Physical Examinations: New York State mandates physical examinations.**

Physicals will be held during the school year for all students in Kindergarten, grades 1, 3, 5, and all students new to our district that do not have a physical on file. All children in Kindergarten, grades 1, 3, and 5 will receive hearing and vision screenings. Girls in grades 5 are also screened for scoliosis each year. For 5<sup>th</sup> grade girls to be exempt from the scoliosis screening, a current physical must be on file in school.

### **Immunizations:**

To be admitted or allowed to attend school, a certified copy of immunizations is necessary. Certified means signed by a doctor or clinic who administered the shots. NYS requires the following immunizations:

- 4-5 doses of diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus (Dtap) vaccine
- 3 doses of hepatitis B vaccine
- 2 doses of Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR) vaccine
- 2 doses of the Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine
- 3-4 doses of polio (IPV) vaccine

Students attaining 11 years of age are required to have a Tdap (pertussis) booster to remain in school.

New York State Public Health Law, Section 2164 requires that schools will not permit a child to attend school **unless** the parent provides the school with a certificate of immunization or proof from a physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant that the child is in the process of receiving the required immunizations.

**Important:** on 6/13/19, NYS eliminated the religious exemption from vaccinations for school attendance. Information is available on the [NYS Department of Health Website](#).

### **Medications:**

New York State Education Law prohibits the giving or self administering of internal medicine in school without both a **written doctor's order** for the medication and a **written parental request** to give the medication. This law includes both prescription and over-the-counter medications (including cold medicines, Ibuprofen, Tylenol, cough drops, etc). Medications should be hand delivered by parent/guardian to our school nurse in the original container and with the original prescription label attached. This enables the school nurse to seek further information from the parent/guardian if needed and/or provides information to the nurse in order to protect against loss or misuse of the medication. Medication will not be administered unless all of these conditions are met. Medications cannot be carried on the student unless there is a doctor's order indicating the student is able to self-carry/self-administer.

**Physical Education Class/Recess:** If a student is unable to participate in physical education class due to an injury, he/she is also unable to participate in recess. This is a school policy designed to protect your child from any further injury. Any medical condition warranting a modification from regular gym must have updated medical documentation on that condition renewed at the beginning of each new school year. (example: gym as tolerated, epilepsy, diabetes). A doctor's order is required for Physical Education excuses of more than one day.



### **Guidelines for Sending Students Home from School Due to Illness:**

The following guidelines have been developed by school officials in consultation with the school physician. The conditions which warrant sending a child home include:

- Temperature of 100.0 or above
- Diarrhea/vomiting
- Persistent headache
- Persistent upset stomach
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) or any discharge or crusting near the eyes
- Any condition based upon the school nurse's evaluation which she feels warrants medical attention and/or the need to isolate a sick child from the other students, including COVID-19 symptoms.

### **Guidelines for Children Returning to School after an Illness:**

Below please find guidelines for determining whether a child is ready to return to school following an illness.

- *Fever*- fever has been absent for 24 hours, without the use of a fever reducer ie: Tylenol or Ibuprofen
- *Conjunctivitis (pink eye)*- after 24 hr of treatment
- *Vomiting and Diarrhea*- there has been no vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours and child is able to hold down fluids and food
- *Head lice*- after receiving a treatment for lice and there can be no live lice visible
- *Scabies*- after medicated treatment with note from doctor
- *Strep throat*-after 24 hours of treatment with note from doctor
- *COVID-19*
  - If your child has symptoms of COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19, they should follow [isolation](#) guidance.
  - If your child was [exposed](#) to someone who has COVID-19, they should follow [quarantine](#) guidance.
  - You can use CDC's [quarantine and isolation calculator](#) to help determine how long someone should isolate, quarantine, or take other steps to prevent spreading COVID-19.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAM OFFERINGS**

### **Special Education**

Every parent or person in parental relation has rights regarding the referral and evaluation of their child for the purposes of special education services or programs. Parents and Guardians can refer to *A Parent's Guide to Special Education* on the New York State Education Department's (NYSED's) website at: [www.nysed.gov](http://www.nysed.gov). For more information contact:

**Matthew L. Wright**

Director of Pupil Services

Email: [mwright@schoharieschools.org](mailto:mwright@schoharieschools.org) Phone: 518-295-6657

### **After-school Programs**

Schoharie Elementary School offers a variety of after-school activities including academic assistance, intramurals, clubs, and special art and music programs. These activities are all supervised by staff members or adult volunteers. Participation in these activities may be limited and require written parental permission. Bus transportation is available at **3:20** for students engaged in supervised activities. Information on the available programs will be sent home throughout the school year. **Please be aware that students are not allowed to remain after-school unsupervised.**

### **Choir/Band**

**Choir:** Our choirs perform in two concerts throughout the year, a holiday concert and a spring concert. The elementary music program includes a fourth and fifth grade choir and an ensemble group for fourth and fifth graders, which also travels to perform throughout the community. Also, exceptional students in the fifth grade choir may participate in the All-Star Festival.

**Band:** Schoharie Central School District's instrumental music program begins in the fifth grade. Fifth graders who are interested in learning to play a musical instrument are encouraged to speak with the elementary band director (518-295-6600 – Option 2). Band members will participate in the holiday concert, the spring concert, a band trip and parades on Memorial Day.

Choir and band practices are scheduled after school on alternating days to provide the opportunity for students to participate in both activities if they so choose. We encourage you to speak with your child regarding the responsibility involved in learning to play an instrument and the commitment one makes when joining a band or chorus.

### **Library**

Students are allowed to sign out library books and magazines for a two-week period. Most materials may be renewed if the student has not completed reading them at the end of the two-week period. Reference books are available on an overnight loan basis only.

- Kindergarten and first grade students are allowed to borrow one book at a time.
- Second graders through fifth graders are allowed to borrow the number of library materials (books and magazines) which corresponds with their grade level (i.e.. third graders may borrow three books)
- Books may be exchanged every day at the teacher's discretion.

Fines are not assessed for books returned past their due date, however, students are strongly encouraged to be responsible and renew materials they may not be finished reading yet. Parents are asked to help their children keep library materials in good condition. Please keep them away from pets and small children who often tear or write on the pages. Your cooperation and support in protecting our library materials and returning them on time is greatly appreciated.

Our school library is pleased to have a number of digital resources, including several services that offer free access to digital or eBooks and audiobooks, online encyclopedias, and databases. All

services are online with 24/7 access via the [Elementary Library Link](#) on the District Website.

## **Physical Education Requirements**

### **Footwear**

All students in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade are required to wear athletic sneakers during Physical Education classes. Below are examples of safe athletic sneakers.



Converse, sneaker sandals, hiking boots, and slip-ons are not appropriate footwear for physical education.

### **Jewelry**

Due to safety concerns regarding the physical contact and equipment worked with in PE, please be advised that all students will be asked to remove jewelry and other loose items on their person. This includes, but is not limited to: necklaces, watches, rings, and piercings. A new piercing that is a stud may be covered with a bandage, but all other piercings must be removed. Students must be able to remove these items independently. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items, or any damages accrued through the enforcement of this protocol.