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Monument Valley Telephone Numbers

- Monument Valley Main Office                                           644-2300
- Monument Valley Fax                                                   644-2394
- Nurse                                                                644-2324
- Kitchen                                                              644-2325
- Custodian                                                            644-2326

District Numbers

- BHRSD Central Office                                                 298-4017
- Superintendent of Schools                                            298-4017 x19
- BHRSD Special Education Office                                       298-4017 x14
- Monument Mountain Regional High School                               528-3346
- Muddy Brook Regional Elementary School                               644-2350

Email Contacts

Email addresses may be found on the district website [www.bhrsd.org](http://www.bhrsd.org).
Administration and teacher email addresses are in the format of
first name.last name@bhrsd.org
i.e. ben.doren@bhrsd.org
Berkshire Hills Regional School District Committee

Mr. Stephen Bannon, Chairman
Mr. Richard Bradway, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Christine Shelton, Secretary
Mr. Daniel Weston, Assistant Treasurer

Mr. Frederick Clark  Mr. Richard Dohoney
Mr. William Fields   Ms Kristin Piasecki
Mr. Andrew Potter    Mr. Jason St. Peter

Administration
Berkshire Hills School District

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Dr. Peter Dillon

DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES
Mrs. Kate Burdsall

DIRECTOR OF LEARNING AND TEACHING
Mr. Joshua Briggs

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR
Mrs. Sharon Harrison

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
Mr. Steve Soule

MUDDY BROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Ms. Mary Berle, Principal
Mrs. Nan Thompson, Assistant Principal

MONUMENT VALLEY REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
Mr. Ben Doren, Principal
Mr. Miles Wheat, Assistant Principal

MONUMENT MOUNTAIN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
Mrs. Marianne Young, Principal
Mr. Scott Annand, Assistant Principal
Dear Monument Valley Students and Families:

Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year! We look forward to success for all.

This Parent/Student Handbook is considered a guidebook for Berkshire Hills Regional School District families, and it is designed to give all members of our education community a shared and unified source of information. It provides the access you need to policies and legislation important to your child’s education. Information contained in this booklet ranges from the district’s medication policy to evacuation procedures. It provides for you all the information you are entitled to know through the No Child Left Behind Act, and it offers you names and numbers that may be helpful.

It is our hope that you will take a few minutes to review this handbook and discuss it with your child. Additional school and district information may be found on our website, www.bhrsd.org. Should you have any questions, please contact at 413-644-2300.

All the best,

Mr. Ben Doren  
Principal

Mr. Miles Wheat  
Assistant Principal

Berkshire Hills Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness.
WHAT IS A MIDDLE SCHOOL?

It is special, individual learning activities for the “in between” student.
- It is **student** centered
- It is belonging to a **team**
- It is academics, exploratories, and physical education
- It is stressing basic skills
- It is flexible scheduling by teams for their students
- It is a chance to experience success
- It is learning to believe in self
- It is interdisciplinary units which show students how curriculum is interrelated
- It is learning to be self-directed, to accept responsibility, and to be independent

IS MY FIFTH GRADER READY FOR THIS?

We don’t have to tell you that the growth process is speeding up! You only have to count outgrown shoes and let out last month’s hems to know that!

You might be surprised to learn that many growth studies show:
- that the change to adolescence can begin for early maturing girls in Grade 3 and for early maturing boys in Grade 4.
- that a majority of students go through these changes during Grades 5 through 8; and all will be in some stage of transition during these grades.
- that today’s 10 year olds are about the same size and maturity level as the 12 year olds in your parent’s day.

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL IS PREPARED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUR STUDENT:

**Counselors** are available to help students learn life-long problem-solving skills as they perceive their world as young adolescents.

**Academic Teaming** prepares students for higher education, both with individual and team effort.

The varied **Exploratory Classes** allow students to learn decision-making skills and permit them to experience success in the practical and performing arts.
BERKSHIRE HILLS REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mission

To ensure all students are challenged through a wide range of experiences to become engaged and curious learners and problem solvers who effectively communicate, respect diversity, and improve themselves and their community.

Goals

• **Student Achievement/Growth/Enlightenment**
  - Foster an intellectually challenging and supportive education that expands academic and career opportunities for all.
  - Expand learning beyond the school walls to include nature, the community, and with partners.
  - Excite and engage students in learning.
  - Problem solving shall be used as an educational tool in and across disciplines.
  - Students will demonstrate their achievement and growth in a variety of ways and the data will be used effectively in the evaluation and revision of curriculum and instruction.
  - Use flexible schedule to meet varied student needs: pre-test, post-test, in order to allocate resources efficiently.
  - Use personal relationships to maximize a social-emotional safety net.
  - Explicitly make curricular connections between and across grades, schools and districts.
  - The school experience is engaging, verdant and empowering.
  - Challenge our expectations and approaches to working with the underserved.

• **Human Infrastructure**
  - Focus on an unrelenting commitment to success for all students and all staff.
  - Foster leadership opportunities for both young people and adults including a partial rotating administration position.
  - Make decisions that are good for students first and adults second (these don’t need to be mutually exclusive).
  - Use evaluation to set standards, recognize excellence and/or challenges provide support and when necessary after providing feedback and support to dismiss ineffective staff.
  - Study and potentially pilot incentive pay programs to encourage excellence and innovation.
  - Take true advantage of our sacred professional development time.
• **Resources/Financial Planning/Infrastructure Maintenance**
  o Increase revenue through adding new K and 1 sections while maintaining class size.
  o Generate other income through reworking contracts, writing grants and individual solicitations.
  o Collaborate additionally to increase opportunities and potentially realize savings.
  o Revisit how we allocate resources: funds, space and time in support of our goals.
  o Rework how we use time including reconsidering the length of the school day.
  o Rethink roles.
  o Shift from a culture of advocacy for individual programs to one of problem solving for all students.
  o Work to improve food offerings, including additional healthy choices, and realize efficiencies.

• **Communication/Collaboration**
  o Be clear and transparent.
  o Be explicit about the work in schools.
  o Ensure that each student is well known by multiple adults.
  o Make school more community oriented.
  o Redefine existing roles (Role clarification: SC, Supt., Dept. chairs/dept. liaisons, students and families).
  o Looks past building to campus, past campus to district and community, past district to collaborating districts.
  o Tap into and enhance the role of alumni.
MONUMENT VALLEY REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mission

In cooperation with parents and the community, the Monument Valley Regional Middle School will provide all students a safe environment in which:

- Personal and academic excellence is promoted and celebrated
- Student responsibility for learning is developed and expected
- All people value and exercise respect and responsibility
- A spirit of inquiry is recognized and fostered
- An enthusiasm for life-long learning is instilled

MAKING OUR SCHOOL A GREAT PLACE TO BE

MVRMS subscribes to the beliefs set forth by the National Middle School Association. In their position paper, *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* (2010), they outline a framework of four essential attributes that connect with the characteristics of successful middle grades schools. Embracing these attributes helps us in striving to create a school that best meets the needs of our students.

Essential Attributes

An education for young adolescents must be

Developmentally responsive
Using the distinctive nature of young adolescents as the foundation upon which all decisions about school organization, policies, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are made.

Challenging
Ensuring that every student learns and every member of the learning community is held to high expectations.

Empowering
Providing all students with the knowledge and skills they need to take responsibility for their lives, to address life's challenges, to function successfully at all levels of society, and to be creators of knowledge.

Equitable
Advocating for and ensuring every student's right to learn and providing appropriately challenging and relevant learning opportunities for every student.
SCHOOL FAMILY STUDENT COMPACT

Compact of Shared Responsibility

Monument Valley thanks you for the opportunity to be a part of your child’s education. We know that there are many important actors in a child’s life and no one person or organization is ever enough to see to all of the needs children have. We believe we have a better chance if we work closely together with families and involve students directly in taking responsibility for their educational success. The Compact of Shared Responsibility below grows out of that belief.

As a School we will:

- Communicate frequently regarding your child’s education.
- Provide an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.
- Respect each student, their parents and the diverse culture of the school.
- Contact you quickly in case of any concerning incidents.
- Keep Power-School up to date so that you can keep track of your child’s progress.

As Parents we will:

- Have ongoing communication with my child’s school.
- See that my child attends school regularly and is habitually on time.
- Establish a time and place for my child to do homework and check regularly to see it is getting done.
- Monitor my child’s involvement with electronics and social media.
- Come to the school as necessary to discuss the needs of my child and respond to specific incident.
- Be familiar with the student/family handbook.

As a Student I will:

- Come to school each day prepared to learn.
- Always work to the best of my ability.
- Strive to make a positive difference in the school community.
- Demonstrate respect for the behavioral norms of Monument Valley, the staff, and my fellow students.
- Be familiar with the student/family handbook.
**School Colors**  Green and White

**School Mascot**  Ozzie the Ostrich

Ozzie was designed by Maia Stanton when she was a seventh grade student at Monument Valley Regional Middle School
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES AND BUILDING COMMUNITY

Building discipline and the development of school culture are pursued through a program known as Restorative Practices at Monument Valley. Restorative Practices are based on seven core assumptions.

1. The true self in everyone is good, wise and powerful.
2. The world is profoundly interconnected.
3. All human beings have a deep desire to be in good relationship.
4. All humans have gifts; everyone is needed for what they bring.
5. Everything we need to make a positive change is already here.
6. Human beings are holistic.
7. We need practices to build habits of living from the core self.

The advisory curriculum based on these core assumptions is delivered once a week on Wednesday mornings. Advisories also meet daily for a brief period at the beginning of every day. Through a variety of team building activities and facilitated discussions, students are invited to determine how they can best help build up the culture of Monument Valley. Advisory allows students to practice participating in important and sometimes difficult conversations.

Through our advisory program students will decide what it means for them to be member of a school community. They will ask and analyze the question of what it means to be a responsible community member. They will try to understand what each one of us owes our community and what our community can do for us.

When the trust of the community is violated, we respond restoratively. Discipline in a restorative context focuses on repairing the harm more than on punishing the wrong-doer. We ask ‘What and who were harmed?’, ‘What needs to be done to repair that harm?’, and ‘Who is obligated to repair that harm?’

Families are important partners in the restorative process. Especially in instances of serious harm, it is important that all students in a restorative circle feel they have advocates and allies in that circle. Families know their children the best. Your honest support and feedback in a restorative circle are a critical part in an effective restorative circle.
MONUMENT VALLEY REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Sharing Concerns

From time to time, parents may wish to bring problems or concerns to the attention of appropriate school officials. We urge parents to use the following general guidelines:

1) Any concerns regarding a school-related matter need to first be raised by the parent with the staff member most directly involved (i.e. questions regarding the content of instructional materials or homework assignments should be raised with the teacher involved.)

2) If the matter remains unresolved, the parent may wish to speak with the building principal or assistant principal. Appointments can be scheduled by contacting the office.

3) If the matter is still unresolved, the parent may wish to speak to the superintendent. For an appointment, simply contact the superintendent’s office.

4) If the matter still remains unresolved, the parent may wish to bring it to the attention of the School Committee by communicating directly with the chairperson of the School Committee.

We urge parents to use the progressive steps outlined above as most problems can be addressed satisfactorily by the teacher or other staff member most directly involved. We have found that by following this process parents find the most satisfaction and success.

The following are examples (not an all-inclusive list) of issues that are more appropriately addressed at the levels indicated.

1. TEACHERS
   a. student homework assignments, quizzes, and tests;
   b. course content, instructional materials, academic progress, and extra help;
   c. issues related to classroom discipline, relationships with other pupils and the teacher.

2. GUIDANCE COUNSELOR
   a. course selections and student schedule;
   b. student placement issues;
   c. school records

3. SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT COUNSELOR
   a. problems between: school and home; teacher and pupil; pupil and other pupils;
   b. personal matter relating to student development, behaviors, interactions and others;

4. ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
   a. school wide discipline issues, bus conduct issues
   b. problems between: school and home; teacher and pupil; pupil and other pupils.
   c. after school programs.
5. **PRINCIPAL**  
a. any issue arising out of a school building when no other staff member can be specifically identified;  
b. instructional and co-curricular program issues (athletics, music, drama, etc.);  
c. matters related to the physical plant;  
d. complaints, dissatisfaction, or concerns regarding school personnel;  
e. school-wide discipline.

6. **SUPERINTENDENT**  
a. questions regarding school committee policies and administrative procedures;  
b. school committee meeting and agenda items;  
c. complaints, dissatisfaction, or concerns regarding school personnel or services which have not been resolved at the principal’s level.

7. **SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
a. concerns that have not been successfully addressed/resolved throughout the process.
GENERAL INFORMATION

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
Monument Valley offers a number of after school programs for our students. Announcements regarding registration are made on the morning announcements, via the PA and in the lunchroom. Information will also be available on our website. Sample programs include: basketball, volleyball, yearbook and newspaper. Should you wish to offer a class or want more information please contact Mr. Wheat. Please remember to pick up your child at the end of the activity. Most activities will end at 3:45.

AGENDA
Please take time to review your child’s Agenda, a day planner given to each grade 7 and 8 student. The Agenda is a wonderful tool for organization. Please encourage your child to use the Agenda for daily and long term assignments. In grade 5 and 6 students will use a folder system for organization. Students and parents are encouraged to access information via online resources (see Powerschool). This site is a secondary source as students are responsible for writing all assignments in their agenda.

ATTENDANCE
If your child is going to be absent please call the office at 644-2300. Calls made by 9 A.M. are greatly appreciated. Please note the district has an attendance policy which states that family vacations during school time are an unexcused absence. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance of a trip. Upon returning to school it is the responsibility of the student to meet with the teacher to determine missed work and set a schedule for completion. The Attendance Policy may be found on page 21.

BERKSHIRE HILLS TECHNOLOGY FUND
The Fund has made an ongoing commitment to assist district families in obtaining affordable bank financing for a computer purchase or depending on need, even borrowing a computer at no charge for as long as the student is enrolled in the district. The goal of the project has been to close the “digital divide” the gap between technological “haves and have nots” in our school community. Call Donald Elitzer at 528-4693 for more information.

BUSSING
Transportation of students to and from school is provided by Massini Bus Company. Questions regarding routes, students riding alternate busses and concerns should be addressed directly with the bus company at 413-229-7962. Please obtain permission from the bus company at least one day in advance when your child needs to ride a different bus. A note from home without bus company approval does not guarantee that your child will be able to ride an alternate bus. Because it is difficult to reach students at the end of the day, we ask that you notify the school of changes in your child’s transportation no later than 2 P.M. There are no late busses, so students staying for extra help or school activities will need to be picked up promptly at the close of the activity. Please be aware that due to the number of students riding the bus it may not be possible for students to ride with large projects or instruments. Please call the bus company in advance if you have a question regarding this issue.
DIGITAL CULTURE

At Monument Valley Regional Middle School, we promote appropriate use of technology to enhance the teaching of content and community behaviors that students need to succeed as responsible, digital citizens in our global society. Students in seventh and eighth grade with parental/guardian permission may bring a personal electronic device to school to use for educational purposes, such as accessing online materials, completing assignments and collaborating with peers, using the Internet and digital tools as part of the curriculum. All Students have access to school-based technology such as computers and tablets to support the regular curriculum. Students in fifth and sixth grade only need the school-based technology for success in instruction. Monument Valley is committed to developing 21st-century vision and skills for our students, including how we approach digital culture in our increasingly technological world.

For students who do not have a device at home, or for school in the upper grades, our partnership with the Berkshire Hills Technology Fund lets us offer a low-cost tablet or computer, and a payment plan. See the section on the fund in this handbook for more information or contact the main office.

Examples of Personally Owned Devices
Personally owned devices include laptops, cell phones, smart phones, tablets and iPads/iPods, notebooks, netbooks, eReaders, and any device that can access the internet or has Wi-Fi. This includes all existing and emerging devices that can take photographs, record audio or video, input text, upload and download media, and transmit or receive messages or images that a student brings to school from home. Devices that only access games are not permitted. The district is not liable for the loss, damage, misuse or theft of personally owned devices brought to school.

Resource for Families
Common Sense Media is a great website for families and educators with good advice and reviews, great explanations and reasonable approaches to limits for the devices of tweens and teens: www.commonsensemedia.org

“Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) Guidelines for Seventh and Eighth Graders
Based on our BYOD pilot for the past two years we found that personal devices are being used by the upper grade students for instruction, while that was not the case for the younger grades. There are numerous benefits to accessing instructional resources, completing assignments and organizing using a personally owned device in school. Students who do not follow these guidelines will lose the privilege of using them in school, temporarily or permanently, depending upon the severity and frequency of the violation. All students must have a current Electronic Information Policy form signed and in their file to participate in BYOD. Students are expected to keep their devices off when they’re not being used under adult supervision.

BYOD Student Expectations at MV

- Each student is responsible for his/her own personally owned device. This includes set-up, maintenance, and repair. Students are responsible for securing their devices at all times.
- Monument Valley is not responsible for lost, loaned, damaged, or stolen devices.
- Students may use their device for personal use during recess while outside, or inside the designated recess area during inclement weather, as well as in the cafeteria before school. The school may establish other appropriate times, places and guidelines for students to use their devices for personal activity under adult supervision.
• Examples of acceptable use of a personally owned device include listening to music, playing games and reading.
• A student who needs to reach a family member can get teacher permission, or go to the main office to use the school phone or their device under adult supervision.
• Internet access may only be through the guest network (BHRSDGUEST). This is intended to ensure the safety of children by using our secure and monitored network. Personally owned devices may not access district servers, district files, or private networks (for example: 3G/4G cellphone networks) while at school.
• Personally owned devices may not be used at any time in hallways, locker rooms, restrooms, or other unsupervised spaces.
• Students may not use devices to record, transmit or post photographic images or video of any person without permission on campus or during school-related activities.
• Personally owned devices will be used as directed by the teacher. Each teacher may allow and regulate the use of personally owned devices in the classroom on a daily basis and on specific activities.

DISMISSAL:
Students are dismissed at 2:45 PM on a regular school days and 11:30 AM on half days. Parents picking up students at the end of the day should park on the front circle and remain in your car rather than coming into school. Students will file out of the building and find their ride. Please avoid blocking the crosswalk and our driveway entrance. A number of our students cross the street to walk to other school buildings. Cars in the crosswalk create a safety concern.

In the event of an early dismissal, parents should send a note to school with their child. The child gives the office staff the note and receives an early dismissal pass which is given to the teacher at the time they need to leave school.

If you have a situation arise which requires a message to your child regarding a change in plans when possible, we appreciate getting the call by 2 PM. This allows adequate time to get the message to the student.

DRESS EXPECTATIONS
Students at Monument Valley Regional Middle School are expected to dress in a manner that promotes a positive and healthy climate. Students wearing inappropriate items will be asked to change clothes, cover the item, or call home for a change of clothing.

• Clothing that references tobacco, alcohol, drugs, weapons, or contains innuendoes referring to violence or sex is not acceptable.
• Skirts and shorts must be no shorter than fingertip length or must have at least a 3 inch inseam. The leg length applies whether or not tights or leggings are worn.
• See through tops, dark bras showing through shirts and straps showing are unacceptable. Spaghetti straps are not allowed. Tank tops must have at least a 2 inch shoulder covering. Showing cleavage or underwear is not permitted.
• Shirts must be a minimum of two inches below the waistband or long enough so there is no skin showing.

Having to monitor student dress is uncomfortable for the staff and for the students. It raises many issues around body image. To minimize embarrassment, we try to be discreet about how we approach students asking them privately to change or cover up. If your child tells you that she
wore a pair of shorts or a shirt and no one spoke with her, please understand that it does not necessarily mean the clothing is acceptable.

EXTRA HELP
Monument Valley remains open after regular school hours for any student requiring extra help or choosing to complete homework assignments. Students should connect with the teacher a day ahead to verify availability. Students must arrange their own transportation and should be picked up no later than 3:30 pm.

FIELD TRIPS
Field trips are an important part of the educational process. All students are expected to participate. Some trips happen during the school year and are designed to enrich the students’ educational experience. Other trips are planned at the end of the school year as a culminating activity. When there is an expense for a field trip, scholarships are available for families in need. Please submit a letter to the principal or assistant principal stating the amount you are able to contribute and the amount you will need in scholarship. We encourage all students to take part in fund raising events.

For the end of the year field trips, students may become ineligible if they have exhibited inappropriate behavior during the school year, poor attendance, excessive tardiness and lack of effort in academic performance. Parents and students are notified in advance if there is a concern about attendance. It is important that all students have the opportunity to attend.

GRADE LEVEL TEAMS/SCHEDULE ORGANIZATION
Grade 5 Students are on a grade level team with a teacher responsible for each of the subject areas, math, science and humanities. Humanities is a double block class for English Language Arts and Social Studies. There are two periods of Exploratory Arts classes per day. The classes are: art, general music, health, library, physical education, technology, and theatre.

Grade 6 Students are on a grade level team with a teacher responsible for each of the subject areas – language arts, math, science and social studies. There are two periods of Exploratory Arts classes per day. The classes are: art, foreign language, general music, health, physical education and technology.

Grade 7 Students are on a grade level team with a teacher responsible for each of the subject areas – language arts, math, science and social studies. Students may take a full year class in either French or Spanish or in an Academic Support class. There are two periods of Exploratory Arts classes per day. The classes are: art, general music, health, physical education and technology.

Grade 8 Students are on a grade level team with a teacher responsible for each of the subject areas – language arts, math, science and social studies. Students who successfully completed a language class as 7th graders remain in the language class. Students who participated in Academic Support remain in those classes. Honors Math is available for students who have met the necessary pre-requisites for the class. There are two periods of Exploratory Arts classes per day. The classes are: art, general music, health, physical education and technology.

Students in all grades may take a performance music – band, chorus and orchestra – during one of their exploratory periods in lieu of general music or another exploratory.
**GRADING SYSTEM**
We use a percentage system for grading for sixth through eighth grade. The fifth grade uses a letter system, and fifth and sixth grade exploratory classes are taken on a pass basis. A grade of 80 and higher, or a B, constitutes proficiency in a class, and a grade of 90 and higher, or an A, constitutes mastery. Any assessment below a 70 or a C will be reported as an INT intervention grade. Students receiving an INT in a course will get supports in the next term to bring them closer to proficiency.

Parents may view grades throughout the term by utilizing their Powerschool account.

**GREEN SCHOOL**
MVRMS is happy to have been built with many green materials and renewable systems. The geothermal system for heating and cooling using the natural properties of the earth assists us in keeping our building warm and cool at the correct time. Heat recovery units help to reduce energy consumption of the ventilation system. Keeping our inside temperature stabilized is done by having insulation at 2.5 times the standard code requirement. Photovoltaic solar panels on the roof provide some of our electricity. The building orientation of north/south maximizes the use of natural light. In addition, strategically placed and operable windows provide light and air. The photo sensors in the classrooms automatically dim the lights when there is abundant sunlight. And we all enjoy walking into a room and having the sensors automatically work the lights!

**HONOR ROLL**
In order to achieve high honor status a student must have an average of 90 with no grades lower than 85. Honors is earned by having an average of 85 with no grades lower than 80. All subjects receiving a numerical grade count toward the average. Honor Roll is determined for 7th and 8th grade only.

**LOCKERS**
Each student is assigned a locker at the beginning of the school year. Homeroom teachers give students the combinations. Students are not to share lockers or combinations. Searches of students, their property and lockers may be conducted by school personnel if school officials have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Police may be contacted to assist school personnel. Students are not to write on lockers, put decals or pictures on lockers or to deface a locker in any way. Any student who damages or misuses a locker will be subject to disciplinary action, plus restitution in full including materials and labor. Your locker is the property of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District and loaned to you for storage of school books and materials, plus personal items such as clothing.
LOST AND FOUND
Students are requested to bring any found articles, textbooks or clothing to the office. Lost and found items are collected in the cafeteria. The school suggests that you do not bring valuables or large sums of money to school as the school cannot assume responsibility for these items if lost. Periodically the school donates unclaimed items to local charities.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT
There are numerous ways parents can become involved with the school. Parents are welcome to offer after school activities, supervise an after school homework club, chaperone field trips and dances, visit on Welcome Wednesdays and become involved in more structured activities. Parents are required to complete a CORI form prior to involvement. Please contact the main office at 644-2300 for help with the process. You also may want to become involved in one of the following groups.

- Parent Mentoring – This is a district wide initiative to help parents and community members work with the school to support youth. The mission is: Community partners will collaborate to inspire and train parents and families to build their networks of support to promote safe and healthy environments for youth. Training programs will be offered throughout the school year to prepare parents to address difficult issues with their children. Parents will also have the opportunity to discuss issues with other parents.
- School Council – This is a representative, school building based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers and community members that is required to be established pursuant to M>G>L. Chapter 71, section 59c. The MVRMS School Council meets monthly. The meeting schedule is posted on the website and on the Week at a Glance.

PARENTAL SUPPORT AND FUNDRAISING GROUPS
The Berkshire Hills Regional School District (BHRSD) is appreciative of and thankful for the support parental groups provide for co-curricular and athletic activities. Parents come as spectators, volunteers, and fundraisers. Their support provides a sense of community for our students and as volunteers they often provide the extra hand needed to accomplish an activity.

Financially their fundraising provides many enrichment activities for our students. It is important to recognize that the BHRSD does not audit or provide accounting for their financial records.

To help ensure the credibility of these organizations and that of the school district the BHRSD will develop a set of financial accounting recommendations. Annually each organization will need to submit a document of assurance to the district that they are following the recommendations. In exchange, the BHRSD will allow them to use, subject to applicable district policy, the school/district name, our facilities and appropriate equipment, as well as publicize their activities.
PARKING/DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP
Limited visitor parking is available on your right as you drive around the front circle. Additional parking is available behind the school. When dropping off your student please do not block the driveway. Proceed to the front entrance only. Do not use the bus entrance since that will delay the busses dropping off students. We appreciate parents waiting for students to follow the no-idling program.

PLAGIARISM
MVRMS takes very seriously the issue of students copying work from other people or sources including information found online. Time is spent in the classroom teaching students how to cite sources appropriately within documents. Students found plagiarizing will meet with the teacher, principal and parent to discuss appropriate consequences which could include loss of credit for the assignment or other disciplinary action.

POWERSCHOOL
Powerschool is a web based student information system that enables educators to create a collaborative environment for parents, teachers and students to work together in preparing 21st century learners for the future.

PROJECT CONNECTION
Project Connection is an extended school day and school year program that involves activities with an academic component built in to the curriculum. We focus on experiential learning with many hands on programs that incorporate some of the many different Massachusetts Common Core Standards that we are working on all year long through the traditional school day. Programs run from 3:30-5:00 and transportation is provided for those students that need. You can reach Project Connection by e-mail at projectconnection@bhrsd.org or by phone at (413) 644-2300 extension 3306.

REFERRAL for SPECIAL EDUCATION
A student may be referred for an evaluation by a parent or any person in a care giving or professional position concerned with the student’s development.

When a student is referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education, the special education director will send written notice to the student’s parents within 5 school days of receipt of the referral. The notice shall seek the consent of the parent for the evaluation to occur, and provide the parent with the opportunity to express any concerns or provide information on the student’s skills or abilities. The parent will have the opportunity to consult with the special education director or his/her designee to discuss the reasons for the referral, the content of the proposed evaluation, and the evaluators.

Upon consent of the parent, the school district shall provide an evaluation of the student within 30 school days. We will ensure that evaluators are appropriately credentialed and trained to administer all assessments. Each person conducting an assessment shall summarize in writing, the procedures employed, the results, and shall define the student’s needs and recommendations for meeting those needs. A team meeting will be held within 45 school days of receipt of consent for evaluation, to determine eligibility for special education. The special education team shall consist of all evaluators, the student’s regular education teacher, a special education teacher, an administrator, the parent and anyone else relevant to the process. If you have questions or would like more information, please call Ms. Kate Burdsall, Director of Student Services. at 298-4017, ext.14.
TRANSFER OF PARENTAL RIGHTS THROUGH DECISION MAKING
The Berkshire Hills Regional School District informs students and families regarding the age of majority through the team process and by written notice to all special education students and their parents, one year prior to age 18.

RESTITUTION
Students and their parents are held responsible for loss of or damage to textbooks, equipment, and materials that have been assigned to them and for loss, damage or destruction of school property for which the student has been judged responsible by the administration. The administration shall establish the repair or replacement cost of the property in question and the student will be billed accordingly. The student or parent shall make restitution payable to MVRMS. Total payment must be made prior to the next school year.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
During the year there will be special activities designed for teams and/or specific grade levels. Information regarding these events will be found on our calendar and website. Most of these events are chaperoned by staff who volunteer their time. Should you wish to help chaperone please call the school. Prompt pick up at the end of the event is greatly appreciated.

SCHOOL CLOSING OR DELAY
The district will be using an automated calling system to alert families via phone and/or email of delays and closings. Please keep the school informed of phone number and email address changes. Information is also posted on www.bhrsd.org
In addition, school closings or delayed openings will be announced as early as possible on the following radio stations: WSBS 860, WBRK 1340, and WUPE 100.1. The following TV stations will also have information: WWLP/TV22, WRGB/6, and WTEN/10.

SCHOOL HOURS
Our school day begins at 8:00. Students arriving at or after 8:00 will be marked as tardy. Students arriving by car should enter the front door and proceed to the Student Center. Students arriving by bus will enter through the back door and report to the Student Center. The day ends at 2:45. After school activities usually end at 3:45. A student must be with a staff member if in the building after 2:45. Students should be picked up promptly at the conclusion of the day or the activity.

TARDINESS
On time arrival at school is an important responsibility for students and families. Reminder: students need to be in the building prior to 8:00. Chronic offenders will be required a parent meeting to address tardiness. Parents will be notified if the student reaches the chronic level.

TEAM MEETINGS
Team teachers meet regularly to coordinate instruction and to review the progress of their students. Parents can arrange to meet with their child’s team by contacting your child’s homeroom teacher via e-mail or voice mail.
WATER BOTTLE GUIDELINES
Monument Valley Regional Middle School Student Council will be responsible for all recycling of water bottles brought from home. MVRMS Student Council will purchase recycling bins for the recycling of the water bottles. Student Council will also have clear and reusable water bottles for sale.

- Water bottles are only to be filled with water
- Use clear bottles only
- Fill up bottles between classes or during free time and get to class on time (Filling up a bottle is not an excuse for being late to class)
- Privileges can be removed by your classroom teacher if the rules are not followed.
- Teachers have a choice to keep water bottles in a certain area of the room.
- Bottles are to be used appropriately.
- Bottles are to be used for drinking water only.
- Clean up the water if you spill it.
- Recycle all non-reusable bottles.

WEBSITE
Parents will find a great deal of information on our district and school website. Please check out www.bhrsd.org and click on the Monument Valley link. After school events and other school news will also be available there. Bookmark our site and check in daily! Please let us know what other information would be helpful as we continue updating our pages.

WEEK AT A GLANCE
Each Friday an overview of the upcoming week is sent to parents who have an email listed. Paper copies are distributed to students without an e-mail address. The Week at a Glance talks about upcoming events and provides the school lunch menus.
Appendix A
Monument Valley Response to Bullying Behaviors

In compliance with Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010 – An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools signed into law May 3, 2010, the definition and prohibition of bullying is defined as:

The repeated use of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property;

ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property

iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;

iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or

v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying are prohibited:

i. on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a bus stop, on a school bus or vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school’ or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and

ii. at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

The above information is taken from the Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education August 2010

Bullying Behaviors further defined:

Physical Actions: Hitting, pushing, punching, slapping grabbing, tripping, touching or showing private body parts or other physical altercation performed with the intent to hurt or humiliate.

Emotional Actions: Teasing, name calling, insulting, exclusion, telling others to exclude, starting and spreading rumors, making racial or sexual comments or other actions that cause a person to feel badly about himself/herself.

Cyber Incidents: Impersonating another person on the Internet or electronic devices, sending hurtful text messages, getting others to respond negatively toward someone electronically, creating a webpage to hurt, embarrass or scare someone.

Property damage: Stealing, hiding or damaging another person’s things
Response to Bullying Reports:

1st time: Principal or designee meets with the student to discuss the incident and review appropriate behavior, school expectations, and rules. Problem solving conference is held with the student involved. Student calls parent with the principal or designee. Student is informed of Steps 2 – 4. Lunch and recess detention or internal/external suspension may be assigned based on the seriousness of the incident and in keeping with school policies. Student is informed of Steps 2 – 4. An incident report is completed. 2nd time: Principal or designee meets with the student to discuss the incident and review appropriate behavior, school expectations and rules. Internal/External suspension is assigned for at least one day. Student calls parents with the principal or designee. A conference with the student, a parent/guardian, teacher if appropriate and the principal or designee happens following the suspension. Student completes bullying awareness counseling. A letter is sent home documenting the incident. Student is informed of Steps 3 and 4. An incident report is completed.

3rd time: Principal or designee meets with the student to discuss the incident and review appropriate behavior, school expectations and rules. Internal/External suspension is assigned for at least two days. Student calls parents with the principal or designee. A conference with the student, a parent/guardian, teacher if appropriate and the principal or designee happens following the suspension. Student may lose social privileges to include hallway, lunch and recess privileges as well as attendance of school functions. Student completes bullying awareness counseling. A letter is sent home documenting the incident. Student is informed of Step 4. An incident report is completed.

4th time: Principal or designee meets with the student to discuss the incident. Parent is called to pick up the student and remove from school for the length of the external suspension. A minimum of three days will be assigned. Student calls parents with the principal or designee. A conference with the student, a parent/guardian, teacher if appropriate and the principal or designee happens following the suspension. Student loses social privileges to include hallway, lunch and recess privileges as well as attendance of school functions for a determined period of time. Student completes bullying awareness counseling. A letter is sent home documenting the incident. An incident report is completed. Further incidents may result in alternative school programs.

Allegations determined to be false will result in:

1st time: Meeting with the student and a phone call home.

2nd time: Meeting with the student and a parent. Regular meetings with a school counselor or outside counselor if family prefers. Any further false allegations that occur, the consequence will be determined in consultation with the parent, counselor and school administrator.

Whenever bullying is determined to have taken place, the parents of all students involved (students who bullied and the students being bullied) will be notified of the incident and of the actions taken by the school. If a law is believed to have been broken, law enforcement will be notified by the school as well. Consequences may skip a step based on the severity of the actual behavior and the number of previous incidents.
MONUMENT VALLEY REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

EVACUATION
An evacuation of a building could be necessary as a result of many possible emergency situations including but not limited to fire, gas leak, hazardous materials release, or a bomb threat. To evacuate a school building is a decision made by the building administrator. The type of evacuation will vary depending on the circumstances surrounding the cause of the evacuation. There are four possible evacuations.

- The first evacuation is to leave the building and go directly to a pre-designated location to be accounted for and then wait for clearance to re-enter the building. The building should not be re-entered until the building administrator determines it is safe for re-entry.

- The second type of evacuation is to leave one building and go to another. The middle school will go to the elementary school in this instance. (High school goes to elementary/Elementary goes to middle school or high school depending on the situation) When two schools are being evacuated they will proceed to the remaining school.

- The third type of evacuation is to leave the building and board buses to report to our designated shelter location – Hevreh of Southern Berkshire. (High school goes to Hillcrest Education Center/Brookside Campus and Elementary reports to Berkshire South Youth Center)

- The fourth option is to evacuate the building by way of dismissing for the day.

In all four possible evacuations it is the role of the Critical Response Team to determine the best option, communicate that throughout the building and take all steps necessary to carry out the evacuation in an expeditious and orderly manner accounting for everyone throughout the entire evacuation.

Posted in each classroom are directions for the escape path for occupants of that classroom. Students are to leave the classroom quickly and quietly and report to the designated area with the teacher. Should a designated path be blocked, the teacher is to select an alternate path and lead the class outside. At that time attendance is to be taken and students are to remain with the teacher until directed to return to class or another location.
MONUMENT VALLEY REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
STAFF DIRECTORY FOR 2015-2016

Administration/Guidance
Principal
Mr. Ben Doren
Assistant Principal
Mr. Miles Wheat
Guidance Counselor
Mr. Kevin Costello
School Adjustment Counselor
Mr. Dom Sacco
Office Staff
Mrs. Julie Duffin
Ms. Debra Spence

Grade 5
Mrs. Diane Arnold    Science
Ms. Helen Eline      Math
Ms. Kathleen Gillis  Language Arts/Social Studies
Mrs. Debra Ramsay  Language Arts/Social Studies

Grade 6
Mrs. Carole Aberdale  Math
Ms. Kim Cormier       Language Arts
Mr. Matt Naventi     Social Studies
Ms. Jessica Oakley  Science

Grade 7
Mrs. Erica Bell      English
Ms Mary Tierney      Science
Mr. Julian Park      Social Studies
Mrs. Catherine Rueger Math

Grade 8
Mr. Fred Erickson    Math
Mr. Brendan Heck      English
Ms. Jennifer Kujawski Science
Mrs. Christine Lucy  Social Studies

Interventionists
Mrs. Donna Astion    Enrichment
Mrs. Susan Bilodeau  Grade 7/8 Math Specialist
Mrs. Kathleen Davis  Grades 7/8 Math Special Education
Ms. Allison Fisher   Grades 5/6 ELA Special Education
Mrs. Nancy Kane      Library/Media Specialist
Ms Lynn Casella     Clinician

Special Education
Mrs. Mary Shook     Grades 7/8 ELA Special Education
Mrs. Nan Smith      Grades 5/6 Special Education
Ms. Elizabeth Sparks   Grades 5/6 Math Specialist
Foreign Language
Mrs. Catherine Elliott   French
Mr. David Heath   Spanish

Art   Mrs. Katie Malone-Smith
General Music   Ms Sunhwa Reiner
Health   Mrs. Pat Boland
Physical Education   Mrs. Stephanie Mason
                     Mr. Chip Vittum
Music   Mr. Michael Gillespie   Band
                     Mrs. Juraye Moran   Orchestra
                     Ms. Sunhwa Reiner   Chorus

Design   Mr. Danny O’Dell

School Nurse   Ms. Patricia Harper

Speech   Ms. Kim Swarbrick

ESL   Ms. Karen Luttenberger

OT/PT   Ms. Kim Cavanaugh
                     Ms. Pam Hassett

Paraprofessionals   Mrs. Kyoung Bubriski
                     Mrs. Nina DeLuca
                     Mrs. Theresa Girona
                     Mrs. Marge Kinne
                     Mrs. Peg Pegorari
                     Mr. Brian Rembisz
                     Mr. Anthony Wirmusky, Directed Study Supervisor

Custodial Staff   Mr. Scott Jenny, Supervisor
                     Mr. Gerald Curtin
                     Mr. Joseph Powers
                     Mr. Michael Race

Food Service Staff   Mrs. Kathy Sullivan, Director
                     Mrs. Theresa Errichetto
                     Mrs. Holly Hamilton
                     Mrs. Vicky Petersoli
DISTRICT INFORMATION

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Referral
A student may be referred for an evaluation by a parent or any person in a care giving or professional position concerned with the student’s development.

When a student is referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education, the special education director will send written notice to the student’s parents within 5 school days of receipt of the referral. The notice shall seek the consent of the parent for the evaluation to occur, and provide the parent with the opportunity to express any concerns or provide information on the student’s skills or abilities. The parent will have the opportunity to consult with the special education director or his/her designee to discuss the reasons for the referral, the content of the proposed evaluation, and the evaluators.

Upon consent of the parent, the school district shall provide an evaluation of the student within 30 school days. We will ensure that evaluators are appropriately credentialed and trained to administer all assessments. Each person conducting an assessment shall summarize in writing, the procedures employed, the results, and shall define the student’s needs and recommendations for meeting those needs. A team meeting will be held within 45 school days of receipt of consent for evaluation, to determine eligibility for special education. The special education team shall consist of all evaluators, the student’s regular education teacher, a special education teacher, an administrator, the parent and anyone else relevant to the process. If you have questions or would like more information, please call Mr. Thomas Simon, Special Education Director, at 298-4017, ext.14. (This is a state requirement. It is not part of the BHRSD Policy Book)

Transfer of Parental Rights for Special Education Decision Making
The Berkshire Hills Regional School District informs students and families regarding the age of majority through the team process and by written notice to all special education students and their parents, one year prior to age 18.

DISTRICT POLICIES

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The Berkshire Hills Regional School District seeks to provide a means for educating young people in a democratic tradition, to foster recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, and to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and Bill Rights.

Recognizing that freedom carries with it responsibility, academic freedom also carries with it academic responsibility which is determined by the basic ideals and goals of the local community. Discussion and analysis of controversial issues should be conducted
within the framework of the educational philosophy and objectives of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District. The right to discuss and debate controversial issues is the most essential part of the student’s freedom of learning and the Berkshire Hills Regional School District through its school staff, encourage and protect the exercise of that right within the bounds of relevancy and intelligent inquiry. (See Section 1, Policy 1B of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy.)

ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS

The school nurse shall be the supervisor of the medication administration program in the school. The school nurse, school physician and school health advisory committee shall develop procedures related to the administration of medications. Registration allowing the delegation of medications shall be submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Health and renewed yearly. Review and revision of the procedures for the administration of medications shall occur at least every two years or as needed (See Section, Policy JLCD of the BHRSD Police Book for full policy)

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

The Berkshire Hills Regional School District Committee approves the following regulations governing administration of medications in the schools under its jurisdiction.

1. Management of the Medication Administrative Program

   a. The school nurse shall be the supervisor of the medication administration program in the School.

   b. The school nurse, the school physician, and the school health advisory committee shall develop and propose to the School Committee policies and procedures relating to the administration of medications. Review and revision of the procedures for the administration of medications shall occur, as needed but at least every two years.

   c. Medication Orders/Parents’ Consent:

      1. The School nurse shall ensure that there is a proper medication order from a licensed prescriber which is renewed as necessary, including the beginning of each academic year. A telephone order or an order for any change in medication shall be received only by the school nurse. Any such verbal order must be followed by a written order within three school days. Whenever possible, the medication order shall be obtained, and the medication administration plan shall be developed before the student enters or re-enters school.

      2. The school nurse shall ensure that there is a written authorization by parent of guardian. (See Section J, Policy JLCD-R of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)
AIDS (ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME)

Whereas, there is a great deal of concern in the community about the history, symptoms, and transmissibility of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and AIDS Related Complex (ARC): and

Whereas, misinformation or lack of knowledge regarding the scope of the disease could result in improper decisions about children’s attendance at school: and

Whereas, a comprehensive policy on AIDS and ARC has been developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, which has been adopted by the Massachusetts Department of Education as policy; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Massachusetts Medical Society strongly recommends at this time that school systems in the Commonwealth appropriately implement an official policy governing school attendance by children and teachers with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and AIDS Related Complex (ARC) using the guidelines currently developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. (See Section J, Policy JLCCA of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

The Berkshire Hills Regional School District is committed to providing an environment conducive to learning and one in which the student is able to accept academic and extracurricular challenges, strive to reach his/her potential and excel. To reach these goals, the schools and students must remain free from substance abuse. Thus, the following have been established to inform students of their rights and responsibilities as well as the action to be taken regarding drug and alcoholic beverage possession, use, distribution or sale.

All medication, including prescription drugs to be taken for medical purposes, must be administered under the supervision of the school nurse. Medication must be given to the nurse at the beginning to the school day and taken in her presence.

Furthermore, as stipulated in the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, “Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94C, including and not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal”

No alcoholic beverages may be present at a school-related event. For the purposes of this policy a school-related event is defined as any activity where Berkshire Hills Regional School District staff and/or students are gathered for the purposes of recognition or reward, either for academic or athletic achievement. This policy applies to events held off school grounds as well as on school grounds and to events that are sponsored by non-school –related groups as well as school-related groups.
Any student who unlawfully uses possesses sells or otherwise distributes a drug, alcoholic beverage or drug paraphernalia while on school property or during an off-school activity either school-approved or school-sponsored activity will be referred to the appropriate school administrator for disciplinary actions. (See Section J, Policy JICH of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Regular school attendance is important to the learning process and establishes good work habits. Attendance in the classroom with the opportunities therein provided to interact with the teacher and other students is an integral part of the learning experience. All students are required by law to attend school every day that school is in session. Parents or guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure their child is in attendance each day school is in session, unless he/she is absent for one of the following reasons:

Excused Absences
- Illness – after five consecutive days of illness, the school may require a note from a doctor.
- Bereavement
- Documented medical or dental appointments
- Documented court or legal commitments
- Religious holidays
- College visits
- School field trips
- Other extenuating circumstances approved by the school administration.

Teachers are not authorized to excuse absences.

Unexcused Absences
All other reasons for absence will be considered unexcused even if the student was given permission to miss school by their parent.

Students are allowed up to six unexcused absences in a six-month time period. The Massachusetts State Law specifies that a student under 16 years of age may not be absent more than six (6) unexcused day sessions in a six (6) month period. Chronic absenteeism is defined in absences in excess of fifteen (15) unexcused days. Parents are required under the law to ensure regular school attendance of their children and are subject to a fine or other legal action if they fail to comply with the law. The local school administration or designee will be provided with the names of students with seven or more unexcused absences during a six-month period.

Some examples of unexcused absences are, but not limited to:
- Family vacations/trips unless the administration has granted approval for a documented educational experience or purpose.
- Truancy
- Activities which should be conducted outside the school day, such as hair appointments, shopping, sleeping, doing homework, etc.
• Activities more appropriately related to the parent/guardian, such as providing care for siblings, absence due to parent transportation, etc.

**Notification**

Parents should notify the school by telephone each time their child is absent (excused or unexcused). It should not be assumed that the school will provide academic work for all absences. Please see individual school handbooks for procedures. School administration or designee will determine if the absence is excused. If the parent does not call the school, school personnel will call the child’s home, parent’s workplace, or emergency contact to confirm the absence.

**Attendance Procedure**

Within a six (6) month period, the following steps will be taken

**Step 1** Five (5) days of unexcused absence:
- Principal or designee sends letter home reminding parents of attendance policy.
- At the discretion of the Principal, a follow up call is made to parents to further explain policy and develop plan for improved attendance

**Step 2** Seven (7) days of unexcused absence:
- Letter from Principal and follow up conversation between Principal or designee and family to discuss child’s pattern of unexcused absences. The letter states that further unexcused absences may result in a referral to the Department of Social Services and/or Berkshire District Court

**Step 3** Ten (10) days of unexcused absence:
- Letter home indicating that the child has exceeded the legal limit.
- Principal or designee requests a formal meeting with parents to discuss ways school and home can work together to resolve unacceptable number of unexcused absences.
- In the event that parent fails to appear for formal meeting within a two-week period, the District will initiate truancy/negligence procedures as described below.

**Step 4** Fifteen (15) days of unexcused absence:
- The District initiates a CRA filing for truancy or a Failure to Send Action, with the Southern Berkshire District Court and/or a 51-A filing for child Neglect with the Department of Social Services.
- Written notification sent to parents
Monument Valley Regional Middle School Bullying Prevention Plan
Bullying, Cyber-bullying, and Retaliation Are Prohibited

A. **Priority Statement**

Monument Valley Regional Middle School is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment. Any unlawful or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in school buildings, on school grounds, or at school-related activities. This commitment will be supported in all aspects of the school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement. This commitment is an integral part of the comprehensive efforts to promote learning, to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful or disruptive behavior and to create a positive school environment. The same protection will be provided for all students regardless of their status under the law.

B. **Definitions**

**Aggressor** is a student who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

**Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

**Bullying** is conduct that is repeated, by one or more students, and targets another student causing one or more of the following:

1. physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to his/her property
2. placement of the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property
3. a hostile environment at school for the targeted student
4. infringement on the rights of the targeted student at school
5. material and substantial disruption to the educational process or the orderly operation of the school

Bullying generally involves “picking on” a student over time and may include:

1. hitting and shoving
2. pressuring a student into taking an action he/she does not wish to take
3. threats, teasing, name-calling, or putdowns
4. threatening looks, gestures, or actions
5. cruel rumors
6. false accusations
7. social isolation

**Cyber-bullying** is bullying through use of cell phones, computers, or other technology. This may include but is not limited to:

1. sending derogatory, harassing, or threatening email messages, social-networking messages or posts, instant messages, or blogs
b. creating websites, social-networking groups or pages, or blogs that make fun of, humiliate, or intimidate others

c. posting or sending embarrassing or inappropriate pictures or images of others

d. creating a website, social-networking profile or blog or posting by which the author/creator impersonates another person

**Hostile Environment** is a circumstance in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s education. The targeted student becomes so concerned about bullying that he/she is unable to participate in, and concentrate on, academics and other school activities.

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about an incident. It involves a student “getting back at” another student because of a belief that the student reported bullying or provided information about it to an adult or others who may help the targeted student.

**C. Acts of Bullying (Including Cyber-bullying) and Retaliation Are Prohibited**

Monument Valley Regional Middle School prohibits bullying (including cyber-bullying) and retaliation as defined above both at school and under the following circumstances:

a. on school grounds or any property next to school grounds

b. at the bus stop or on school buses or any other school vehicle

c. at any school-sponsored, or school-related activities, functions or programs

d. through use of any school computers, internet connection or other school based technology

e. at a location or during activities that are not school related, or by using private computer or cell phone, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the targeted student, infringes on the rights of the targeted student at school, or otherwise disrupts the orderly operation of the school

**D. How to Report Bullying**

Students who believe they are targets of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation, or who know about bullying or cyber-bullying conduct should report conduct to Christine Congdon, Assistant Principal. Students may also report the conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, or other school staff member, who will in turn report the incident, in writing, to the principal or designee.

**I. Complaint Notification:**

**A. Anonymous complaints:**

Should anonymity be requested, the principal or her designee shall meet with the student to review the request for anonymity and the impact of the anonymity on the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, but no disciplinary action will be taken based solely on an anonymous
complaint. Anonymous reports may be filed in writing without indicating the name of the reporter. Reports may be mailed or dropped off in the designated box at the school. Incident reports may be accessed through the website at www.bhrsd.org.

B. Informal/Verbal complaints by students:

Students may make informal/verbal complaints of conduct that they consider to be bullying to a teacher, administrator or staff personnel. Such informal/verbal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time, place, the number of occurrences, target of the alleged act and potential witnesses. All personnel who receive the informal/verbal complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing. This written report shall then be forwarded to the principal or her designee.

C. Formal/written complaints:

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file written reports of conduct that they consider to be bullying. These written reports shall be specific as to the action giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time, place the number of occurrences, target of the alleged act and potential witnesses. Such reports must be filed with the principal or her designee.

D. False Accusations:
Depending upon the age of the child, actions by the school may include meeting with the student, meeting with the student and a parent, regular meetings with student support personnel, assess potential need for (additional) social skills curriculum, social skills work with peers, and/or restorative justice reinforcement.

E. Addressing Concerns Regarding Bullying

Safety
Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying and/or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee, at their discretion and in accordance with applicable law, contacts parents or guardians prior to the investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00. Responses to promote safety may include, but shall not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; predetermining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, and a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying
The confidentiality of students and witnesses reporting alleged acts of bullying and/or retaliation will be maintained to the extent possible given the school’s obligation to investigate the matter. The Principal or his/her designee will be responsible for taking steps to investigate and otherwise address reports of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. Students who engage in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation will be subject to discipline by the Principal or Assistant Principal, subject to any procedural requirements. In making disciplinary decisions, the Principal or Assistant Principal will consider both the need for accountability and the importance of teaching appropriate behavior. The range of disciplinary action that may be taken includes but is not limited to:

- verbal warning
- written warning
- parent conference
- detention
- internal or external suspension
- expulsion from school

In addition to any disciplinary action, the Principal/Designee will report conduct relating to bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation to local law enforcement if s/he believes that criminal charges may be pursued.

I. Staff responsibilities and intervention strategies:

A. Staff who witness acts that may be bullying, as defined above, shall promptly file with the principal or designee a written incident report of the events witnessed. If a staff member is told by a student of a particular event that staff member is obligated to file a written report to the principal or designee.

B. In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, staff members are encouraged to address the issue of bullying in other interactions with students. Staff may find opportunities to educate students about bullying behavior through class discussion, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. All staff members should intervene whenever they observe conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another individual, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of “bullying.”
II. Administrative responsibility:

1. Investigation

   A. The principal or designee after being notified of a complaint will promptly begin an investigation. H/She shall complete a written form when the investigation is complete. The form will include findings of fact, and determinations of acts of bullying are verified. When acts of bullying are verified the form will include recommendations of intervention and disciplinary actions. Please note that anonymous complaints will not have any discipline actions included.

   In addition to any disciplinary action, the Principal/Desigenee will report conduct relating to bullying, cyber-bulling, and retaliation to local law enforcement if s/he believes that criminal charges may be pursued.

2. Remedial Action

   One verified harassing and/or bullying act-verbal warning to all parties with the explanation of future consequences. This will give our students a chance to modify their own behavior.

   Second verified harassing and/or bullying act-a directed meeting with support staff, parents, and students with Principal or designee. This meeting will have more invested parties trying to resolve the issues with the target and the harasser.

   Third verified bullying act. School discipline consequences, as defined in the student handbook will be applied.

   Anytime the Principal or designee feels that harassing activities have occurred, school discipline may be rendered. Also, anytime the Principal or Designee feels a criminal act has occurred, the GBPD will be notified to investigate.

3. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-Building

   Upon the principal or designee determining that a violation of the district’s anti-bullying policy has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v).

   Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:
   A. offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school’s/district’s Anti-bullying policy.
   B. providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel
   C. implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals
D. meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home
E. adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills
F. making a referral for evaluation

4. Community Intervention strategies:
   A. Planned annual professional development programs addressing bully/target problems.
   B. Data collection to document history of bully/target problems to examine nature and scope of the problem
   C. Educate peers to help avoid and deter bullying behavior.
   D. Offer wide range of resources and prevention techniques to avoid bullying behavior.
   E. Community wide awareness and involvement of students, staff and parents in examining the modern issue with regard to bullying and cyberbullying.
   F. Modeling by staff of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior and relationships to students

F. Closing a Complaint Regarding Bullying

In the event school staff determines that bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has taken place, the principal or designee will, in addition to taking disciplinary action:

A. Notify the parent or guardian of the aggressor.
B. Inform parents or guardian of the targeted student of the steps that have been taken to prevent further actions to the extent consistent with applicable legal restrictions.
C. Notify local law enforcement, if s/he believes that criminal charges against the aggressor may be pursued.

The above language is intended to be consistent with the BHRSD’s policy addressing Bullying.

Legal References: Massachusetts General Law Chapter 92
1. Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report: ____________________________
   (Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken
   against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of anonymous report.)

2. Check whether you are the:  Target of the behavior Reporter (not the target)
3. Check whether you are a:  Student Staff member (specify role) Parent Administrator
   Other (specify) _________

Your contact information/telephone number: ____________________________

4. If student, state your school: ____________________________

5. If staff member, state your school or work site: ____________________________

6. Information about the incident:

Name of Target (of behavior): ____________________________

Name of Aggressor (person who engaged in the behavior): ____________________________

Date(s) of Incident(s): ____________________________

Time When Incident(s) Occurred: ____________________________

Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible): ____________________________

Witnesses (List people who saw the incident for have information about it):

Name: ____________________________ Student Staff Other ______

Name: ____________________________ Student Staff Other ______

Name: ____________________________ Student Staff Other ______

8. Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred
   and what each person did and said, including specific works used.) Please use additional
   space on back if necessary.

__________________________________________

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY
II. INVESTIGATION

1. Investigator(s): ____________________________

   Position: ________________________________

2. Interviews:

   Interviewed aggressor
   Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________

   Interviewed target
   Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________

   Interviewed witnesses
   Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________

   Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________

3. Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor?   Yes    No
   If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously?   Yes    No
   Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION   Yes    No

Summary of Investigation:

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)
III. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation:

   Yes  No

   Bullying  Incident documented as ____________________________
   Retaliation  Discipline referral only ________________________

2. Contacts:

   Target’s parent/guardian  Date: __________
   Aggressor’s parent/guardian  Date: __________
   District Equity Coordinator (DEC)  Date: __________
   Law Enforcement  Date: ______

3. Action Taken:

   Loss of Privileges  Detention  STEP referral  Suspension
   Community Service  Education  Other ________________________

4. Describe Safety Planning: ________________________________

   Follow-up with Target: scheduled for: __________
   Initial and date when completed: ______
   Follow-up with Aggressor: scheduled for: __________
   Initial and date when completed: ______

   Report forwarded to Principal - Date: __________
   Report forwarded to Superintendent – Date: __________
   (If principal was not the investigator)

   Signature and Title: ________________________________
   Date: ______________
DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

From time to time, parents or other citizens may have problems or concerns that they wish to bring to the attention of appropriate school officials. To assist parents in this regard, the following general guidelines may be helpful:

- Any concern regarding a school-related matter should first be raised by the parent with the staff member most directly involved (i.e., questions regarding the content of instructional materials or homework assignments should be raised with the teacher involved).

- If the matter remains unsolved, the parent may wish to speak with the building principal. Appointments can be scheduled by contacting the office of the principal involved.

- If the matter is still unresolved, the parent may wish to speak with the superintendent. For an appointment, simply contact the superintendent’s office.

*(See Section B, Policy BHD of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)*

ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

The electronic information resources are now available to qualifying students in the district. These resources include access to the Berkshire County Wide Area Network as well as Internet services. Electronics and Computer facilities are the hardware, software, network, and internet systems and equipment which may be located in the classrooms, hallways, computer and business labs, offices teachers’ rooms, network station areas and libraries. The District’s goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end students that must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided so those students are aware of the responsibilities they are about to acquire.

Each student member applying for an account will review set guidelines regarding proper behavior and use of the network. The signature(s) at the end of this document is (are) legally binding and indicate(s) the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully and understand(s) their significance and agree(s) to abide by these terms.

**Terms and Conditions**

1. **Privileges:** The use of electronic information resources is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use of these resources will result in the loss of computer services, disciplinary action, and/or referral to legal authorities. The systems administrator will close an account if necessary. An administrator or faculty member has the right to request, for cause, that the systems administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific student accounts.
2. **Acceptable Use:** The use of an assigned account must be in support of education, business and/or research and within the educational goals and objectives of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District. Each student is personally responsible for this provision at all times when using the electronic information services.

3. **Monitored Use:** Electronic mail transmissions and other use of electronic resources by students shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes.

4. **Network Etiquette:** Each account holder is expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of student etiquette. These rules include, but are not limited to, the following:
   
   a. Be polite. Never send, or encourage others to send abusive messages.
   
   b. Use appropriate language. Remember that you are a representative of your school and district on a non-private system. You may be alone on a computer, but what you say and do can be viewed globally! Never use vulgar or any other inappropriate language.
   
   c. Use electronic mail appropriately. Electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Everyone on the system has access to mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities must be reported to the system administrator or school administration.

5. **Vandalism:** Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy property of another student or of any other agencies or networks that are connected to the Internet. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, the uploading, downloading, or creation or computer viruses. It also includes any physical damage to computer hardware or software in the District.

6. **Security:** Security on any computer system is a high priority because there are multiple students. Once properly logged into the BHRSD network, do not leave your account/connection open or unattended. Do not use another individual’s account. Unauthorized access to a computer system or part of a computer system that you do not have permission to use is known as electronic trespass and is illegal. If you identify a security problem, notify the system administrator or school administration at once.

7. **Liability:** The Berkshire Hills Regional School District makes no warranties of any kind whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The district will not be responsible for any damages the students suffer while on the system. These damages include, but are not limited to, loss of data as a result of delays, non-deliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by the system or your errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the information system is at your own risk. The Berkshire Hills Regional School District specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy of information obtained through electronic information sources.
**Penalties**

Failure to adhere to the above recommendations for proper use of the computer facilities in the BHRSD will result in the following disciplinary actions or additional actions as deemed appropriate.

**First Offense:** Loss of student password for two weeks.
**Second Offense:** Loss of student password for one month, and the possibility of school suspension.
**Third and Subsequent Offenses:** Loss of student password for one semester and the possibility of school suspension.

The right of appeal to the Principal will be upheld in all offenses. *(See Section I, Policy IJNDB of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)*

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**EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY**

In the course of a school year, there may be a need to evacuate students, employees and/or visitors from school buildings.

Each school building administrator will develop an evacuation plan approved by the Superintendent. This plan will be published as part of the staff handbook as well as the student/parent handbook.

On an annual basis, the procedure will be reviewed with staff and students. Evacuation drills involving students and staff will occur regularly, with documentation, regarding date and evacuation time. *(Recommended quarterly)*

The evacuation procedure of each school building will include:

1. The methods by which classrooms, specialty areas and restrooms are to be cleared of occupants;
2. The procedure by which disabled employees and students are to be assisted in exiting the building;
3. How attendance checks of students and staff are to be taken and recorded;
4. How central office, police and fire departments (when applicable) are to be notified
5. How parents are to notified (if applicable);
6. The location of an alternate building site to be used:

The procedure by which the building will be made safe for re-entry by students and staff. *(See Section E Policy EBCA of the BHRSD Policy Book)*
ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION (ELE)

The goal of the English Language Education (ELE) program of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District is to support the progress of LEP (Limited English Proficient) students in the four English language domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. These students (known as English Language Learners (ELL)) receive content instruction in English at the appropriate academic and grade level. Any newly enrolled student with a language other than English spoken at home will be assessed for English Language Proficiency within 30 days of enrollment at school. Based on the results, students will be placed in a regular education classroom/schedule with support services in English as a Second Language as needed.

All parents have the right to waive ESL services. Information on the waiver procedure is available through the principal of each school. A Language Assessment Team (LAT) will convene once a student is identified as LEP. The LAT may include, but is not limited to: parent/guardian, principal, guidance counselor and/or school psychologist, ELL coordinator, teachers, and interpreter (when possible and if necessary). During that meeting, a specific education plan and schedule for the year will be developed. Programming options available to students are documented in the student/parent handbook. The mini-handbook (in Spanish and English) for students eligible for ELE services and their parents/guardians also provides information about ELE programming options and legislative rights.

All students will be assessed annually for progress. Once deemed fluent in spoken and written English. The student (now known as FLEP=formerly Limited English proficient) will be exited from the ELE program and monitored for at least one year to insure continued progress. (See Section I, Policy IHBE of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, creed, sex, religion, nationality, and physical and intellectual differences.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law (known as Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971), which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. The law reads as follows:

No child shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation, disability or homelessness.
This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Education in compliance with this law will be followed.  (See Section J, Policy JB of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

HAZING

The Berkshire Hills Regional School Committee adopts Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 269, Sections 17-19 as amended by Chapter 665 of the Acts of 1987 requiring all secondary school to distribute copies of Anti-Hazing Law to student groups, teams or organizations.

Specifically, the law requires that:

1. Secondary schools distribute copies of the law to student groups, student teams or student organizations.
2. While copies of the law must be distributed to members, plebes, pledges or applicants of student groups, teams or organizations, the burden for such distribution is on the individual student group, team or organization.
3. It is the duty of each student group, team or organization, through a designated officer, to deliver annually to the school an attested acknowledgement that; each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants has received a copy of the law, and the group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the law.
4. Each secondary school distributes the law, on at least an annual basis, to full-time enrollees, (In our opinion, this obligation may be met by including the law in a student handbook which is distributed to all students at the start of each school year).
5. Each secondary school adopts a discipline policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing and include it with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook.
6. Each secondary school file an annual report with the Department of Education certifying that it has complied with its responsibilities under the statute: it has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and the policy is given appropriate emphasis in the student handbook.

Whoever is a principal organizer of participant in the crime of hazing shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or imprisonment for not more than a year, or both.  Whoever knows of an incident of hazing and does not report the crime shall be punished b a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

(See Section J, Policy JICFA of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)
**HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**
(Educational Services in the Home or Hospital)

Upon receipt of a physician’s written order verifying that any student enrolled in the Berkshire Hills Regional School District or placed by the district in a private setting must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for medical reasons and for a period of not less than 14 school days in any school year, the principal shall arrange for provision of educational services in the home or hospital. Such services shall be provided with sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue his or her educational program, as long as such services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student. The principal shall coordinate such services with the Director of Special Education for eligible students. Such services shall not be considered special education unless the student has been determined eligible for such services and the services include services on the student’s IEP. (See Section I, Policy IHBF of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

**HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES**

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs. (See Section J, Policy JG of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

**HOMEWORK**

The term “homework” refers to an assignment to be prepared during a period of supervised study in class or outside of class. The purposes of homework are to improve the learning processes, to aid in the mastery of skills, and to create and stimulate interest on the part of the student. Homework is a learning activity which should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student.

With increased maturity, learning should become an independent activity. This should be established through consistent assignments which encourage students to investigate for themselves and to work independently as well as with others. Homework assignments should be consistent in terms of the amount given each day and the time required fro each assignment so that a pattern of meaningful homework can be established by the teacher and/or the student. The information for any homework assignment should be clear and specific so that the student can complete the assignment.

Homework assignments should take into consideration individual differences of students such as health, ability, conditions at home, and educational resources at home. Homework should not require the use of reference materials not readily available in most
homes, school libraries, or the public library, and should require the use of those materials only when the student has had instruction in the use of them.

There are many other learning activities in the life of a student besides homework. Such things as participating in school activities, pursuing cultural interests, participating in family living, and exploring personal interests should be considered by teachers when planning consistent assignments. Homework is not to be used as a form of punishment under any circumstances. (See Section I Policy IKB of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

**INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING BEHAVIOR**

Bullying and harassment are major distractions from learning. The grades of the victims can suffer. Fear can lead to chronic absenteeism, truancy, or even dropping out of school. Bystanders feel both guilty and helpless for not standing up to the bully.

**Definition**

Intimidation and bullying of any type have no place in a school setting. The Berkshire Hills Regional School District will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment free of intimidation and bullying.

*Intimidation is any threatening action whose initiation by whatever means, creates a climate of hostility. It is also the use of language, conduct, or symbols in such manner as to be commonly understood to convey hatred or contempt.*

Bullying is defined as the act of one or more individuals intimidating one or more persons through verbal, physical, mental, or written interactions. Bullying can take many forms and occur in virtually any setting. It can create unnecessary and unwarranted anxiety that will affect attending school, walking in corridors, eating in cafeterias, playing in the schoolyard or recreation areas, participating in or attending special and extra-curricular activities, or riding on the bus to and from school each day.

As a rule, bullying behavior starts in elementary school and peaks in the middle school years. However, it attracts more attention from adults when it appears in high school. There the students are older and physically larger and the behavior is recognized as being less tolerable and more inappropriate. Also, sexual harassment is, in fact, often a form of bullying.

Most bullying by students starts out verbally – teasing and put-downs – and may become progressively worse and may eventually assume physical dimensions.

Examples of intimidation and bullying include but are not exclusive to:

1. Name-calling, teasing, jokes, gestures that are offensive, foul or vulgar language.
2. Verbal or physical abuse for the expressed purpose of gaining control or engendering fear.
3. Other threats of any kind, stated or implied
4. Assaults on students, including those that are verbal, physical, psychological and emotional.
5. Attacks on student property.
(See Section J, Policy JICFB of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

**Nondiscrimination**

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. The District’s policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If you have a complaint or think that you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, sex, religion national origin, sexual orientation or disability, register your complaint with the Title IX compliance officer. The elementary school compliance officer is Garth Story. The middle school officer is Christine Congdon. The high school officer is Scott Annand. (See Section A, Policy AC of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

**Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap**

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the district’s facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs and activities of the district or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the district exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

**Definition**

A “Qualified individual with a disability” is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the district.

**Reasonable Modification:**

The district shall make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the district can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity.

**Communications**

The district shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the district shall furnish appropriate auxiliary
aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the district. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the district shall give primary consideration to the request of the individuals with disabilities.

**Auxiliary Aids and Services**

“Auxiliary aids and services” includes (1) qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assisted listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments; (3) acquisition or modification of devices and (4) other similar services and actions.

**Limits of Required Modification**

The district is not required to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. Any decision that, in compliance with its responsibility to provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities, would fundamentally alter the service program or activity or unduly burden the district shall be made by the School committee after considering all resources available for use in funding and operating the program, service, or activity. The decision shall be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion.

**Notice**

The district shall make available to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions of Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Compliance Coordinator**

The district designated the Director of Special Education to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title II of ADA, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance or alleging any actions that would be prohibited under ADA. The district compliance coordinator is:

Mrs. Kate Burdsall  
Director of Student Services  
50 Main St.  
Stockbridge, Ma. 01262.  
(413) 298-4017 Ext. 13

The district shall adopt and publish procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited under the ADA. The school system receives federal financial assistance and must comply with the above requirements. (See Section A, Policy ACE of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)
PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District. Further students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint.

Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:
1. to administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or member of the school community from immediate, serious, physical harm; and
2. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

The following definitions appear at 603 CMR 46.02:
1. Extended Restraint: A physical restraint the duration of which is longer than twenty (20) minutes
2. Physical escort: Touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student.
3. Physical restraint: The use of bodily force to limit a student’s freedom of movement.

The use of mechanical or chemical restraint is prohibited unless explicitly authorized by a physician and approved in writing by the parent/guardian. The use of seclusion restraint is prohibited in public education programs.

Mechanical restraint – The use of a physical device to restrict the movement of a student or the movement or normal function of a portion of his or her body. A protective or stabilizing device ordered by a physician shall not be considered a mechanical restraint.

Seclusion restraint – Physically confining a student alone in a room or limited space without access to school staff. The use of “Time out” procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered “seclusion restraint”.

Chemical restraint – the administration of medication for the purpose of restraint.

The Superintendent will develop written procedures identifying:
- Appropriate responses to student behavior, that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide;
- Descriptions and explanations of the school’s method of physical restraint;
- Descriptions of the school’s training and reporting requirements;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints.

Each building Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint, which the department of education recommends be at least 16 hours in length.
Only school personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.00 shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible the administration of physical restraint shall be administered in the presence of at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. A person administering physical restraint shall only use the amount of force necessary to protect the student from injury or harm.

In addition each staff member will be trained regarding the school’s physical restraint policy. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student’s refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

A member of the School Committee or any teacher or any employees or agent of the School Committee shall not be precluded from using such reasonable force as is necessary to protect pupils, other persons or themselves from an assault by a pupil.

The program staff shall report the use of physical restraint that lasts longer than five minutes, or results in injury to a student or staff member. The staff member shall inform the administration of the physical restraint as soon as possible, and by written report, no later than the next school day. The Principal or director or his/her designee shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which, upon request, shall be made available to the Department of Education.

When a restraint has resulted in serious injury to a student or program staff member or when an extended restraint has been administered, the program shall provide a copy of the required report to the Department of Education within five (5) school working days of the administration of the restraint.

In special circumstances waivers may be sought from parents/guardians either through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process or from parents/guardians of students who present a high risk of frequent, dangerous behavior that may frequent the use of restrain. (see Section J, Policy JKAA of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

**SCHOOL COUNCILS**

The Berkshire Hills Regional School District, in compliance with Section 53 of Chapter 71 of the Acts of 1993, mandates the establishment of School councils in each of the district buildings.

The Principal of each school has the responsibility for defining the composition of the Council and convening the first meeting no later than 20 days after the first day of school. Membership on the Council shall include the Principal, who serves as one of the two co-chairs, teachers at the school, parents of students attending the school, at least one student for Monument Mountain Regional High School, and other persons including
community leaders who are not parents, teachers or students at the school. The number of parents on each School Council must equal the number of teachers plus the Principal. Other than this, the size of the council is up to local discretion provided that the number of “other persons” does not exceed 50% of the Council’s membership. School Councils should also be broadly representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of the school building and the Berkshire Hills Regional School District. (See Section B, Policy BDFA of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is understood by the Berkshire Hills Regional School District Committee and its employees that sexual harassment violates Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Chapter 2788 of the Acts of 1996. Sexual harassment is discriminatory and a violation of the professional ethics expected of all employees, volunteers, community organizations, and the like, associated with the Berkshire Hills Regional School District.

As an educational organization, the Berkshire Hills Regional School District endeavors to provide an employment climate and a school climate that holds as one of its tenets respect for the right of all individuals involved. Inherent to this is the right of all involved to be free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is defined as: “Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature – when submission to or rejection of such conduct is either implicitly or explicitly made a term or condition of an individual’s employment, academic performance or evaluation; or when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interfering with an individual’s employment or academic work or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive working, academic or social environment.” (See Section A, Policy ACAB of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

**STUDENT RECORDS**

**A. General Provisions**

The student record contains all information concerning a student that is kept by the school district and which personally identifies the student; it consists of the temporary record and the transcript. For purposes of these procedures, custodial parent refers to a divorced or separated parent who has physical custody of the child, and the non-custodial parent is the parent who does not have physical custody of the child. Non-custodial parents may not be eligible to access their child’s student record, or may have to follow certain procedures in order to access the student record. See Section C below.

The rights outlined below may be exercised by the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) for a student under the age of 14 years, or jointly by the student and custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child over the age of 14 years. A student over the age of 14 is called “an eligible student”. A student 18 years or older may, in writing, deny his
custodial parent(s)/non-custodial parent(s) access to his/her student record, with the exception of transcripts, report cards and/or progress reports.

Each eligible student and custodial parent/guardian, except as limited herein for certain parents, has the right to see the student record for that student within ten (10) days of submitting a written request to see the records. Copies of any records may be obtained upon request and shall be provided within ten (10) days of the request. The District may charge for the cost of reproducing copies.

The student’s record is available to authorized school personnel who work directly with the student, or administrative/clerical personnel who need to have access to records in order to carry out their responsibilities. The term “authorized school personnel” includes, but is not limited to, administrators, teachers, counselors, therapists, paraprofessionals, administrative office, staff and clerical personnel. Authorized school personnel included those employed by the District or under contract with the District as an independent contractor. Authorized school personnel do not need permission to see student records.

No information in the student’s record is available to anyone outside the school system without written permission from the eligible student and/or parent and/or guardian, unless the requesting party is listed an exception as provided by the Student Records regulations. Exceptions to the requirement of written permission include, but are not limited to, a probation officer, court order, subpoena, where health or safety requires the disclosure of student information/records or upon transfer to another school district. However, eligible students and/or their parents/guardians will generally be notified before these records are released. A written release must be signed to have any part of the school record sent outside the school. This includes, but is not limited to prospective employers, other technical school, and colleges.

An eligible student and parent/guardian have the right to request to add relevant information to the student’s record as well as the right to request removal of information believed to be untrue or incorrect.

**B. Directory Information Notice**

The Berkshire Hills Regional School District has designated certain information contained in the education records of its students as directory information for purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Record Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: (1) name, (2) address, (3) telephone number, (4) date and place of birth, (5) major field of study, (6) participation in officially recognized activities and sports, (7) weight and height of members of athletic teams, (8) dates of attendance, (9) degrees, honors and awards received, (10) post high school plans of the student.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose in the discretion of the school system, without the consent of a parent of a student or an eligible student. Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation...
of any or all of the above information as directory information; such refusal must be in writing and made annually. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent or student, or as otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq. You are hereby notified that pursuant to this notification, the school system will provide requested directory information to military recruiters unless the parent or eligible student specifically directs otherwise, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

Any parent or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file written notification to this effect with the principal on or before the 15th day of each September.

In the event that a refusal is not filed, it is assumed that neither a parent of a student or eligible student objects to the release of the directory information designated.

C. Rights Of Certain Divorced or Separated Parents

It is necessary for divorced parents to submit a copy of the custody agreement or order, and any subsequent changes made thereto, to the District so that District personnel may identify which of the parents has physical custody of the child. The non-custodial parent may access his/her child’s record unless

1. the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student, and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or

2. the parent has been denied visitation, or

3. the parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or

4. there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

The District shall place in the student's record any documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).

Non-Custodial Parent Access: In the case of a non-custodial parent who is eligible to access the student record, i.e., does not fit any of the four (4) categories under 1-4 above, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal. Upon receipt of the request, the principal and/or his/her designee shall immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth under 1-4 above.
When the student record is released to the non-custodial parent, the school will delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records will be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

D. **Amending Your/Your Child’s Record**

1. A parent has the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written material to the student's record. The parent should submit the additional information in writing to the principal with a written request that the information be added to the student record.

2. A parent has the right to request in writing deletion or correction of any information contained in the student's record, except for information which was inserted into that record by the TEAM. Such information inserted by the TEAM shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP), or, if the IEP is rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process. Any deletion or amendment shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:

   (a) If a parent is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the student's record, the parent shall present the objection in writing and/or have the right to have a conference with the principal or his/her designee to make the objections known.

   (b) The principal or his/her designee shall within one week after the conference or receipt of the objection, if no conference was requested, render to such parent a decision in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parent, the principal or his/her designee shall promptly take such steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

   (c) If the principal's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may file an appeal to the Superintendent. Such appeal shall be in writing and submitted to the Superintendent within five (5) business days of receipt of the principal's decision. The Superintendent shall render a written decision on the appeal within two (2) weeks of receipt of the written appeal.

   (d) If the Superintendent's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may appeal to the School Committee by filing a written appeal within five (5) business days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision. The School Committee shall conduct a hearing as required on the appeal as required by 603 CMR §23.09(4).
E. Notice On Transfer To Other Schools

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(g), notice is hereby given to parents and eligible students that the District forwards the complete school record of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such transfer of records takes place without consent of the parent or eligible student.

F. Destruction of Records

1. Notice is hereby given that the temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after that student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system. When the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from school, and if the eligible student or the parent/guardian want the temporary record, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school, that the documents be provided to them. No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.

2. In addition, each year, the principal and/or teachers and/or other service providers may destroy the following documents that are considered part of the student’s temporary record: disciplinary records (other than documentation of suspensions/expulsions/exclusions), any notes from the Parent/guardian or other documents concerning absences, early dismissals, late arrivals, as well as examples of student work. If the eligible student or the parent/guardian want those records, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school that the documents be provided to them, rather than be destroyed. No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.

STUDENT SMOKING

It shall be unlawful for any student enrolled in the Berkshire Hills Regional School District to use or possess tobacco products of any type on school grounds or in school buildings. (See Section J, Policy JICG of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PREMISES

Use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses or at any school sponsored activity by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

Possession of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities or on school grounds or school buses or at any school sponsored activity by any student is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.
This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriated handbook(s) and requirements of state law. (See Section A, Policy ADC of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)

**VERTICAL ACCELERATION OF STUDENTS**

It is a focus of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District to provide opportunities for its students to achieve in academics and, where possible, advance academically through both enrichment opportunities and grade/course acceleration. The enrichment process allows students not only to master grade level curricula, but to utilize this information in new, different, and challenging situations. This is the first step beyond mastery of presented curricula. Acceleration proceeds above this level and allows a student to bypass a grade, or subject area within a grade, provided total mastery and enrichment opportunities have been exhausted.

The process by which vertical acceleration will be considered for implementation is as follows:

1. Parent, student, and/or faculty member may present a request for consideration of vertical acceleration.

2. The parent, student, and/or faculty must present a rationale for vertical advancement to another course or grade level.

3. The teacher and, where appropriate, the guidance counselor must present a thorough summary of classroom achievements and assessment of the student’s academic progress.

4. The school psychologist should complete a thorough psycho-educational evaluation as appropriate.

5. The Principal will call for a team meeting involving the parents, teacher(s), school psychologist, and any other school personnel critical to the team meeting. At this meeting, all information regarding the student’s academic progress and social/emotional maturity will be reviewed. The request for vertical acceleration will be based on the evaluation and achievement materials presented.

6. The team will make a recommendation to the principal regarding whether or not vertical acceleration should occur and, the team will recommend a plan of action for its implementation. The principal will make a decision with the approval of the superintendent, regarding this recommendation. If the recommendation is not approved, the parent, student, and/or faculty member may request a review after six months.

7. The classroom teacher(s) and the building Principals will implement the plan. It will be the teacher’s responsibility, along with the guidance counselors, where appropriate, to monitor student progress.
8. Regular communication regarding student progress will occur. Should the student have difficulty with the vertical acceleration, another team meeting will be activated to assess the situation and recommend changes in the program. Should the student succeed in the vertical acceleration additional team meetings may be necessary to continue developing action plans for vertical acceleration in additional academic school years. The steps will follow those outlined above. *(See Section I, Policy IKEA of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy).*

**WEAPONS VIOLATIONS**

**Weapons Prohibited:** Carrying or handling in any school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle, or at any school-sponsored activity is prohibited. Such weapons or objects include but are not limited to weapons, explosives, guns, knives, dangerous objects, or any object that can reasonable be called a weapon.

**Exceptions:** An exception may be made for participants in authorized curricular or extracurricular activities.

**Reporting:** Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 calls for certain actions to take place in reference to weapons violations, Section 37L requires the following actions by schools in the case of a disciplinary incident involving a dangerous weapon:

“Any school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student’s possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time.”

“Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the Superintendent of said school, who shall file copies of said report with the local chief of police, the Department of Social Services, the Office of Student Services or its equivalent in any school district, and the local School Committee.

**Penalties:** Students found in violation of this policy will be subject to possible suspension, expulsion, and police intervention. School Administrators will use great care to use good reason and common sense in handling weapons discipline cases. Care will be taken to insure that reasonable judgment will be used to avoid overreacting by calling an object a weapon that is not intended to be used as a weapon. *(See Section J, Policy JICI of the BHRSD Policy Book for full policy)*

**WELLNESS POLICY**

It is the goal of Berkshire Hills Regional School District (BHRSD) for every student to have the necessary skills and knowledge to actualize healthy and satisfying lives. We believe that wellness is a multi-faceted concept that is best learned through practice and from modeling of healthy behaviors by adults in the school, family and community. We define wellness as a condition of health that is the result of proper nutrition, exercise and other personal habits that contribute to a sound mind and body. Therefore it is the policy of BHRSD to ensure that each student has equitable access to program, activities and classes that promote physical, social-emotional and mental wellbeing. These programs will be consistent with, but not limited by the Massachusetts Department of Education
Wellness Committee
BHRSD will establish a Wellness Committee that should involve parents, students, nurse, Food Service Director, school committee member, health teacher, physical education teacher, school administrator, members of the public, and other community members as appropriate. The Wellness Committee will enact a plan, to be approved by the Superintendent, to oversee implementation and evaluation of the Wellness Policy.

Nutrition Guidelines
It is the policy of the school district that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to law. The district will:

- Establish separate guidelines for foods and beverages in the following categories:
  - foods and beverages included in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses
  - foods and beverages sold in vending machines, snack bars, school stores and concession stands
  - foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities
  - refreshments served at parties, celebrations and meetings during the school day
  - specify that its guidelines will be based on nutrition goals, not profit motives

  - Provide to all children who participate in subsidized food programs the ability to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
  - Provide students with access to a variety of affordable nutritious, appealing and fresh foods that meet and exceed health and nutritional needs of students as outlined by the Nutrition Standards and U.S. Dietary Guidelines (www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/dga)
  - Develop guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment.

- Provide adequate time, with a minimum of 20 minutes sit down time, for students to eat lunch at appropriate times, no earlier than 10:45 and no later than 1:00 pm, in the school schedule in clean, safe, and pleasant settings.
- Refrain from using food as a reward/punishment. This is not meant to exclude foods for celebration and special events.

Nutrition and Physical Education
The school district will provide nutrition education and physical education aligned with the standards established by the MA DOE.
Nutrition Education

- Provide sequential, interdisciplinary nutritional education to foster healthy lifelong habits and promote comprehensive wellness learning in each grade from pre-K to 12.
- Enhance nutrition education using locally grown foods whenever possible
- Promote regional partnerships between health agencies, health education resources, food suppliers, school meal programs, and other community resources.
- Send consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program to student and families.
- Encourage parents/guardians to support healthy food choices and habits for their children.

Physical Education Activities

- Provide sequential, interdisciplinary physical education to foster healthy lifelong habits and promote comprehensive wellness learning in each grade from pre-K to 12.
- Refrain from using the denial and the imposition of physical activity as a punishment in all school related activities.
- Give students opportunities for daily physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- Provide opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- Provide opportunities, encouragement and support for all preK-12 students to be physically active on a daily basis and achieve the recommended health-related physical fitness standards.
- Design curriculum that promotes the acquisition of lifelong physical activities, i.e. walking programs, cross-country skiing
- Encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.

Social/Emotional Activities

- Students will be provided sequential, interdisciplinary social-emotional education to foster healthy lifelong habits and promote comprehensive wellness learning in each grade from pre-K to 12.
- Students will understand the benefit of adequate sleep as it relates to readiness for learning and overall health and will learn to identify patterns of behavior that promote healthy sleep cycles, including types and timing of activities prior to sleep and nutritional relationships to sleep.
- Students shall learn to define relaxation and be able to understand its relationship to overall health and well-being. Additionally, students will be able to identify what type(s) of activities may encourage relaxation and will learn methods for promoting it in their own lives.
Other Wellness Activities

- Communication with parents/guardians, staff and students is essential. We will seek opportunities, to educate the school community on trends and information related to health and wellness. We will encourage community partnerships that assist the district in this effort.

- We will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing district-wide nutrition, nutrition education, physical activity and social-emotional programs and policies and other wellness initiatives.

- We will consider and implement when appropriate, environmentally-friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, recycling and composting.

- We will consider and implement when appropriate, physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs designed to benefit staff health.

Evaluation:
The Superintendent, Director of Food Services and Building Administration are charged with operational responsibility for ensuring the district meets the BHRSD Wellness Policy (ADF). The Wellness Committee will report annually to the BHRSD Superintendent, who will submit the report to the School Committee.

Leg Ref: Section 204 of Public Law 108-265 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act 2004
Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

The Federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (also known as NCLB) requires that all school districts receiving Title I funding must notify parents of the right to know about the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their child(ren). The specifics of the law are as follows:

Parents/Guardians have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of the classroom teacher.

- Whether a teacher has met State qualifications and licensing at the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher is providing instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency license or waiver
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certifications or degrees held by the teacher, and the field or discipline of the certification or degree.
- And, whether the child is provided services by a paraprofessional, and if so, his/her qualifications.

Parents also have the right to know if their child is taught by a teacher for four or more weeks who is not “highly qualified” (a term that is specifically defined by NCLB to mean that a teacher must be certified in the area in which he/she is teaching). This notification will come directly from the school to all parents whose children are impacted by this decision.

Berkshire Hills Regional School District is committed to providing quality instruction for all students and does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. If you would like to receive any of the information listed above for your child’s teacher, please contact the building principal. If you have additional questions regarding NCLB, please do not hesitate to call the building principal.

Sincerely,

Dr. Peter Dillon
Superintendent of Schools
PARENT OR GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM
ELECTRONIC INFORMATION POLICY

I have read the Berkshire Hills Regional School District’s Electronic Information Resources Policy and understand that access to the electronic information resources is designed for educational purposes. I understand that it is impossible for the District to restrict access to all the controversial materials and I will not hold the District responsible for controversial materials my student acquires utilizing the district’s electronic information resources. I agree to report any misuse of the electronic information resources to the District’s System Administrator of School Administration. Misuse comes in many forms, but can be viewed as any messages sent or received that include/suggest pornography, unethical or illegal solicitation, racism, sexism, inappropriate language, and other issues described previously.

I hereby give my permission for my student to access the District’s electronic information resources. I understand that this permission shall remain effective during the time my student is enrolled as a student in Berkshire Hills Regional School District, or until I give the District written notice that the permission given is revoked. I further understand that any amendments or revisions to the Electronic Information Resources Policy will be printed in the Student Handbook and that no other notice of amendment or revision to the Electronic Information Resources Policy will be given to me unless it is to be effective prior to publication in the Students Handbook.

Student’s Name (please print) _____________________________________________

Parent/Guardian Name (please print) _______________________________________

Signature ___________________________ Date __________________________

I do not give the Berkshire Hills Regional School District permission for my student to access the District’s electronic information resources.

Student’s Name (please print) _____________________________________________

Parent/Guardian Name (please print) _______________________________________

Signature ___________________________ Date __________________________

(See Section I, Policy IJNDB-E of the BHRSD Policy Book for full Policy). (This is an example of a letter you will have to sign to allow your child to use the internet services)
Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school district requires that the following forms must be on file in your child’s health record before we begin to give any medicine at school, whether prescription medication or non-prescription medication (such as Tylenol).

1. **Signed consent by the parent or guardian to give the medicine.** Please complete the enclosed consent form and give it to the health office.

2. **Signed medication order.** The written medication order form should be taken to your child’s licensed prescriber (your child’s physician, nurse practitioner, etc.) for completion and returned to the school nurse. This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year.

Medicines should be delivered to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container by you or by the student as long as the school nurse is notified. Please ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty day supply of the medicine should be delivered to the school.

If you have further questions concerning this policy, please do not hesitate to call me at 644-2300.

Sincerely,

Pat Harper, RN
School Nurse

*(See Section J, Policy JLCD-E of the BHRSD Policy Book)(This is an example of a letter you will have to sign to allow the school to dispense medications.)*
Dear Parent,

Recently, some changes were made in the regulations dealing with student records. As you know, in cases where parents have divorced or separated, there are different rules set by the state for which parent can see and get copies of his/her child’s student records. The parent(s) who have physical custody, as identified in the custody agreement or order, has the right to see and get copies of his/her child’s student records with no limitation. However, the parent who does not have physical custody of the child (non-custodial parent), even if he/she has legal custody or visitation rights, may or may not have access to his/her child’s student records.

A non-custodial parent is eligible to see and get copies of his/her child’s student records unless the school or district has been given documentation that:

1. the non-custodial parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or to the custodial parent, or
2. the non-custodial parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation, or
3. the non-custodial parent’s access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order.

It is necessary for divorced or separated parents to submit a copy of the custody agreement or order so that the school system may identify which of the parents has physical custody of the child, and then to determine if one of the conditions above exists. The non-custodial parent must request in writing that he/she be permitted to look at or copy his/her child’s student records. However, the school can allow the non-custodial parent to have access to the child’s records only after the school has notified the custodial parent and twenty-one (21) days has elapsed from this notification. During that twenty-one day period, the custodial parent can obtain a court order restricting access to the child’s records or can submit a copy of any outstanding protective orders; if such orders are provided to the school system, then the school cannot release records.

Very truly yours,

Peter Dillon
Superintendent of Schools
RECEIPT OF PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

Each parent, guardian or the student him/herself (if over 18 years old) must sign the acknowledgment form below, indicating that he/she has received and read a copy of the handbook. If the signed acknowledgment form is not received by September 15, then the school district will nonetheless presume that the parent, guardian or student him/herself (if over 18 years of age) has received and read the handbook.

I have received and read the Monument Valley Regional Middle School Handbook for the 2016-2017 school year.

__________________________________________________________________________
Student Name

__________________________________________________________________________   _____________
Parent Signature       Date

Please return to Advisory teacher.