

**SACOPEE VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2007/2008**

The purpose of this student planner is to help organize your work and to make sure that homework and class work is completed on time. Included in this planner is your student handbook that will help acquaint you with the programs, policies and procedures at SVMS. Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for reading and following the rules in this handbook.

This handbook has been developed within the framework of the SAD55's policies. In case of a conflict between a Board policy and the rules in this handbook, the policy will prevail. The SAD55 School Department reserves the unlimited right to make changes to the handbook at any time without prior notice. The handbook is provided solely for the convenience of staff, students and parents, and the SAD55 School Department, to the extent permissible by law, expressly disclaims any liability, which may otherwise be incurred.

A copy of the SAD55 Board's policy manual is available in the Middle School Office and the Superintendent's Office.

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## ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

It is very important that each student makes every effort to be in school every day. School attendance laws and policies make it absolutely necessary that we have accurate records for all absences or days tardy. For this reason, attendance is taken during the first class each morning. Parents/Guardians must notify the school, in the morning, of the day a student is absent.

The following are the reasons an absence is excusable: A) illness, B) appointments with health professionals, C) observance of religious holidays, D) family emergencies, E) school suspensions, F) planned absences for personal reasons approved in advance by the principal. All other absences are considered unexcused and may result in disciplinary consequences and lowered grades

### Special Absences

On many occasions, due to vacation and special family situations, we receive requests for students to be excused from school for periods ranging from a few days to a few weeks. Naturally, this presents a problem maintaining the continuity of instruction. It is essential that prior to any requests of this sort (except in emergency situations), a parent conference with the teachers be held. At that time, it should be mutually decided as to how disruptive the student's leave would be to his or her school program and to determine if there are appropriate activities and assignments that the student might complete outside the classroom. It should be noted that instruction cannot be repeated in many cases and some curriculum will simply be missed. Please make careful note of vacations listed on the school calendar and plan your travels accordingly.

### Early Dismissal

If your child needs to leave school early for a doctor's appointment or other reason, please send a note to school that day notifying us the time and reason you will be picking up your child early.

### Tardiness

It is extremely important that all students are in their classes at 8:00 a.m. ready to begin their school day. Arriving late to a class already in progress is a disruption. Any student arriving late to school must have a note from his/her parent explaining the reason for the tardiness. If the student does not have a note, it will be considered unexcused tardiness. The Principal will contact parents when there is repeated tardiness.

### Truancy

Maine law defines truancy as the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year. The law also provides a procedure that schools must follow when a student is truant. The SAD55 Truant Officer is notified and assists the school with truant students. Any questions about truancy issues should be directed to the principal.

## BICYCLES

Students who ride bicycles to school must secure them to the bicycle rack. Students are required to wear helmets. The school does not assume any liability for damage or theft of bicycles on school property.

## BOOK BAGS AND BACKPACKS

Due to safety concerns, carrying book bags/backpacks to class is not allowed without special permission.

## CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM

The co-curricular program provides a variety of activities to complement the academic offerings. It also fosters a sense of teamwork, enjoyment, cooperation, and competition. Some activities require substantial commitments of time, energy, and talent. Programming will be available for students in all grades.

## DANCES/SOCIALS

Dances are for SVMS 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and SAD55 student residents attending other schools. The name of the SAD55 student resident must be submitted to the office at least two days prior to the dance. Students who are absent on the day of the dance cannot attend. Students may leave early only if accompanied by their parents or guardian. If a student has left the designated area, he/she will not be readmitted. Inappropriate conduct or attire will result in a phone call home, removal from the dance, and possible disciplinary action. Backpacks are not necessary at dances and must be left at home. Students cannot bring digital cameras or cell phones into school dances.

Students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade will have an opportunity to participate in evening socials, which will include age appropriate activities and games.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of electronic devices on school grounds, (iPods, GameBoy, or other hand-held devices), is not allowed during the school hours of 8:00 a.m. ó 3:30 p.m. unless special permission has been granted by a teacher. They will be confiscated and parents will be asked to retrieve the items from an administrator. SVMS is not responsible for the loss or theft of personal property if your child chooses to bring them into school.

## FIELD TRIPS

All field trips have educational objectives and receive prior approval from the school administration. Students must have a signed permission form in order to participate in a school-sponsored field trip. Some opportunities may necessitate a small fee and the school will make every effort to keep costs minimal. Please alert the building principal if assistance with any fee would be helpful. Your inquiry will be held in strict confidence.

## FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

### Free and Reduced Lunch Form

A free and reduced lunch form is sent home with all students on the first day of school. This form is confidential and only one form per family is necessary. The percentage of free and reduced students in our school and district determines Title One funding and affects many other grants. If you need any help filling out the form, please contact Mary Emerson, Food Service Director.

### Meals

Breakfast and lunch are served daily. The cost of breakfast is 75 cents a day and 30 cents for reduced price breakfast. All students are encouraged to either eat breakfast at school or home! Student may purchase a hot lunch, bring their own lunch, or purchase just a white or chocolate milk to go with their lunch. The price of school lunch is \$1.75 & 40 cents for reduced price lunch. Students who bring their own lunch have the opportunity to purchase chocolate milk for 50 cents or white milk for 40 cents.

<b>Meal Prices</b>	<b>Full Price</b>	<b>Reduced Price</b>
Breakfast Daily	\$.75	\$.30
Lunch Daily	\$1.75	\$.40
Breakfast Monthly **	\$16.25	\$6.50
Breakfast Yearly	\$135.00	\$54.00
Lunch Monthly **	\$37.75	\$8.50
Lunch Yearly	\$315.00	\$72.00
Combined Breakfast & Lunch Yearly	\$450.00	\$126.00

\*\* Monthly rate is an approximation depending upon the number of school days per month

Lunch money should be turned in on the first day of the week. Parents may purchase meals in advance, as some parents prefer to pay for an entire month or year at a time. Checks are the easiest form of payment, but please put the student's name on the memo line. Online payments are available at [www.mynutrikids.com](http://www.mynutrikids.com). If a student does not turn in lunch money, they will only be allowed to "charge" three regular school lunch meals. After that time, students will be offered a cheese sandwich and milk. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact Mary Emerson, Food Service Director.

### AFDC or Food Stamp Recipients

If your family qualifies for AFDC or Food Stamps, you automatically qualify for free lunch; however, you should receive a letter from the State of Maine that needs to be submitted to the school food nutrition program.

### Food Allergies

Any student with any food allergy or food intolerance needs to have a note from their healthcare provider on file in the nurse's office. This information will then be entered into our food management software to assist the student in making appropriate food choices.

## GUIDANCE SERVICES

The goal of the middle school counseling program is to support the developmental needs of ALL students in the areas of academic success, personal/social growth, and career/vocational awareness. The counselor will provide the majority of the guidance services in the classroom setting or in small groups. Age appropriate instruction will be provided in areas including career exploration, college readiness, conflict management, and study skills. The counselor is available to work with students one-on-one on a short term, as needed basis. The counselor is available to meet with students and parents to discuss individual concerns and to provide information about community resources for families interested in pursuing long term counseling services.

## LOCKERS

Student use of school lockers and other storage facilities such as desks are a privilege granted by the school. All lockers and other storage facilities are school property and remain under the control, custody and supervision of the school. Students have no expectation of privacy in school storage facilities or any items placed in them. School officials have the authority to inspect and search storage facilities and their contents on a random basis, with or without reasonable suspicion, and with or without notice or consent.

Students are to use only the lockers issued to them by the office or physical education teacher and may not be shared with other students. Students may not at any time place personal locks on any school locker. Students may not open or enter another student's locker unless the office has given permission. The school is not responsible for loss, theft or damage to personal property stored in lockers. Students should safeguard their possessions and not bring valuable items or large amounts of cash to school.

## LOST AND FOUND

It is very important that students take responsibility for their possessions, and that items such as jackets and backpacks be labeled with the child's name. A lost and found will be located in the main office. At the end of each trimester, all unclaimed items will be donated locally to a charitable organization.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Each grade level has a schedule designed to maximize learning opportunities. Students will be given specific grade level schedules the first day of school.

## PROGRESS AND GRADE REPORTS

Progress reports will be sent home at the mid-point of each trimester. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers directly with any questions, comments or concerns at any point during the school year. Report cards will be sent home at the end of each trimester.

## RECESS

Students should be prepared with proper clothing and sneakers so they can enjoy an active and fun recess each day. If weather is severe, every effort will be made for students to still have an opportunity to be active indoors for a period of time.

## SCHOOL TELEPHONES

A phone is available in the main office until 4:00 p.m. for students to use for emergencies and if they need to make arrangements to stay after school for make-up work. Students must have a pass to use the phones during regular school hours.

## STUDENT CELL PHONES

Student cell phone use is not allowed during school hours (8:00-2:15). Cell phone use may be allowed at school-sponsored activities if under the direct supervision of an adult.

## STUDENT RECOGNITION

Recognition for academic achievement, improvement, effort, and citizenship, will be done each trimester, and at the end of the school year. Faculty, staff, and students will work to create criteria for these awards.

## STUDENT RECORDS

Each year we request parents to complete a student information/emergency card. If any of this information changes during the year, please let us know as soon as possible so that we have current contact information.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SCHOOL-ISSUED ITEMS

One of the greatest expenses in running a school is the cost of the books and materials. It is imperative that students cover all their books and treat all school property with care. At the end of the year, each student will be charged for any lost or damaged books, uniforms, calculators, lab equipment, or other school-issued materials.

## SVMS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The middle school program is often the first time some of our athletes experience school-organized athletics and there are often different types of policies and rules that we must follow as a district and as member of the middle school "Triple C Conference". We often view this experience as a learning experience to prepare athletes to have a successful and enjoyable experience at the high school level while also understanding that not every middle school athlete will be interested in participating at the high school level. Although winning often is important to parents, athletes and coaches, it is not our emphasis. We feel that skill development; sportsmanship, learning how to be part of a team, and providing an enjoyable experience are our top priorities. If we accomplish these things, winning will take care of itself.

## VISITORS

For the safety of our students and staff, all parents, visitors and volunteers must identify themselves at the main office before entering any other areas of the school. Visitors will be issued a badge for the duration of their stay.

Parents who wish to visit classrooms or meet with teachers or other staff members are requested to schedule such visits in advance so as not to disrupt the educational program.

## WEAPONS

In accordance with State and Federal Statutes, students shall not possess or use weapons of any kind on or surrounding school grounds (examples include but are not limited to firearms, explosives and knives). Students also shall not use any object, although not necessarily designed to be a weapon, to inflict bodily harm and/or to threaten, intimidate, coerce or harass another person (examples include but are not limited to bats, lighters, tools and toy weapons).

## STUDENT COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE AND RULES

### **STUDENT COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE**

M.S.A.D. #55 computers, networks and Internet access are provided to support the educational mission of the schools and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff. This policy and the accompanying rules also apply to laptops issued directly to students, whether in use at school or off school premises.

Student use of school computers, networks and Internet services is a privilege, not a right. Compliance with the M.S.A.D. #55 policies and rules concerning computer use is mandatory. Students who violate these policies and rules may have their computer privileges limited, suspended or revoked. Such violations may also result in disciplinary action, referral to law enforcement and/or legal action.

M.S.A.D. #55 computers remain under the control, custody and supervision of M.S.A.D. #55 at all times. M.S.A.D. #55 monitors all computer and Internet activity by students. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers.

M.S.A.D. #55 utilizes filtering technology designed to block materials that are obscene or harmful to minors, and child pornography. M.S.A.D. #55 takes precautions to supervise student use of the Internet, but parents should be aware that the M.S.A.D. #55 cannot reasonably prevent all instances of inappropriate computer use by students in violation of Board policies and rules, including access to objectionable materials and communication with persons outside of the school. M.S.A.D. #55 is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information that students obtain through the Internet.

Students and parents shall be informed of this policy and the accompanying rules through handbooks, the school web site and/or other means selected by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent is responsible for implementing this policy and the accompanying rules. Additional administrative procedures or school rules governing the day-to-day management and operations of M.S.A.D. #55 unit's computer system may be implemented, consistent with Board policies and rules. The Superintendent may delegate specific responsibilities to the Technology Coordinator and others as he/she deems appropriate.

Legal Reference: 47 USC § 254(h)(5) (Children's Internet Protection Act)

Approved and Adopted: July 5, 2007

### **STUDENT COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE RULES**

These rules accompany Board policy IJNDB (Student Computer and Internet Use). Each student is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving M.S.A.D. #55 computers, networks and Internet services, and for his/her computer files, passwords and accounts. These rules provide general guidance concerning the use of M.S.A.D. #55 computers and examples of prohibited uses. The rules do not attempt to describe every possible prohibited activity by students. Students, parents and school staff who have questions about whether a particular activity is prohibited are encouraged to contact a building administrator or the Technology Coordinator.

#### A. Consequences for Violation of Computer Use Policy and Rules

Student use of M.S.A.D. #55 computers, networks and Internet services is a privilege, not a right. Compliance with M.S.A.D. #55 policies and rules concerning computer use is mandatory. Students who violate these policies and rules may have their computer privileges limited, suspended or revoked. Such violations may also result in disciplinary action, referral to law enforcement and/or legal action.

The building principal shall have the final authority to decide whether a student's privileges will be limited, suspended or revoked based upon the circumstances of the particular case, the student's prior disciplinary record and any other pertinent factors.

#### B. Acceptable Use

M.S.A.D. #55 computers, networks and Internet services are provided for educational purposes and research consistent with the school unit's educational mission, curriculum and instructional goals.

All Board policies, school rules and expectations concerning student conduct and communications apply when students are using computers.

Students are also expected to comply with all specific instructions from teachers and other school staff or volunteers when using M.S.A.D. #55 computers.

#### C. Prohibited Uses

Examples of unacceptable uses of M.S.A.D. #55 computers that are expressly prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Accessing Inappropriate Materials - Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, forwarding, downloading, scanning or displaying defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing and/or illegal materials.
2. Illegal Activities - Using M.S.A.D. #55 computers, networks and Internet services for any illegal activity or in violation of any Board policy or school rules. M.S.A.D. #55 assumes no responsibility for illegal activities of students while using school computers.
3. Violating Copyrights ó Copying, downloading or sharing any type of copyrighted materials (including music or films) without the owner's permission (see Board policy/procedure EGAD ó Copyright Compliance). M.S.A.D. #55 assumes no responsibility for copyright violations by students.
4. Copying Software - Copying or downloading software without the express authorization of the Technology Coordinator. Unauthorized copying of software is illegal and may subject the copier to substantial civil and criminal penalties. M.S.A.D. #55 assumes no responsibility for illegal software copying by students.
5. Plagiarism - Representing as one's own work any materials obtained on the Internet (such as term papers, articles, music, etc). When Internet sources are used in student work, the author, publisher and web site must be identified.
6. Non-School-Related Uses - Using M.S.A.D. #55 computers, networks and Internet services for non-school-related purposes such as private financial gain; commercial, advertising or solicitation purposes; or any other personal use not connected with the educational program or assignments.
7. Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access - Sharing passwords, using other users' passwords, and accessing or using other users' accounts.

8. Malicious Use/Vandalism - Any malicious use, disruption or harm to M.S.A.D. #55 computers, networks and Internet services, including but not limited to hacking activities and creation/uploading of computer viruses.
9. Unauthorized Access to Blogs/Chat Rooms - Accessing chat rooms or news groups without specific authorization from the supervising teacher.

D. No Expectation of Privacy

M.S.A.D. #55 computers remain under the control, custody and supervision of M.S.A.D. #55 at all times. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, including e-mail, stored files and Internet access logs.

E. Compensation for Losses, Costs and/or Damages

The student and his/her parents are responsible for compensating M.S.A.D. #55 for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the school unit for violations of Board policies and school rules while the student is using school unit computers, including the cost of investigating such violations. M.S.A.D. #55 assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or costs incurred by a student while using M.S.A.D. #55 computers.

F. Student Security

A student is not allowed to reveal his/her full name, address, telephone number, social security number or other personal information on the Internet without prior permission from a teacher. Students should never agree to meet people they have contacted through the Internet without parental permission. Students should inform their teacher if they access information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate or make them uncomfortable in any way.

G. System Security

The security of M.S.A.D. #55 computers, networks and Internet services is a high priority. Any student who identifies a security problem must notify his/her teacher immediately. The student shall not demonstrate the problem to others or access unauthorized material. Any user who attempts to breach system security, causes a breach of system security or fails to report a system security problem shall be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action in addition to having his/her computer privileges limited, suspended or revoked.

H. Additional Rules for Laptops Issued to Students

1. Laptops are loaned to students as an educational tool and are only authorized for use in completing school assignments.
2. Before a laptop is issued to a student, the student and his/her parent must sign the school's acknowledgment form. Optional: Parents are required to attend an informational meeting before a laptop will be issued to their child.
3. Students are responsible for the proper care of laptops at all times, whether on or off school property, including costs associated with repairing or replacing the laptop. M.S.A.D. #55 offers an insurance program for parents to cover replacement costs and/or repair costs for damages not covered by the laptop warranty. Parents who choose not to purchase insurance should be aware that they are responsible for any costs associated with loss, theft or damage to a laptop issued to their child.

4. If a laptop is lost or stolen, this must be reported to the Technology Coordinator or Principal immediately. If a laptop is stolen, a report should be made to the local police and the Technology Coordinator or Principal immediately.
5. The Board's policy and rules concerning computer and Internet use apply to use of laptops at any time or place, on or off school property. Students are responsible for obeying any additional rules concerning care of laptops issued by school staff.
6. Violation of policies or rules governing the use of computers, or any careless use of a laptop may result in a student's laptop being confiscated and/or a student only being allowed to use the laptop under the direct supervision of school staff. The student will also be subject to disciplinary action for any violations of Board policies or school rules.
7. Parents will be informed of their child's login password. Parents are responsible for supervising their child's use of the laptop and Internet access when in use at home.
8. The laptop may only be used by the student to whom it is assigned.
9. Laptops must be returned in acceptable working order at the end of the school year or whenever requested by school staff.

Approved and Adopted: July 5, 2007

SACOPEE VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL  
BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

It is essential for schools to maintain a safe and orderly environment, which supports student learning and achievement. Acceptable student behavior allows the schools to discharge their primary responsibilities to educate students and promote good citizenship. All students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for others and in accordance with School Board policies, school rules, and applicable state and federal laws. Disciplinary action may be taken against students who violate policies, rules, or laws, and/or whose conduct directly interferes with the operations, or general welfare of the school. Physical force and corporal punishment shall not be used as disciplinary methods.

**Sacopee Valley Middle School**  
**Behavior Rubric**

Behavior	First Time	Second Time	Third Time	3+ Times
<b>Verbal Behavior</b> Name calling (make people feel bad about themselves), taunting, swearing, gossiping, rumors, lying about others, benign threats, silent treatment, exclusion, insulting	Documented verbal warning  Reflection sheet	Loss of privilege*  Reflection sheet  Principal notified	Loss of privilege(s)  Reflection sheet  Meeting with Principal  Parents notified	Individual Student Plan developed  Referred to Middle School Student Support Team
<b>Physical Behavior</b> Shoving, slapping, grabbing, tripping, negative contact, taking others' things, poking, invading another's personal space	Loss of privilege  Principal notified  Reflection sheet	Loss of Privilege(s)  Reflection sheet  Meet with Principal  Parents notified	Loss of Privilege(s)  Meeting with parents  Reflection sheet  Resource Officer notified	Individual Student Plan developed  Referred to Middle School Student Support Team
<b>Severe Behaviors</b> Hazing, spitting, harassment, punching, kicking, tackling, stealing/destruction, threats to commit bodily harm, intentionally injuring another student, retaliation (regarding reporting occurrence of aggressive behavior)	Principal immediately notified  1-3 day suspension  Reflection sheet  Parents notified	Principal immediately notified  3-5 day suspension  Reflection sheet  Meeting with parents  Resource Officer notified	Principal immediately notified  5 day suspension  Reflection sheet  Referred to Middle School Student Support Team	Individual Student Plan developed

\*Middle School privileges include such things as recess, time with peers, school dances, or field trips. Whenever possible, consequences will be related to the behavior. For example, poor behavior at recess will result in loss of recess.

Each incident and situation is different. Teachers and the administration will use the above rubric as a guide. It is possible that other consequences may be utilized for certain behaviors. These consequences might include such things as community service, administrative reflection with Principal, classroom detention, guidance mediation, parent meeting, or consultation with student support staff.

Low Level teasing and, or other trading insults may in fact be later deemed bullying if the behavior if on the reasonable person standards is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates intimidating, hostile educational environment for the student who is being bullied. In addition, such behavior, while not defined as bullying may in fact meet criteria for Disorderly conduct/or Harassment as defined in Maine 17A Statutes, Section 501, 506-A. This does not preclude teachers or school administrators from setting and enforcing rules for civility, courtesy, and or responsible behaviors in the classroom and the school environment.

- Please note that consequences may be adjusted according to students existing IEP and or Behavior Plan that by Federal Law takes precedent.
- Also please note above behaviors occurring on a bus or other forms of transportation provided by the district may require further consequences with intent of maintaining safety on the bus.

#### M.S.A.D. #55 STUDENT DRESS CODE

The M.S.A.D. #55 Board of Directors recognizes that the primary responsibility for the dress and appearance of students rests with individual students and their parents or guardians. Students are encouraged to use sound judgment and reflect respect for themselves and others in dress and grooming. In keeping with the goal of the school to provide a safe, healthy and nondiscriminatory environment for educating students the following guidelines will be followed:

1. Clothing should not be disruptive to the daily operation of the school.
2. All clothing is to fit properly, be of appropriate length and not be revealing.
3. Students may not wear pants that sag below the hips.
4. Students may not wear clothing that exposes undergarments except standard cut T-shirts.
5. Clothing should appropriately cover the chest, midriff, back and mid thigh.
6. Tank tops, halter tops, tube tops, strapless dresses, fishnet tops, and clothing with spaghetti straps are not considered appropriate clothing
7. Shoulder coverage should be at least three finger widths wide.
8. Students will not wear clothing with writing, slogans or pictures or symbols that promote alcohol, tobacco or other illegal substances.
9. All clothing and accessories should present no safety hazard or be destructive to school property.
10. Sunglasses, hats, hoods, caps, bandanas, and other headgear may not be worn. Sacopee students should place items in their locker at 7:55 A.M. Exceptions for headgear may be granted for religious or medical reasons.
11. All articles of clothing, jewelry and accessories shall be free of images or words that are considered sexual, offensive, or obscene.
12. The length of a skirt, dress or shorts must extend to at least the student's mid thigh.
13. All students must wear shoes.

### Enforcement:

All staff members are charged with the responsibility of enforcing the dress code policy in their classroom, in the school building and on school property. Students who violate the dress code shall be asked to change. If the student refuses to comply with the request they will be sent to the office.

### Violations of the dress code will result in the following:

First Offense: Students will receive a verbal warning and have an opportunity to correct the violation.

Second Offense: Students will receive a written warning and may face disciplinary action which could include suspension from school.

### Habitual Offenders:

Students who repeatedly violate this policy will be required to meet with the Administration and may face an extended suspension from school.

Students should adhere to this policy during the regular school day and at school functions. These guidelines may be waived at the discretion of the administration for special school occasions or events (example-Prom and Semi-Formal).

Approved and Adopted: 3/12/03

### BUS BEHAVIOR

Students who violate the rules will receive a disciplinary form from the bus driver and the building administrator will be notified. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken by the administration that may include detentions, reflection sheets, an assigned seat, parent conference, and/or removal from the bus for a period of time.

### M.S.A.D. #55 BULLYING POLICY

#### Bullying Prohibited

Bullying, as defined in this policy, is not acceptable conduct in M.S.A.D. #55 schools and is prohibited. Any student who engages in conduct that constitutes bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion. A student's bullying behavior may also be addressed through other behavioral interventions.

#### Bullying Defined

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" means any physical act or gesture or any verbally, written, or electronically communicated expression that:

- A. A reasonable person should expect will have the effect of:
  1. Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
  2. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to his/her property; or

3. Substantially disrupting the instructional program or the orderly operations of the school; or
- B. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, hostile educational environment for the student who is bullied.

#### Application of Policy

This policy applies to bullying that takes place at school or on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity or event, or while students are being transported to or from school or school-sponsored activities or events. It also applies to bullying that occurs at any other time or place that substantially disrupts the instructional program, operations of the school, or welfare of students.

Examples of conduct that may constitute bullying include, but are not limited to:

- A. Physical contact or injury to another person or his/her property;
- B. Threats of harm to a student, to his/her possessions, or to other individuals, whether transmitted verbally, in writing, or through cyberspace;
- C. Blackmail, extortion, demands for protection money, or involuntary loans or donations;
- D. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidations such as use of aggressive or menacing gestures;
- E. Stalking;
- F. Blocking access to school property or facilities;
- G. Stealing or hiding books, backpacks, or other possessions;
- H. Repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking, put-downs, or demeaning humor relating to a student's race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, religion, physical, socio-economic status, disability, or other personal characteristics, whether or not the student actually possesses them, that could reasonably be expected to result in disruption of the instructional program or operations of the schools, or that results in a hostile educational environment for the student.

For the purpose of this policy, bullying does not mean mere teasing, put-downs, "talking trash," trading of insults, or similar interactions among friends, nor does it include expression of ideas or beliefs so long as such expression is not lewd, profane, or does not interfere with students' opportunity to learn, the instructional program, or the operations of the schools. This does not preclude teachers or school administrators from setting and enforcing rules for civility, courtesy, and/or responsible behavior in the classroom and the school environment.

The determination whether particular conduct constitutes bullying requires reasonable consideration of the circumstances, which include the frequency of the behavior at issue, the location in which the behavior occurs, the ages and maturity of the students involved, the activity or context in which the conduct occurs, and the nature and severity of the conduct.

# LET'S GET REAL! SM

Sacopee Valley Middle School strives to create an environment where students and adults feel safe and open to explore a shared learning experience. Recent meta-analysis shows that comprehensive Social Emotional Learning Programs can enhance the learning of valuable life skills, improve wellbeing, attendance and academic performance as well as decrease behavioral referrals.

**Social Emotional Learning (SEL)** is not a new curriculum but rather a framework for curriculum. It involves both teaching students a set of skills to help support their social and emotional well-being as well as creating a safe and caring environment conducive to learning and applying those skills. By focusing on Self Awareness, Self Regulation, Social Awareness, Relationships and Responsible Decision Making, SEL enhances the learning environment and optimizes academic instruction.

In order to achieve this goal **SVMS** is creating a **Climate and Culture Committee** by recruiting members from all the different groups of staff at the new middle school. This committee will use student, staff and parent input to develop tools and processes aimed at improving school climate and culture. A **Matrix of School Wide Behavioral Expectations** will be created through shared agreements to be developed beginning at the classroom level. Each classroom will then elect two student representatives to attend a Grade Level Caucus, which will refine expectations for their grade. Each Grade will then send two students and a teacher to a School Wide Caucus where School Wide Behavioral Expectations will be defined. This tool will be the common language to express positive behavioral expectations, which are age appropriate and adhere to District Policies and the Middle School Behavior Rubric.

**LET'S**

**GET**

Get **R**eady to  
Meet **E**xpectations,  
**A**ct appropriately  
And **L**ead By Example

SM