

# Harry S. Fisher Elementary School

79 North Main Street, Terryville, CT 06786  
Phone (860) 314-2770 Fax (860) 314-8008

## STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020



**“HOME OF THE WILDCATS”**

## **Plymouth Public Schools Mission Statement**

The Mission of Plymouth Public Schools is to Challenge, Inspire, and Prepare all students for success in an ever-changing and complex world.

Dr. Martin Semmel, Superintendent of Schools

(860) 314-8005

### **Harry S. Fisher Elementary School Mission Statement**

Harry S. Fisher Elementary School is united in its partnership with students, families, and the community in its ongoing quest for excellence. Our school community will support the diverse needs of all students through a positive and nurturing atmosphere. Students will grow intellectually and socially as they become active participants in the school community and lifelong learners.

**Phone: (860) 314-2770   HARRY S. FISHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL   Fax: (860) 314-8008**

Our students *Step Up to the PLATE to Get on BASE* by:

<b>Practicing Self Control</b>		<b>Believe</b>
<b>Living Respectfully</b>		<b>Achieve</b>
<b>Acting Responsibly</b>	<b>to</b>	<b>Succeed</b>
<b>Treating others with Empathy</b>		<b>Excel</b>
<b>Expressing Gratitude</b>		

**Principal:** Kimberly Loveland

**Administrative Assistant:** Mindi Davidson

**FACULTY**

<b>Kindergarten</b> Kim Dumonski Catherine Triarhos Joan Zabek	<b>Dean of Students</b> Stephanie Satow	<b>Physical Education</b> Jerry Curtiss	<b>Special Education</b> Kathy Rossi Melissa Colman	<b>Paraprofessionals</b> Nanette Allen-Green Penny Bissonette Nicole Decker Amber Garrow Faye Johnpiere
	<b>BCBA</b> Emily Tonucci	<b>Art</b> Shari Kohl	Sarah Johnson (STAR) Vicki Rees (APPLE)	
<b>Grade 1</b> Suzette Andrade Amy Battisto Carolyn Celentano	<b>Teacher of the Hearing Impaired</b> Heather Boughton	<b>General Music</b> Kaylin Spaulding	<b>Literacy Coaches</b> Corinne Mazon (K-2) Nicole Levesque (3-5)	Desare LaPointe Ashley Motta Kelly O'Reilly
		<b>Instrumental Music</b> Robert Carter		<b>Numeracy Coach</b> Dina Schaffrick
<b>Grade 2</b> Allison Curtiss Joanna Kacprzyk Rhonda Mazur	<b>School Psychologist</b> Jessica McDonnell	<b>Library Tutor</b> Judy Cumiskey	<b>Instructional Tutors</b> Mary Erin Clem Jaclyn Guastaferrri Ainslie Warner	Dennis Rivera Virginia Roman Kyle Skidmore
	<b>Speech Pathologist</b> Alysa Oling	<b>Head Custodian</b> Mark Lyons		Lorraine Tuller Jocelyn Van Buren Joshua Willard
<b>Grade 3</b> Casey Platt Emily Salvatore Julie Simonsen	<b>Social Worker</b> Jill Levandoski	<b>Night Custodians</b> Tina Raboin Tony Losacano	<b>Lunch Monitor</b> Debra St.Peter	<b>Special Education Tutors</b> Maria Caputo Elizabeth Finkeneller
	<b>OT COTA</b> Jennifer Druan	<b>Cafeteria Staff</b> Laura St. Amand Anna Mendez Casaundra Abeling	<b>Recess Monitors</b> Christopher Judd Cassie Kirouac Nicole Cook	
<b>Grade 4</b> Sandy Dunn Jennie Fowler Denise Seamour	<b>School Nurse</b> Patricia O'Brien			<b>PTA Officers</b> <i>President</i> Cassie Kirouac <i>Treasurer</i> Randy Picard
	<b>Building Substitutes</b> Bianca Kaluta Jennifer Zeigler			
<b>Grade 5</b> Candi Clukey Joy Kyle Denise Przystawski				

**SCHOOL DAY HOURS**

**REGULAR SCHOOL DAY**

Grades Kindergarten through Five 8:40-3:10

**\*\*\*4-HOUR SCHOOL DAY (EARLY DISMISSAL)\*\*\***

Grades Kindergarten through Five 8:40-12:45

**\*\*\*\*2 HOUR DELAYED OPENING\*\*\*\***

Grades Kindergarten through Five 10:40-3:10

**NOTE:** School cancellations, late openings, or early dismissals due to inclement weather or other emergencies are broadcast over television WVIT, WFSB, WTNH and the following radio stations: WTIC, WKSS, WDRC, and WRCH. The School Messenger telephone contact system will be utilized to notify parents regarding schedule changes due to inclement weather.

\*\*\*\*In the event of an early dismissal from school due to storms, heating difficulty, etc., please make certain that your child is aware of special arrangements in advance. It is important that each child be instructed as to what to do if school is dismissed early for any reason. \*\*\*\*

**AFTER SCHOOL DISMISSAL**

Kindergarten will be dismissed using the doors at the end of the kindergarten hallway and to the far right of the front of the building. Bus students in grades one through five will be dismissed from school via the side door on the upper level.

All walkers will be dismissed with their classrooms and will go towards the fenced in playground by Kindergarten. Parents picking up walkers are asked to wait outside by the fenced in playground for their child(ren). Please remember a child will be put on their regularly assigned bus unless the classroom teacher receives a note from the parent informing the main office of a change.

All students will be accompanied by their classroom teachers and released first by buses then as walkers. Please do not take children out of their teacher's line until they have reached the lower playground dismissal area. This ensures that all students are accounted for and released to the appropriate buses and designated pick-up adults.

**ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION (40 C.F.R. 763.93 (g)(4))**

Federal Law and State of Connecticut Regulations of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) require school districts throughout the State of Connecticut to give annual written notice of the availability of asbestos management plans. These plans are available for inspection upon request.

We have been informed we do have asbestos in various isolated areas including small amounts of non-friable asbestos in the vinyl floor tiles. However, all areas are well under control, and at the present time there is virtually no health risk to occupants. For further control, all areas will be periodically inspected and cared for under our Asbestos Management Plan.

## ASSEMBLIES

There are times when classes, grades, teams or the entire school may gather for assembly programs. These programs are arranged to bring information or entertainment to the student community. A student's conduct in assemblies must meet the same standards as in the classroom. Accommodations are made at all assemblies to meet the needs of all of our students.

### ATTENDANCE/EXCUSES/DISMISSAL/TARDIES/TRUANCY

Connecticut General Statute §10-184 requires all parents/guardians of children between the ages of five and eighteen to cause their children to attend school regularly. A student should not be absent from school without a parent's consent and it is expected that parents will allow their children to be absent only for health or other extenuating circumstances.

**Please call the school before 9:00 on a day when your child will be absent or tardy. It is essential that we receive parent notification! An automated phone call will be made to your home in the event that the school does not receive a phone call regarding your child's absence.**

**Excuses:** An absence shall be considered "excused" when a child does not attend school due to illness or injury, death in the immediate family, religious obligation, an emergency, or other exceptional circumstances. Written excuse for such absences should be submitted to school officials by the child's parent or guardian. When a student's absence due to illness or injury reaches five consecutive school days, a note from the child's physician will be necessary for excuse. All other absences, with or without written explanation, shall be considered unexcused. All absences must be reported or clarified no later than 48 hours (two school days) after it occurred.

#### Planned Extended Absences

If a student expects to be absent for an extended time, the parent is to submit a letter to the principal requesting approval for the absence. Upon administrative approval, the student should discuss with his or her teachers the assignments that he or she will be expected to complete during this period. Completion of missed class work is the responsibility of the student, not the teacher. Unless a student has an extended illness, all make-up work will be completed within five days after the student returns to school.

#### Certification of Chronic Illness

Parents are advised to monitor the number of absences, which have accumulated because of medical reasons. When absences for medical reasons are frequent, it may be advisable to seek documentation from a doctor that a chronic illness exists. Doctor's notes need to specifically address dates of absences.

#### Dismissals

The office should be notified in writing for any changes to a child's daily schedule. In order to prevent confusion at dismissal, please avoid making last-minute telephone calls indicating changes in transportation home.

#### Early dismissal requests

Early dismissals from school are granted only by the school nurse, the Principal, or the Dean of Students (in the principal's absence). If a parent or legal guardian wishes to have a child dismissed early, he/she must submit a signed, dated note to the teacher or have called the school for the child to receive permission to leave the building prior to the end of the school day (3:10). The request should state the reason for the request, the time of dismissal, and also indicate the person who will be meeting the child. The child should be met in the office. Upon arrival at the office, the adult picking the student up must sign the child out and will be asked to provide proper identification.

#### Late Arrival Policy

Students who arrive to school after 8:40 a.m. must secure a tardy slip from the main office and be signed in by a parent or guardian. Tardies will be excused for medical, dental, religious and legal reasons as well as family emergency/crisis with proper documentation.

#### Truancy-Annual Notification of Obligations under C.G.S. §10-184

Regular and punctual student attendance is essential to the educational process. Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-184 provides that "[e]ach parent or other person having control of a child five years of age and over and under eighteen years of age shall cause such child to attend a public day school regularly during the hours and terms the public school in the district wherein such child resides is in session, unless such child is a high school graduate or the parent or person

having control of such child is able to show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public schools. The parent or person having control of a child seventeen years of age may consent, as provided in this section, to such child's withdrawal from school. Such parent or person shall personally appear at the school district office and sign a withdrawal form. The school district shall provide such parent or person with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community, and shall include an attestation on the withdrawal form from a guidance counselor or school administrator from the school that the district provided the parent (or person having control of the child) with information on the educational options available in the school system and community. The parent or person having control of a child five years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is six years of age and the parent or person having control of a child six years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is seven years of age. The parent or person shall exercise such option by personally appearing at the school district office and signing an option form. The school district shall provide the parent or person with information on the educational opportunities available in the school system.”

The regular attendance of students at school is, by law, the responsibility of each student's parent or guardian. Those who miss classes on a regular basis may suffer long-term negative consequences in that they are unlikely to master the skills necessary to succeed in school and life. By state statute, truancy is defined as four (4) unexcused absences from school in any one month. A student is considered habitually truant when he/she continues to accumulate four (4) unexcused absences in any month or ten (10) unexcused absences in one academic year. The law requires that school personnel attempt to notify by telephone the parent or guardian of any student absent from school. Further, appropriate school staff is required to hold a meeting with the parent of the student within ten (10) days of a known truancy. A written complaint must be filed in Superior Court of each habitual truant. Judges are empowered to place habitual truants in temporary custody if there is a strong probability that the student will not attend school. Parental fines could be imposed by the court for students truant from school.

### **BEFORE SCHOOL REGULATIONS**

Students who walk to school should walk on the sidewalks. If it is necessary to cross the street, students must follow the directions of the crossing guard.

**Students should arrive at school after 8:30 A.M.** Please be careful to observe this arrival time. There is no supervision on school grounds prior to 8:30 A.M. When the bell rings, all students will enter the building and report directly to their classroom.

### **BICYCLES**

Students may ride bicycles to school with written parental permission. Students must have locks and are expected to secure the bike in the bike rack by the front door.

**Connecticut State law requires that all children under the age of 12 wear a helmet when riding a bicycle. Students who ride a bicycle to school without wearing a helmet will lose bicycle privileges. Skateboards, scooters, and roller blades are not to be used for school transportation.**

### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district. The Board of Education membership roster is available on the District website at: <http://www.plymouth.k12.ct.us>

In order to perform its duties in an open and public manner and in accordance with state law, the Plymouth Board of Education holds regular business meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Terryville High School cafeteria. Parents, students and other community members are encouraged to attend.

Meetings of the Board follow a planned and posted agenda. At a certain time in the agenda, the Board chairperson will recognize individuals who want to make a statement, not more than 5 minutes in length, or to express a viewpoint. In addition, if they give advance notice to the Superintendent, individuals with relevant issues for discussion may have such issues placed on a future Board agenda for a more thorough discussion of the topic.

The Board's main purpose is policy setting designed to improve student learning. Board members are interested in the public's opinion on district issues, which can assist them in formulating policy which reflects community values and expectations.

## **BULLYING POLICY**

Bullying behavior by any student in the Plymouth Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
- B. Places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. Creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. Infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or physical, mental, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

- A. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
- B. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
- C. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying or teen dating violence behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying or teen dating violence to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying or teen dating violence behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

## **CAFETERIA**

All eating is to be done in the cafeteria. Food is not permitted elsewhere in the building with the exception of breakfast. Rules of cleanliness are to be observed at all times. Misconduct in the cafeteria may be cause for receiving an assigned seat or forfeiting the right to eat in that location or such other disciplinary action deemed appropriate for the misconduct.

All cafeteria services are in compliance with the National School Lunch Program and offer to students nutritionally balanced lunches daily.

The cost of lunch for the 2019-2020 school year is \$2.90 for elementary students. The price of milk is \$.50. Prices are subject to change.

Students are able to purchase breakfast every day. The cost of breakfast is \$1.60.

We encourage you to deposit money in your child's account if they are purchasing items a la carte to help speed the amount of time spent waiting in line in the lunch room. Money left in an account at the end of the school year will stay in your child's account for the following school year.

Lunch is a time where students are able to practice their social emotional skills and continue to grow their abilities to communicate and bond with their classmates. We encourage this independence and identify this as a critical time for peers to interact in a less structured environment. If you intend to eat lunch with your child, please communicate this to the main office prior to 9:30 AM so arrangements can be made for you to join your child.

All students at Fisher Elementary School have a daily snack time. If your child wishes to bring a snack, we ask that the snack consists of one child size serving of a healthy food from one of the basic food groups. **If your child has a food allergy, be sure to inform the classroom teacher and the nurse along with stating the specific allergy on the school forms. ENERGY DRINKS ARE DISCOURAGED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY.**

#### **CAFETERIA RULES:**

- Quiet voices
- Ears listening
- Safe and calm body
- Be clean and responsible
- Raise your hand if you need help
- Be kind and show empathy
- Be assertive and use your Bystander Power

#### **COMPUTER RESOURCES**

District resources have been invested in computer technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for an increasingly computerized society. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students are expected to adhere to rules distributed in the classroom. Violation of these rules may result in loss of computer privileges. Any expenses incurred by the school system because of damage done to the computers, software, or printers will be paid by the student. *All students must have a "Network/Internet Acceptable Use" form on file prior to utilizing any of the school computers.*

Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful or inappropriate for students as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

#### **COUNSELING**

Social services and counseling are rendered by professionally qualified members of the school staff. The responsibilities of the social worker and school psychologist include helping the student function more successfully within the school environment. The district's comprehensive counseling program strives to assist students in acquiring critical skills in the academic, career, and personal/social aspects of development.

School counselors will use a variety of methods to assist students in overcoming barriers to learning, to make strong connections with the educational opportunities in the school and to ensure that every child learns in a safe, healthy and supportive setting. Counseling is an opportunity to talk with someone about things that are important to students. These opportunities to talk may be personal, social, or educational. Counselors will listen and be open and honest with students.

Parents/guardians may contact the counseling staff at school at any time by calling 860-314-2770 to discuss counseling opportunities.

#### **CURRICULUM OR CLASSROOM PROGRAM**

Questions or concerns regarding the curriculum or classroom program should be addressed to the classroom teacher. Please call the office and set up a meeting with the appropriate teacher. If your questions or concerns have not been answered or resolved after this meeting, please make an appointment with the school principal to discuss the situation.

#### **DEFIBRILLATORS IN SCHOOLS (AED'S)**

Each school will have (1) one automatic external defibrillator (AED) and (2) school personnel trained in AED operation and cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The AED and trained personnel will be available during the school's normal operational hours.

#### **DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS**

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by students as a means of communications. All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to the community, with the exception of school-connected organizations; will be referred to the office of the superintendent to determine whether the request complies with school policy.

Publications prepared by or for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by the principal. Such items include school posters, brochures, school newspapers and yearbook.

### **DRESS CODE**

The Plymouth Board of Education encourages students to dress appropriately and to be neatly groomed while at school. The Board does not dictate to students and parents as to grooming or what clothing may or may not be worn, but it expects each student's clothing and appearance to meet generally accepted standards of taste and common sense.

Garments with obscenities or drug/alcohol related print and attachments will not be allowed. Students wearing modes of dress that are unsafe either to the students or those around the students or whose dress or appearance is disruptive to school operations and the educational process will be prohibited from attending class.

Any apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute that indicates or implies membership or affiliation with such a gang group presents a clear and present danger and shall be prohibited attire in the schools.

In specific instances, the building principal shall be the sole judge as to the suitability of a student's clothing, grooming and/or appearance. Subsequently, the student or the student's parents may appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent of Schools. Parents dissatisfied by the decision of the Superintendent of Schools may appeal to the Board of Education at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. Such an appeal must be first presented in writing prior to the meeting of the Chairperson of the Board.

### **DRESS CODE GUIDELINES:**

- No unsafe footwear. Shoes must have straps or backs; heels must be low. NO flip flops.
- No halter or spaghetti strapped tops. Tank tops must provide appropriate cover - the stomach may not show.
- Shorts must reach to the bottom of the wearer's fingers when arms are held straight down.
- Appropriate outerwear must be worn during cold weather. Students not dressed appropriately for cold weather will not be allowed to participate in outdoor activities.
- No hats, hoods, or headscarves are to be worn in the school building except those worn pursuant to established religious customs.
- Students should not wear face-coverings or sunglasses in the school building.

### **EARLY CLOSING**

Please check local television or radio media for information regarding potential early closings due to inclement weather. It is important that each child be instructed as to what to do if school is dismissed early for any reason. The School Messenger telephone contact system will also be utilized to notify parents regarding schedule changes due to inclement weather.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND GAMES**

Students are not permitted to possess such items as radios, CD players, DVD players, cameras, electronic devices, games, or telecommunications devices with text messaging at school, unless prior permission has been obtained from the principal. Without such permission, the items will be collected by teachers and turned into the principal. The principal will determine whether to return the item at the end of the day to be taken home by the student or whether the parent will be contacted to pick up the item. The use of electronic devices, such as iPods, Apple Watches, and cell phones are prohibited during the regular school day. These items must be stored in lockers or backpacks upon entering the building.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

As a result of the work done by the town wide Task Force Committee that reviewed the security, safety and emergency practices of all schools, emergency cards were created to inform every household of the *Emergency Procedures in the Event of a School Emergency*. Below is a copy of the information printed on the card.

\*Check Channel 16

\*Check website: [Plymouth.k12.ct.us](http://Plymouth.k12.ct.us)

\*Call: 860-314-4784 for voice message

- \*District will issue Phone Alert Message
- \*Proceed to designated staging area

### SCHOOLS WILL NOT BE ACCESSIBLE

In the event of an emergency, parents are directed to Terryville Fairgrounds where they will receive more information.

## **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES & SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

In compliance with regulations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Civil Rights Act of 1987, the Plymouth Board of Education adopts the following Equal Educational Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Policies.

### **Equal Education Opportunity**

The right of a student to participate fully in classroom instruction and extracurricular activities shall not be abridged or impaired because of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, pregnancy, parenthood, marriage, or any reason related to his/her individual capabilities. The Equity/Title IX Coordinator has the responsibility to monitor the implementation of this policy. Further implementation of this policy is a responsibility of all district administrators in accordance with the procedures set forth in the attached regulations.

### **Under Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act Of 1973**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as Section 504, is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of the Act is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. An eligible student under Section 504 is a student who (a) has, (b) has a record of having or (c) is regarded as having, a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity such as learning, self-care, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and performing manual tasks. The 504 building coordinator is the Principal. The district wide coordinator is the Director of Special Education.

The address for the Office of Civil Rights is:

U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Civil Rights, 8th Floor  
5 Post Office Square, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02109-3921

### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

In compliance with Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, religion, sexual preference or disability in establishing and implementing hiring and employment practices and establishing and providing school activities and educational programs.

### **Complaint Procedure**

As soon as an individual feels that he or she has been subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), or gender identity or expression, he/she should make a written complaint to the building principal or his/her designee. The student will be provided a copy of the Board's policy and regulation and made aware of his or her rights.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the findings and conclusions of the investigation, the complainant may present the complaint and written outcome to the Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the findings. At any time, a complainant alleging race, color or national origin discrimination or harassment has the right to file a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 8th Floor, Post Office Square, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109-0111 (Telephone number (617) 289-0111).

### **Notification of Procedures for Requesting an Initial Evaluation of a Child (Regs. Conn.State Agencies 10-76d-7(a)(2))**

Each board of education shall make available information, understandable to the general public, concerning the

procedures for requesting an initial evaluation of a child to all parents and professional staff of such board. Such information shall include, but not be limited to, a description of the general education interventions that are provided to meet the needs of individual children before a referral for special education evaluation is requested. Such information shall identify at least one person in each school building that parents or professional staff of the board may contact regarding school policies and procedures for special education referrals and evaluations. The board may include such information in the student handbook, on the board's website or in another location to afford parents and staff access to such information

### **The Right to Request Information Concerning Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications**

As a parent of a student enrolled in Harry S. Fisher Elementary School, under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, you have a right to request the following information concerning the qualifications of teachers and paraprofessionals who work with your child:

1. Whether your child's teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. Whether your child's teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. The baccalaureate degree major of your child's teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree;
4. Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and, if so, the paraprofessionals' qualifications.

### **Prohibition Sexual Harassment**

Harassment of a student by a staff member or another student on the basis of sex creates a harmful academic environment. It is the policy of the Plymouth Board of Education to maintain a learning environment free from harassment, insults or intimidation. Any sexual harassment of employees by other employees, students to employees, employees to student or students to students is strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated regardless of the working or personal relationship between the parties. It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain a learning and working environment for students and employees that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any staff member or any individual subject to the control of the Board of Education to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined below. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined below.

#### **Definitions:**

**Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as well as Connecticut General Statutes, S46a-60 (a) (8). Sexual harassment is generally defined under both state and federal law as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of any individual's education or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by any individual is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting such individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment.

#### **Types of Sexual Harassment**

1. **Verbal:** Includes sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, threats. P5145.5(b) Students Sexual Harassment Types of Sexual Harassment (continued)
2. **Non-verbal:** Includes sexually suggestive objects or pictures, graphic commentaries, suggestive or insulting sounds, leering, whistling, obscene gestures.
3. **Physical:** Unwanted physical contact, including touching, pinching, brushing the body, coerced sexual intercourse, assault. Sexual harassment may be overt or subtle. Some behavior which is appropriate in a social setting may not be appropriate in the academic environment. But whatever form it takes verbal, non-verbal or physical - sexual harassment can be insulting and demeaning to the recipient and cannot be tolerated in the academic environment.

### **Complaint Procedure**

#### **Informal Complaints**

A student who believes he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment may make a complaint directly to the building Principal, Guidance Counselor, Psychologist or Social Worker. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual

harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future grades or academic assignments.

The building Principal or other designated personnel will promptly discuss the complaint with the alleged harasser. Should the alleged harasser admit the allegations, the supervisor is to obtain a written assurance that the unwelcome behavior will stop. The building Principal is to prepare a written report of the incident and inform the student and guardian and the alleged harasser and guardian of the resolution. The student and guardian are to indicate on the Principal's report whether or not he/she is satisfied with the resolution. A copy of the report should be sent to the Title IX Coordinator.

If the complainant is satisfied with the resolution, the incident will be deemed closed. However, the complaint may be reopened for investigation if a recurrence of sexual harassment is reported. The Principal is to inform the complainant to report any recurrence of the harassment or any retaliatory action that might occur. Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the resolution, he/she is to file a formal written complaint. The form is available in the Principal's office or can be obtained from the Title IX Coordinator. If during the Principal's informal attempt to resolve the complaint, the alleged harasser admits the allegations but refuses to give assurance that he/she will refrain from the unwelcome behavior, the Principal is to file a report with the Title IX Coordinator. The report is to indicate the nature of the complaint, a description of what occurred when the Principal informed the alleged harasser of the allegations against him/her, the harasser's response to the allegations, and a recommendation that stronger corrective measures be taken. This report would be accompanied by a formal complaint.

Should the alleged harasser deny the allegations, the Principal is to inform the complainant of the denial and state that a formal written complaint will be required for further formal investigation. The supervisor will file a report with the Title IX Coordinator on what has transpired to date. If the complainant submits a formal complaint, a copy of it should accompany the supervisor's report with a recommendation for further investigation.

Formal complaints may be submitted either to initially report any incidents of sexual harassment, or as a follow-up to an unsatisfactory resolution of an informal attempt to resolve a complaint. In the latter case, the formal written complaint is to be submitted to the Principal originally consulted, who will then forward it to the Title IX Coordinator. In either case, the report must be made within 40 calendar days of the alleged incident.

The formal written complaint will consist of the Sexual Harassment form and a copy of any applicable supervisor reports. The form solicits the specifics of the complaint (e.g. date and place of incident, description of sexual misconduct, names of any witnesses, and any previous action taken to resolve the matter).

Employees also have the right to file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, or the Federal Civil Rights Office.

### **Title IX Coordinator**

The Title IX Coordinator for the Plymouth Board of Education is: Ms. Lindsay Aronheim, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Education whose office is located at Central Office (THS) and whose telephone number is 860-314-8003.

### **Student Privacy Policy or PPRA Notice**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, affords parents and eligible students (*i.e.* students over 18 or emancipated minors) certain rights with respect to the administration of student surveys, the collection and use of personal information, and the administration of certain physical exams. These rights include:

1. The right of a parent to inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to a student;
2. The right of a parent to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum. Instructional material means any instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of its format, including printed or representational materials, audio-visual materials, and materials in electronic or digital formats (such as materials accessible through the Internet) but does not include academic tests or academic assessments;
3. To protect student privacy in compliance with the PPRA, the Plymouth school district has adopted policies regarding these rights. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated under the PPRA may contact:  
Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

## **FACILITIES**

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are expected to remain in the area in which their activity is scheduled to take place. After dismissed and unless involved in a teacher/staff supervised activity, students are expected to leave the campus immediately.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, et seq., affords parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) days of the day the District receives the request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record (s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parents or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parents or eligible student believe are inaccurate or misleading, or otherwise violates the student's privacy rights. Parents or eligible students may ask the District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading or violates a student's privacy rights. Parents or an eligible student should write the school principal, clearly identifying the part of the record the parents or eligible student want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading, or otherwise violates the student's privacy rights. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parents or eligible student, the District will notify the parents or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to a school official with legitimate interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Education; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
4. The District will disclose a student's education record without consent to officials of another public school district or public charter school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S. W.  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Unless notified by a parent or eligible student to the contrary within two weeks of the date of this notice, the school district will be permitted to disclose "Directory Information" concerning a student. Directory Information means information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the parent's name and/or e-mail address, the student's name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, photographic and video images, date and place of birth, major field (s) of study, grade level, participation in school-sponsored activities or athletics, weight and height (if the student is a member of an athletic team), dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous education agency or institution attended.

An objection to the disclosure of directory information shall be good for only one year. School districts are legally obligated to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, upon request, with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary school students, unless a parent or eligible student objects to such disclosure in writing. In all other circumstances, information designated as directory information will not be released when requested by a third party unless the release of such information is determined by the administration to be in the educational interest of the

school district and is consistent with the district's obligation under both state and federal law.

### **Connecticut's Complaint Resolution Procedure**

Federal regulations require that state education agencies adopt written procedures for the receipt and resolution of any complaint which alleges that the state education agency, or an agency or consortium of agencies, has violated a federal statute or regulation that applies to the following programs: Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV and/or Title The complaint Resolution Procedure is listed in its entirety on the Plymouth Public Schools Website (<http://www.plymouth.k12.ct.us>) under the District Information heading.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be scheduled for educational, cultural, or extracurricular purposes. While on a trip, all students are considered to be "in" school. This means that conduct and dress standards will be appropriate for the field trip activity.

### **FIRE/ CRISIS DRILLS**

Fire or Crisis drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. A crisis response drill will be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills every three months. Such crisis response drill will be planned and conducted with the local law enforcement agency. Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner.

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**

The school is committed to providing a safe environment for students with food allergies and to support parents regarding food allergy management. Substitutions to the regular meal provided by the school will be made for students who are unable to eat school meals because of their disabilities, when that need is certified in writing by a physician. Meal services will be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the disabled student. An Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) and an Emergency Care Plan (ECP) shall be developed and implemented for students identified with food allergies. Such students may also be eligible for accommodations and services under Section 504 and special education law.

In accordance with providing a safe environment for students with food allergies, Fisher Elementary School will not allow food to be provided to classrooms for celebrations. Birthdays may be celebrated with a non-food token such as pencils or stickers. All items are subject to the approval of the principal. Unapproved items will be returned home with the student.

### **Food Allergies and/or Glycogen Storage Disease (Diabetes)**

The Plymouth Public Schools recognize that food allergies and glycogen storage disease may be life threatening. For this reason, the district is committed to developing strategies and practices to minimize the risk of accidental exposure to life threatening food allergens and to ensure prompt and effective medical response should a child suffer an allergic reaction while at school. The district is also committed to appropriately managing and supporting students with glycogen storage disease. The district further recognizes the importance of collaborating with parents and appropriate medical staff in developing such practices and encourages strategies to enable the student to become increasingly proactive in the care and management of his/her food allergy and/or glycogen storage disease, as developmentally appropriate. To this end, the Plymouth Public Schools have adopted guidelines related to the management of life threatening food allergies and glycogen storage disease for students enrolled in district schools. These guidelines can be found on the District Website or will be available for inspection upon request.

### **HEALTH CURRICULUM**

Drug and alcohol awareness information is provided throughout the school year by the classroom teacher or by a team teaching approach. Law requires this instruction for all students. The units covered in the health education curriculum are available for review. If you wish to exempt your child from any section of this program, you must contact the school for an exemption form. As always, if you have any questions or comments concerning this program, please do not hesitate to contact the building principal.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

The school health office is designed to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school. A cumulative health file is maintained for each student. This file includes notations of past illnesses, results of physical examinations, and other pertinent health information.

## **Mandatory Physical and Immunization Guidelines:**

The Plymouth Board of Education requires each student enrolled in the Plymouth Public Schools to have health assessments as mandated by state law. The purpose of such health assessments shall be to ascertain whether a student has any physical disability tending to prevent him/her from receiving the full benefit of schoolwork and to ascertain whether schoolwork should be modified in order to prevent injury to the student or to secure a suitable program of education for him/her. Such health assessments must be conducted by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine, an advanced practice registered nurse or registered nurse, who is licensed under state statute, a physician assistant, who is licensed under state statute, the school medical advisor, or a legally qualified practitioner of medicine, an advanced practice registered nurse or a physician assistant stationed at any military base. The Board of Education will provide written prior notice of the health assessments required under these administrative regulations to the parent or guardian of each student subject to assessment. The parent or guardian shall be provided a reasonable opportunity to be present during such assessment or he/she may provide for such assessment him/herself. No health assessment shall be made of any public school student unless it is made in the presence of the parent or guardian or in the presence of another school employee. Any student who fails to obtain the health assessments required by these administrative regulations may be denied continued attendance in the Plymouth Public Schools.

### **Assessments Required**

Prior to enrollment in the Plymouth Public Schools, each student must undergo a health assessment, which shall include:

- (a) a physical examination which includes hematocrit or hemoglobin tests, height, weight, blood pressure, and a chronic disease assessment which shall include; but not be limited to, asthma as defined by the Commissioner of Public Health pursuant to subsection (c) of section 19a-62a of the Connecticut General Statutes. The assessment form shall include (A) a check box for the provider conducting the assessment, to indicate an asthma diagnosis, (B) screening questions relating to appropriate public health concerns to be answered by the parent or guardian, and (C) screening questions to be answered by such provider;
- (b) an updating of immunizations as required by state law;
- (c) vision, hearing, speech and gross dental screenings;
- (d) such other information, including health and developmental history, as the physician feels is necessary and appropriate.

The pre-enrollment assessment may include tests for tuberculosis, sickle cell anemia or Cooley's anemia, and tests for lead levels in the blood if, after consultation with the school medical advisor and the local health department, the Board determines that such tests are necessary. Such tests must be conducted by a registered nurse acting pursuant to the written order of a physician, or physician's assistant, licensed under state law, or an advanced practice registered nurse, licensed under state law.

### **Immunizations**

In accordance with state law and accompanying regulations, the Plymouth Board of Education requires each child to be protected by adequate immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, hemophilus influenzae type B, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, varicella, pneumococcal diseases, meningococcal disease and any other vaccine required by the schedule for active immunization as determined by the Commissioner of Public Health pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. §19a-7f, prior to enrolling in any program or school under its jurisdiction.

Among other requirements, before being permitted to enter seventh grade, the Board requires each child to be vaccinated against meningococcal disease. The Board further requires each child to receive a second immunization against measles and tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) before being permitted to enter seventh grade.

Further, each child must have received two doses of immunization against varicella before being permitted to enter kindergarten and seventh grade, and each child must have received two doses of immunization against rubella and mumps before being permitted to enter grades kindergarten through 12.

### **Screenings**

Annual vision screenings are given to each student in grades K, 1, 3, 4 and 5.

Annual hearing screenings are given to each student in grades K, 1, 3, 4, and 5.

Annual postural screenings are given to female students in grades 5 and 7 and to male students in grade 8.

### **First Aid**

When the school reports your student acutely ill or injured, it is expected that the parents will make arrangements to immediately transport them home. However, in cases of serious accidents/life-threatening emergencies requiring immediate hospitalization, the student will be sent to the nearest emergency room by ambulance. Parents will be notified immediately in all cases. Please complete the online health questionnaire at the beginning of the school year. Please update your student's school nurse regarding any changes in their health status as the need arises.

### **Communicable/Infectious Diseases**

Students with any medical condition, which within the school setting may expose others to disease or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. **Students with contagious bacterial infections must have taken the prescribed dosage of antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Your child should be fever-free without fever reducing medication for twenty-four hours before returning to school after an illness.** If you have questions or concerns regarding symptoms your child may be exhibiting, or if they are able to attend or return to school, contact the school nurse.

### **Medication**

Students who need to take prescribed medication during school hours must have the medication delivered to the school nurse or principal by the parents or guardian. **Students are not permitted to carry medications to school unless they have on file with the school nurse a Self Administration of Medication Authorization/Approval Form completed and signed by both the physician prescribing the medication and the parent.** Students who carry their own medications may also have medication stored in the nurse's office. Medications must be in a properly labeled container with the name of the student, physician and medication, date of original prescription, and directions for administering it. The amount must be limited to a forty-five (45) day supply. No medication, prescription or over-the-counter (including topical ointments/creams, eye drops, cough and cold remedies, fever reducers), will be given without written permission from both the physician and parent. Cough and throat lozenges may be used by students with written permission from the parent and if deemed appropriate by the school nurse. Parents or guardians must pick up unused medication by the last day of school, unless other arrangements are made. The school nurse will dispose of medication not picked up. A new written authorization of medication form is required each school year.

### **Pediculosis (Head Lice)**

Infestation of the hair with head lice is a common condition found among school age children. There is no way of preventing a child from acquiring this condition. The goal should be to detect it quickly and treat as soon as possible. Our school health regulations specify that children with head lice be treated at home with a shampoo that kills head lice. Ordinary shampoo will not work. Following the treatment the child may return to school if proof of treatment is provided (e.g. pediculicide shampoo box top) and no live lice are found upon examination by school nurse.

### **Food Allergies**

The school is committed to providing a safe environment for students with food allergies and to support parents regarding food allergy management. Substitutions to the regular meal provided by the school will be made for students who are unable to eat school meals because of their disabilities, when that need is certified in writing by a physician. Meal services will be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the disabled student. An Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) and Emergency Care Plan (ECP) shall be developed and implemented for students identified with food allergies. Such students may also be eligible for accommodations and services under Section 504 and special education law

## **INSTRUCTION**

### **Disabilities**

The school district will not discriminate on the basis of disability as required under ADA, IDEA and Section 504 and C.G.S. .S. 10-76a and any similar law or provision.

**Homework Overview-**The Plymouth Board of Education believes that homework is an extension of the school's instructional program and should be a reinforcement of the learning process. Homework is to be an integral part of the instructional process which encourages students to accept their responsibility as well as to increase their capacity for

independent learning. To achieve this goal, homework should be viewed as having joint responsibilities shared among teacher, parents, and students.

**Homework Policy-**Homework is an integral part of the instructional program and the learning process that allows students to work independently to enhance their academic skills. It should be a meaningful and constructive exercise that extends the classroom learning experience. The regular practice of homework is self-motivated and enables students to function as individuals. Benefit is derived from homework when it is attacked with curiosity, interest and zeal. Individual student capabilities determine the type, frequency and quantity of homework assigned daily. Reading and developing literacy skills is a priority in the elementary curriculum. Students should read outside of school on a daily basis in addition to any other homework assigned.

### **Homebound Instruction**

Homebound instruction shall be provided when a child's condition will cause absence of at least two (2) weeks duration. A note from the child's physician is required stating that the child is unable to attend school for medical reasons. The expected date of return to the school program has to be included in the note. Homebound instruction may also be provided for the following reason(s): child is expelled or excluded from school for safety reasons; or a special education program is pending.

### **KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION**

Kindergarten registration is announced and held during the month of March. New students should register two weeks before the start of school in August if they have not registered by March. Registration is conducted on line by going to <http://plymouth.k12.ct.us> and clicking on the link for registration. Parents are required to provide the following documentation: Birth Certificate, record of pre enrollment physical as required by state law, immunization record, and 3 proofs of residency to complete the registration process.

### **LIBRARY**

Our school library has a collection of over 8,000 books. Students in kindergarten through five visit the library with their classroom teacher. Students may take out books for one week at a time. The online District Library Media Site, at <http://www.plymouth.k12.ct.us> lists Internet resources for all ages, including our new online library catalog, Destiny. With Destiny you can look up books and browse our collection from anywhere in the world, with an Internet connection.

### **LOCKED DOOR POLICY**

For the safety and security of staff and students, doors will remain locked at all times. You must ring the bell at the main entrance and identify yourself. There is a security procedure in place that allows parents to drop off lunchboxes, instruments, sneakers, etc. through the drop off window so that you do not have to enter the building. If you require entrance into the building for another purpose, you will be buzzed in through the second set of locked doors. All visitors must report directly to the school office to be signed in and appropriately directed.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

PLEASE WRITE YOUR CHILD'S NAME ON HATS, COATS, LUNCH BOXES, BACKPACKS, AND SWEATERS. In the event an item is lost, it is placed in the lost and found box located by the office. Students should check this area for any lost item. Every year, many pieces of clothing remain unclaimed from the Lost and Found box. If you discover missing clothing from your child's wardrobe, it would be a good idea to check at school.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

Students are expected to make up all worked missed due to absence. School personnel will only be responsible for providing make up assistance to pupils whose absence is due to illness, religious observation, death in the family, or dangerous weather/ road conditions.

Upon returning to school after a period of suspension, the student shall be given a reasonable amount of time to complete all classroom work, including tests. Failure to make up work may result in a failing grade.

### **MANDATED REPORTERS**

Connecticut General Statute Section 17a-101, as amended by Public Act 96-246, requires certain educational personnel

(school teachers, school principals, school guidance counselors, and school paraprofessionals) as well as licensed nurses, psychologists and social workers who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused or neglected to report such abuse and/or neglect. In furtherance of this statute and its purpose, The Board of Education (Board) recognizes its legal and ethical obligations in the reporting of suspected child abuse, neglect and sexual assault. Any person applying for employment with the Board shall submit to a record check of the Department of Children and Families Child Abuse and Neglect Registry before the person may be hired. Mandated reporters include all school employees, specifically Superintendent, administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, guidance counselors, school counselors, paraprofessionals, coaches of intramural and interscholastic athletics, as well as licensed nurses, physicians, psychologists, social workers and licensed behavior analyst either employed by the Board or working in one of the District schools, or any other person who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in District schools. Such individual(s) who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused, neglected, placed in imminent risk of serious harm, or sexually assaulted by a school employee is required to report such abuse, neglect or risk and/or sexual assault. A mandated reporter's suspicions may be based on factors including, but not limited to, observations, allegations, facts by a child, victim or third party. Suspicion or belief does not require certainty or probable cause.

A mandated reporter shall make an oral report, by telephone or in person, to the Commissioner of Children and Families or a law enforcement agency as soon as possible, but no later than twelve (12) hours after the reporter has reasonable cause to suspect the child has been abused or neglected. In addition, the mandated reporter shall inform the building principal or his/her designee that he/she will be making such a report. Not later than forty-eight hours of making the oral report, the mandated reporter shall file a written report with the Commissioner of Children and Families or his/her designee. (The Department of Children and Families has established a 24-hour Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-800-842-2288 for the purpose of making such oral reports.)

#### **OPEN HOUSE**

Open House for Harry S. Fisher Elementary School will take place on September 10, 2019. A more detailed schedule will be sent home with your child within the first few weeks of school.

#### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Formal parent teacher conferences will be scheduled in October and March. Parents are encouraged to become partners in their child's educational successes. Conferences with teachers may be held at any time during the school year. Teachers are generally available for conferences with parents on Monday through Thursday from 3:10 - 3:35 P.M. Parents and students, as well as teachers, counselors or administrators may initiate a conference. Please send a note to the teacher or phone the office to arrange a conference.

#### **PARENT PORTAL**

The Plymouth School District has developed the Parent Portal as a means to further promote educational excellence and to enhance communication with parents/guardians. The Portal allows parents to view their own child's records at any time. In response for the privilege of accessing the Plymouth School District Parent Portal, every parent/guardian is expected to act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. The Portal is available to every parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the Plymouth School District.

Your usage of any Plymouth Public School sponsored Parent Portal indicates your acceptance of the following:

1. Parent/guardians will not share their passwords with anyone, including children.
2. Parents/guardians will not attempt to harm or destroy data of their children, of another user, School or District network or the Internet.
3. Parents/guardians will not use the Parent Portal for any illegal activity, including violation of Data Privacy laws. Anyone found to be violating laws will be subject to civil and/or criminal prosecution.
4. Parents/guardians will not access data or an account owned by another parent/guardian.
5. Parents/guardians who identify a security problem with the Parent Portal should notify the District's Central Office immediately without demonstrating the problem to anyone else.

6. Parents/guardians who are identified as a security or harassment risk to the Parent Portal or any other District computers or networks, will be denied access to the Parent Portal.

Parent/guardian access to their children's records may be on a continuous basis as long as their children are enrolled in the District.

### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Harry S. Fisher Elementary School concurs that education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school based on communications and interactions. Parents/guardians are encouraged to put a high priority on education and to make the most of their educational opportunities available. Parents/guardians should become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with the District's academic programs, including special programs. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences, participation in campus parent organizations, attendance at Board of Education meetings and being a school volunteer are strongly encouraged. The school welcomes volunteers and as a result has established a wide support base including not only parents, but senior citizens, retired teachers, college students, and high school students.

School-family-community partnerships are about working together for student success. A positive relationship between parent involvement and student achievement has been clearly demonstrated in research literature. Parent involvement also benefits parents themselves in terms of having a greater appreciation of their roles, strengthened social networks, access to information and materials, and motivation to continue their own education.

### **PESTICIDE APPLICATION** (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-231c, 10-231d)

It is the policy of the Plymouth Board of Education to implement an integrated pest management plan that uses available pest control techniques to reduce the amounts of pesticides applied in any building or on the grounds of any Plymouth Public School. Along with pesticides, the Board uses alternative methods of pest control that may include structural maintenance, proper sanitation practices, appropriate solid waste management and alternative mechanical or biological control.

The decision to apply pesticide in any building or on the grounds of any Plymouth Public School is dependent on the results of periodic monitoring for pest populations.

No application of pesticide shall be made in any building or on the grounds of any Plymouth public school during regular school hours or during planned activities at any school except as provided by Connecticut statute or regulation.

Parents or guardians of students and/or staff members may register for prior notice of pesticide application at their school. Each school shall maintain a registry of persons requesting such notice, and shall provide notice to registered individuals in accordance with applicable Connecticut statutory and regulatory provisions.

The Board may make an emergency application of pesticide without prior notice to parent or guardians and/or staff in the event of immediate threat to human health, subject to notice provisions of applicable Connecticut statutory and regulatory provisions.

#### ***Plymouth Board of Education Policy 3524.1 (a)***

#### **Green Cleaning Products Notification** (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-231g)

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-231g requires that on or before July 1, 2011, school districts must implement a "green cleaning program" for the cleaning and maintenance of school buildings. A written description of these green cleaning programs is available for inspection upon request or via the school district website.

#### **Indoor Air Quality (Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-220)**

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-220 requires that for every school building constructed, extended, renovated or replaced on or after January 1, 2003, a board of education must provide a uniform inspection and evaluation program of indoor air quality. Results of this inspection and evaluation procedure are available for public inspection on upon request.

## **PROPERTY, LOCKERS, AND EQUIPMENT**

It is the policy of the Board to hold students responsible for any loss of or damage to the property of the school under the jurisdiction of the Board when the loss or damage occurs through fault of the student.

Any student damaging or defacing school property will be financially liable for restoring the property regardless of the condition of the property at the time of the destructive act, in addition to any other discipline deemed appropriate.

In addition, anyone who witnesses such an act and fails to report it to the proper authorities will be considered as having contributed to that action. Such charges for damaged property will be exactly those which the school must incur to repair the damage.

Each student is assigned a desk, hall locker and/or other equipment. These items are the property of the school, loaned to students for their convenience during the school year, should be kept in good order and not abused. Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by district policy. Parents will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

Students should not attempt to repair school equipment but should notify the main office immediately if it isn't functioning properly. Any damage done will be the responsibility of the person to whom it was loaned for the current year. Students are warned not to bring large sums of money or valuables to school, liability for these items remains with the student.

## **PTA**

The PTA is a self-governing body linked to the State and National PTA. The local unit is part of a nationwide system working to put children first. Through their own plans, activities, and programs, they strive to meet the needs of the children and youth in our community. The PTA seeks your help in making this possible. Meetings will be communicated regularly and all are welcome to join at any time throughout the school year.

## **RECESS**

Recess is part of the daily school program. It provides an important break for fresh air, to exercise, and to socialize. Recess is held outdoors unless it is extremely cold (below 30°F) or stormy. All children participate in recess unless there is a medical reason for non-participation. In such case, a note should be sent by the parent/guardian to the child's teacher explaining why the child should miss recess.

### **RECESS RULES:**

- Eyes watching
- Ears listening
- Safe body
- Be kind and show empathy
- Play fairly
- Be clean and responsible
- Follow the rules of the games
- Be assertive and use Bystander Power

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards for kindergarten through grade 5 will be distributed three times a year with the last report card being distributed on the last day of school. Report card envelopes must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to the child's classroom teacher. The final report card does not have to be returned.

## **SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE SPECIALIST**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the principal of each school (or principal's designee) shall serve as the Safe School Climate Specialist. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying and act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to reports of bullying in the school.

## **SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Principal of each District school shall establish a new committee or designate at least one existing committee that is responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying in the school. The committee must include at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, appointed by the Principal.

The Safe School Climate Committee shall:

1. Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying and teen dating violence;
2. Identify and address patterns of bullying and teen dating violence among students in the school;
3. Implement the provisions of the school security and safety plan, (developed pursuant to Section 87 of PA 13-3) regarding the collection, evaluation and reporting of information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying or teen dating violence (defined in Connecticut General Statutes 10-222d) and report such information, as necessary, to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator and to the school's security and safety committee;
4. Review and amend school policies relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
5. Review and make recommendation to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator regarding the District's Safe Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
6. Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
7. Collaborate with the District Safe School Climate Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying and teen dating violence; and
8. Perform any other duties as determined by the School Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and teen dating violence for the school.

Parent members of the Safe School Climate Committee are excluded from activities #1 and #3 or any other activity that may compromise the confidentiality of a student.

As part of this policy, the Board of Education shall develop and implement a Safe School Climate Plan to address the existence of bullying and teen dating violence in its schools. Such plan shall establish deadlines for reporting investigating, and notifying parents and guardians about bullying and teen dating violence incidents; prohibit retaliation against those who report bullying and/or teen dating violence; and require school officials to notify law enforcement officials when it is believed that bullying or teen dating violence conduct constitutes a crime. The Board requires each school in the District, on and after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, to complete an assessment using school climate assessment instruments, including uniform surveys that collect information about students' perspectives and opinions about school climate at the school and allow students to complete and submit such surveys anonymously, approved and disseminated by the Department of Education pursuant to C.G.S. 10-222h, as amended by PA 11-232. The Board will collect the school climate assessments of each District school and submit them to the Department of Education.

### **SCHOOL TESTING**

Standardized tests can assist both teachers and parents in assessing the academic progress of the child, and in diagnosing specific strengths and weaknesses. We administer the statewide Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) in grades 3, 4, and 5 as well as the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Testing in grade 5.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

The right to inspect desks, lockers and other equipment assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property. An authorized school administrator may search a student's locker or desk when there is reason to believe that the student's desk or locker contains material which presents a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in school.

This document serves as advance notice that school board policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Under special circumstances, school officials may search students, particularly if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses illegal matter, such as a dangerous weapon or illegal drugs. Students must be aware that such items are forbidden both on school property and at school-related activities.

Possession of or bringing such weapons or dangerous instruments on school grounds may be a violation of criminal law and, therefore, any such act shall be reported immediately to the local law enforcement agency and the parent or guardian notified, if possible. Students who violate this regulation shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as possible court action.

### **SECURITY CAMERAS**

Security cameras are located in public areas throughout our building to record activity that is in view, and to ensure the safety and well-being of our students and staff. School administrators and security personnel have access to this recorded information.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

For students in need of Special Education programs, a planning and placement team (PPT) is designed to provide communication and decision-making at the school level concerning the effective use of available resources. The team is also responsible for follow-up and periodic review of all students presently in Special Education and special services programs.

Any child identified as possibly needing special education and/or related services must be referred to a special education Planning & Placement Team for evaluation (PPT). The PPT will determine whether special education services are required. Parents must give their consent before any evaluation can be done or any services can begin. An Individualized Education Plan, based upon the diagnostic findings of the evaluation study will be developed by the PPT, with parental involvement. Parents will be informed regarding the use of scientific, research-based interventions.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

**SCHOOL RULES:** (To be reviewed with your child)

- Walk at all times in the building.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- Show respect for everyone and property at all times (language & actions).
- Toys should not be brought to school. If a toy is brought in for purposes of sharing per the teacher's permission, the item should be put away immediately afterward.
- Use of cell phones and other unauthorized devices is prohibited.
- Students may not sell items at school to raise money for an outside agency.
- Fighting is not permitted.
- It is the responsibility of students to maintain the condition of their books and materials. Parents will be charged for lost, damaged, or defaced items.

#### **1. Philosophy of Discipline**

Discipline begins in the home with the responsibility of parents to develop a positive attitude toward study and behavior. No code established or action taken by school officials can be effective without parental acceptance of this primary responsibility. Discipline continues in the classroom with the relationship between the teacher and the student.

The school district is unequivocally committed to the principle that disorderly and disruptive behavior should not be permitted to interfere with the right of other students to pursue an education. While the teacher should handle most discipline problems, students, parents, the administration and the Board of Education have the responsibility to support and maintain the enforcement of discipline within the building.

All students will be required to conduct themselves at all times in accordance with established codes of student conduct. Every reasonable effort will be made to keep students within the school's sphere of influence, using suspension and/or expulsion only as a last resort. In this connection, students are reminded that:

1. The exercise of any of the student's rights must be weighed against the rights of another individual or group.
2. No student has the right to disrupt the educational process within school.
3. All students will have the right to due process procedures in matters of suspension, transfer, and expulsion.

### **Suspension - the Temporary Removal from the School and/or Program.**

**1. In School Suspension:** Students may simply be excluded from class or activity participation by the principal or his designee up to ten (10) days when it is felt to be in the best interest of the student involved that, although actions warrant suspension, he/she be kept within the scope of the building and program. In-school suspensions shall be served in the school attended by the student.

**2. Out-Of-School Suspension:** Students, enrolled in grades three through twelve, inclusive, may be temporarily removed from school up to ten (10) days when it is felt the interests of the students and the school program would be better served. All suspensions shall be inschool suspensions unless the administration determines, for students in grades three through twelve, inclusive, that (1) the student being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the student shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension or (2) that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate based on evidence of previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of the student and efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive support strategies. In addition, guidelines developed and promulgated by the Commissioner of Education will be used by the administration to help determine whether a student's behavior warrants an in-school or out-of-school suspension. A student in grades preschool to two, inclusive, may be given an out-of-school suspension if it is determined by the administration that such suspension is appropriate based on evidence that the student's conduct on school grounds is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.

### **3. Weapons and Dangerous Instruments**

Possession of or bringing such weapons or dangerous instruments on school grounds may be a violation of criminal law and, therefore, any such act shall be reported immediately to the local law enforcement agency and the parent or guardian notified, if possible. Students who violate this regulation shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as possible court action.

Any dangerous device or weapon may be seized by an employee of the school system under the power granted to the Board of Education to maintain order and discipline in the schools, and to protect the safety of students, staff and the public.

Every employee seizing any weapon or dangerous instrument under the provisions of this regulation shall report the incident to the Principal immediately and deliver the seized device to the Principal together with the name(s) of persons involved, witnesses, location and circumstances of the seizure. If it is known that a student has possession of such a device but the device has not been seized, the employee should report the matter to the Principal or Head Teacher, and the Principal or Head Teacher shall take such action as is appropriate. The Principal or Head Teacher shall report all violations of this regulation to the Superintendent or designee, and to the local law enforcement agency on approval of the Superintendent or designee. The Principal or Head Teacher also shall take disciplinary action as he/she may determine necessary, and shall report the incident to the parents or guardian of the student by telephone or in person, and follow this notification with a letter.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

A student's school records are confidential and are protected by federal and state law from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a

dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school.

### **TRANSPORTATION, BUS ROUTES AND SCHEDULES**

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditional upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Students will be advised that they may be suspended from transportation services for unsatisfactory conduct while awaiting or receiving transportation to and from school which endangers persons or property or violates a Board policy or administrative regulation.

In late August, the bus schedule will appear in the local newspaper. Please encourage your child to use the bus system. In doing so, the bus company may sufficiently determine if there are any problems, such as overcrowding. If you have any questions regarding the bus route, schedule, pickup points, times, or bus drivers, please contact the Business Manager, Paul Hendrickson, at 860-314-2768.

#### **BUS RULES FOR STUDENTS:**

- The driver may assign seats
- Board the bus in an orderly manner without pushing or the crowding of other students.
- Be courteous- No swearing or screaming
- Do not eat or drink on the bus - No littering - Keep the bus clean
- No fighting or hitting
- Remain seated at all times
- Keep your hands and head inside the bus - Do not throw anything out windows
- Keep the aisle clear
- Do not destroy property - No graffiti
- Do not distract the driver while driving
- No cell phones or other electronic devices including gaming devices

These rules of conduct are established to ensure student safety and are for the benefit of each individual student. Students are encouraged to comply with these Bus Rules for Students which contribute significantly to safety and the efficient operation of our transportation system. These rules apply at bus stops, while riding the bus to or from school, and during school related activities.

**Consequences of Misbehavior on the Bus** – Punishment is at the discretion of the school principal. That may include suspension from riding the bus. Serious or repeated misbehavior might cause suspension or expulsion from school. If a child is unruly on the bus and refuses to obey the driver, such child shall be taken to his destination and the school administration shall be advised. The first offense will result in a warning to the child from school administration. The next offense will result in notification of the parent regarding the unruly bus behavior. A third offense may result in suspension from the school bus for a period of time determined by the administrator. The parent is then responsible for their transportation to and from school. If any child misbehaves so as to endanger the safety of the other passengers, he/she may be put off immediately for an indefinite period.

The staff at the school and at the bus company is requesting that your child's bus stop remain as consistent as possible. Being picked up and dropped off at the same place every day is the best way to ensure your child's safety. In the event of a transportation change, however, a 24 hour notice is to be given to the school unless it is an emergency, in which case a call should be made to the main office no later than 2:45 p.m. in order for the request to be honored.

**PLEASE REMEMBER STUDENTS IN KINDERGARTEN WILL BE BROUGHT BACK TO SCHOOL IF**

**THERE IS NO ADULT WAITING FOR THEM AT THEIR BUS STOP.** If the usual adult is unable to be at the bus stop, please inform the school with the name of the individual who will be waiting for your child so the bus company can be notified.

*Please be aware that video cameras have been installed by the bus company to monitor student behavior.*

### **VACATIONS**

School policy strongly encourages the scheduling of family vacations and trips during times which coincide with school vacations. Student absences for reasons of a family vacation or trip that takes place when school is in session are considered “unexcused absences.”

### **VISITORS**

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit Plymouth Schools. **All visitors must first report to the Main Office and be prepared to provide appropriate identification.** Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the principal’s approval and advanced notice. Such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

Unauthorized persons shall **not** be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering the building or from loitering on the grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior will not be permitted.

For safety reasons, visitors should be careful whenever driving cars onto the school grounds. Please honor the posted designated drop-off and pick-up areas.

If an emergency occurs while you are visiting school, please note the classroom Emergency Action plan is as follows:

#### **Medical:**

- Shut door (must be locked)
- Remain in classroom
- Continue to instruct
- Wait for ALL CLEAR

#### **Evacuate:**

- Visual Sweep
- (Report anything suspicious)
- Exit building
- Wait for instruction
- Seek shelter as needed

#### **Lockdown:**

- Shut door (must be locked)
- Hide out (out of sight)
- Maintain silence
- Take action against intruder as a last resort

**Use Judgment – call 911**

### **WEB SITES**

School events and activities are posted on the Fisher Elementary School website and can be obtained by going to <http://www.plymouth.k12.ct.us>. Teachers also have individual web sites posted which can also be found on the same website.

### **WELLNESS POLICY**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to promote the health and well-being of district students. In furtherance of this policy, the Board has created an Advisory Council on Wellness to review any available state or federal guidance on wellness issues and to assist in formulating recommendations for specific goals and guidelines aimed at promoting lifelong wellness practices among district students. This Advisory Council involves parents, students, representatives from the school food authority (i.e. any private company employed to provide food services), school administrators, the board of education, and members of the public and may also involve teachers of physical education and school health professionals. Complete goals and guidelines are available upon request or from the district website.

### **YEARLY CLASS PLACEMENT**

The classes at Harry S. Fisher School are grouped heterogeneously. Many factors are utilized to make classrooms that are supportive for all students while seeking to create equity across gender, abilities, strengths and challenges for students, and individual as well as group needs. The principal will make the final placement of any child within a classroom. All teacher assignments will be made available at least one week prior to the start of school.