

# McALISTER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL



***Kind  
Respectful  
Responsible  
Safe***

## **FAMILY HANDBOOK**

### **2015-2016**

# McALISTER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

## FAMILY HANDBOOK

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# About the McAlister Intermediate School Family Handbook

This *McAlister Intermediate School Family Handbook* provides information that we hope you will find informative and helpful. It summarizes basic district policies and procedures, and indicates policies and procedures specific to our school. In addition, this handbook clearly relays the McAlister Intermediate School PTO's interest and efforts in supporting your child's school experience. **Because yearly editions of the handbook relay changes in school practice, it is recommended that both new and returning members of our school community familiarize themselves with this guide each year, and place it in a location where it can easily be referenced throughout the school year.**

Our school will function more smoothly if students, staff and parents follow the guidelines contained in this handbook. Our school personnel are dedicated to providing the best possible educational programs for your children. This can only be accomplished by fostering a positive home-school relationship. We stand ready to answer any questions you may have relative to the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, and we welcome your constructive comments as we look forward to working with you and your child during the 2015-16 School Year.



McAlister Intermediate School  
260 Mountain Road  
Suffield, CT 06078  
860-668-3830  
FAX: 860-668-3809  
<http://mis.suffield.org>

# **The Suffield Public Schools Mission & Beliefs Statement**

**The Mission of the Suffield Public Schools is to prepare all students with the knowledge, skills and attributes required for success in a rapidly changing world.**

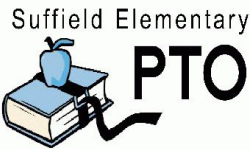
**In pursuit of this Mission, we believe that:**

- **when we address students' diverse academic, social, emotional and physical needs, all will learn;**
- **all students need equitable access to appropriate resources and opportunities to excel;**
- **multiple measures of student learning are required to drive continuous improvement;**
- **students and adults thrive in a safe and secure learning environment characterized by responsibility, fairness, respect, and civility;**
- **highly effective teachers and instructional leaders who engage students in rigorous and challenging experiences are the keys to student success;**
- **an excellent district staff supports success in every classroom, facility and setting;**
- **partnerships, collaboration and communication with families and the community are vital to our mission.**



STAFF DIRECTORY 2015-16			
	Room		Room
<b><u>Principal:</u></b> Ms. Karen Carpenter-Snow <b><u>Assistant Principal:</u></b> Mr. Jack Ferraro <b><u>School Secretaries:</u></b> Mrs. Anet DiLorenzo Mrs. Deborah Stone <b><u>School Nurse:</u></b> Mrs. Michele Fall	Main Office	<b><u>Supervisor of Special Education:</u></b> Mrs. Dianna Kolodziey <b><u>Pupil Services Secretary:</u></b> Mrs. Darlene Harris <b><u>Social Worker</u></b> Mrs. Lori O'Neil	Pupil Services Office (Room 123)
<b><u>PreK-5 Curriculum Leaders:</u></b> Mrs. Sara Baranauskas (Mathematics) Mrs. Kris Pryce (Language Arts)	105A	<b><u>Special Education Teachers:</u></b> Mrs. Amy Craven Mrs. Eilis Lockward Mrs. Carly McKenney/Mrs. Ashley Sheridan Ms. Megan Steidler	211 126 132 211
<b><u>McAlister Curriculum Specialists:</u></b> Mrs. Jessica Marzi (Mathematics) Mrs. Erin Grasso (Reading/Language Arts)	105A	<b><u>Speech and Language Pathologist:</u></b> Ms. Terry Tierney	213
<b><u>Grade 3 Teachers:</u></b> Mrs. Jill Consolini Mrs. Gina Cronin Mrs. Mary Halzack Mrs. Melissa Fortunato Mrs. Amanda Moriarty Mrs. Christine Neskie Ms. Nicole Scalise Mr. Chad Sullivan	219 218 221 216 222 220 223 214	<b><u>School Family Liaison:</u></b> Ms. Kate Powers <b><u>PALS Child Associate/PBIS Interventionist:</u></b> Mrs. Stephanie Parnin	111 110
<b><u>Grade 4 Teachers:</u></b> Ms. Kristin Compton Mr. Bill Fontaine Mr. Michael Kaulins Mrs. Beth King Mrs. Marianne Levinskas Ms. Shannon Lira Ms. Ashley Mitchell Mrs. Alicia Pitocco	203 202 207 206 204 209 205 208	<b><u>Physical Therapist:</u></b> Ms. Gina Doerner <b><u>Occupational Therapist:</u></b> Ms. Mandy Zipoli	210
<b><u>Grade 5 Teachers:</u></b> Mrs. Danielle Bennett Mrs. Kara Forrest/Mrs. Kim Tibbetts Mrs. Maureen Fortin Mrs. Amy Larson Mrs. Kelly Meyer Mrs. Melanie Motter Mr. Joseph Rapuano	124 133 125 129 135 130 128	<b><u>Academic Support:</u></b> Ms. Lisa Carney (Reading) Mrs. Cheryl D'Aquila (Reading) Ms. Keri Fields (Reading) Mrs. Yolanda Gray (Reading) Mrs. Jeannine Grenier (Math) Mrs. Amy Haines (Reading) Mrs. Rachel Little (Reading) Mrs. Kerri Milne (Math) Mrs. Kathleen Swenson (Math) Mrs. Doreen Tapper (Reading)	134 134 134 134 134 134 134 134 134 134
<b><u>Art Teacher:</u></b> Mrs. Sharon Bowe	109	<b><u>Paraprofessionals:</u></b> Mrs. Jean Barnes Mrs. Gail Bass Mrs. Carol Brown Mrs. Judy Case Mrs. Mary Cashman Mrs. Patti Kopec	204 202 202
<b><u>Library Media Specialist:</u></b> Mrs. Karen Pakula	LMC	Mrs. Marcia Monseigneur (Library Media) Mrs. Terry Nejfelt	LMC
<b><u>Music Teacher:</u></b> Mrs. Tanya Engler	108	Mr. Timothy O'Shea (Technology) Mrs. Dottie Surmolian	LMC 216
<b><u>Instrumental Music:</u></b> Mr. Joseph Migliore	Band 121	Mrs. Shirley Zavisza	
<b><u>Physical Education/Health Teachers:</u></b> Mr. Patrick Desrosiers Mrs. Denise Raymond	GYM	<b><u>Duty Clerks:</u></b> Ms. Lorrie Grano Mrs. Kelly Grandfield	Main Office
<b><u>Spanish Teacher:</u></b> Mrs. Patty Nunes	212	<b><u>Head Custodian:</u></b> Mr. Tom Kulas <b><u>Night Custodian:</u></b> Mr. Chris Wood	127

## 2015-16 PTO EXECUTIVE BOARD



### Co-Presidents:

Kendra Wiesel 860-918-6373  
Christine Phillips 860-558-1766

### Treasurer:

Kathie Bond 860-668-7175

### Co-Secretaries:

Manju Sheobaran 860-810-4186

### Co-Vice President – Volunteers

Sandy Carroll 860-550-1754  
Cheryl Sunshine 203-829-1812

### Payables:

Hanna Krol 603-370-9295

### Receivables:

Sarah Sperrazza 860-836-6150

Chairing or volunteering to assist with one of our PTO activities is a great way to get involved and support our schools! Please log onto the McAlister Intermediate School website ([www.mis.suffield.org](http://www.mis.suffield.org)), click on “Parent/Student Resources,” and then click on the PTO link for a volunteer form, or contact Sandy Carroll (860-550-1754) or Cheryl Sunshine (203-829-1812) for more information.

<b><u>School Beautification: Year Round</u></b> Work together to create a welcoming entrance way and enhance gardens.	<b><u>Enrichment: Year Round</u></b> Help plan programs our kids enjoy, such as Wingmasters, Numbers to the Stars, and many more.	<b><u>Grant Writing: Year Round</u></b> Parents work with the Grant Writing Coordinator to assist with grants including the writing and application process.	<b><u>Earning for Learning/ School Incentives: Year Round</u></b> Coordinate, count and sort Box Tops for Education or coordinate school incentive programs such as Target Points, Stop & Shop Points.
<b><u>Square One Art Fundraiser: Fall</u></b> Children create artwork in class and parents are able to order it printed on shirts, plates, etc.	<b><u>Book Fair: Fall/Spring</u></b> Volunteers will check out books, help set up and assist customers.	<b><u>Clothing Drive – Fall/Spring</u></b> Help run a clothing drive at both schools. Clothes are sold by the pound to earn money. Held during Book Fair weeks.	<b><u>Custodian Appreciation: Fall</u></b> Create gift baskets and posters to show our appreciation for our school custodians.
<b><u>Bus Driver Appreciation Breakfast: Fall</u></b> Set up a breakfast to show our appreciation for our bus drivers.	<b><u>Fitness Day: Fall</u></b> Help plan a day of fitness for Suffield parents, including zumba, yoga, and pilates.	<b><u>School Pictures: Fall</u></b> Help organize school picture day, hang posters, send packets home with students.	<b><u>Special Occasion Book: Year Round</u></b> Help collect forms and payments from parents who want to purchase and donate a book for their child.
<b><u>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Parent-Child Book Club: Winter</u></b> Facilitate a book club with grade three students.	<b><u>4<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent-Child Book Club: Winter</u></b> Facilitate a book club with grade four students.	<b><u>5<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent-Child Book Club: Winter</u></b> Facilitate a book club with grade four students.	<b><u>Teacher Appreciation Week: Spring</u></b> Arrange a special breakfast for teachers on National Teacher Appreciation Day.
<b><u>Class Baskets: Spring</u></b> Coordinate Room Parents to organize themed class baskets to be raffled off at Spring Book Fair.	<b><u>Community Service: Spring</u></b> Help students take part in a local charity event or collection. This is often held at the same time as the Spring Book Fair	<b><u>PTO Seasonal Fundraiser: Spring</u></b> Advertise, organize, collect forms, payments and distribute items.	<b><u>5<sup>th</sup> Grade T-Shirts: Spring</u></b> Help grade five students design t-shirts for year-end activities.
<b><u>Grade 3 Traditions: Roller Skating</u></b> Coordinate a roller skating event at a local roller skating location for third grade students.	<b><u>Grade 4 Traditions: Healthtrax</u></b> Coordinate an evening of fun at Healthtrax, Enfield for fourth grade students.	<b><u>Grade 5 Traditions: Nomads</u></b> Coordinate an evening of fun at Nomads, East Windsor, for fifth grade students.	<b><u>Family Game Show Night: Winter/Spring</u></b> Help coordinate a family night out which includes a live game show, prizes and live auction.
<b><u>Variety Show: Spring</u></b> This event takes place every other year (and is currently planned to occur in 2015-16 school year). A wonderful way to let kids show off their talents!	<b><u>Teacher Appreciation Luncheon: Spring</u></b> This team plans and organizes our staff appreciation event at the end of the year.	<b><u>Room Parent Coordinator: Summer</u></b> Assigns room parents to each class summer before start of school. Already complete for 2015 – 2016 school year.	<b><u>Room Parent: Year Round</u></b> Helps coordinate volunteers for classroom teacher projects, field trips, etc. Room parents are assigned during the summer prior to the next school year.

# McAlister Intermediate School Hours

Our school day starts promptly at 8:25 a.m. each morning. We appreciate parents' support in ensuring that students arrive to school on time each day. If you find it necessary to bring your child to school in the morning, we will appreciate it if your child does not arrive before 8:10 a.m. when school personnel are scheduled to begin supervising children. When children arrive late to school, they should report to the main office before proceeding to their classrooms.

Children are dismissed at 3:05 p.m. everyday except during teacher conferences, in-service days or holidays. Please reference the 2015-16 School Calendar for these special dates. On these days, dismissals will be at 1:00 p.m.

**We ask that parents and students be respectful of the fact that the school day begins promptly at 8:25 a.m. and ends at 3:05 p.m. Valuable preparation and closure activities are compromised for students who are tardy for school or leave early.**



## Storm Days

Late openings, cancellations or early closings of school due to inclement weather are communicated in real time through our automated messaging system. Up-to-the-minute emails, text messages and phone calls are sent to all parents as soon as a decision has been made by our superintendent of schools. In addition, this information is posted on our district website, [www.suffield.org](http://www.suffield.org). For those without internet access, local radio stations, WRCH-FM (100.5), WTIC-AM (1080) and FM (96.5) and television stations, WSFB (Channel 3), WVIT (Channel 30) and WWLP(Channel 22) usually will make an announcement between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m., if school is to start late, or not at all. If you do not hear an announcement, we trust your judgment in making a decision to send your child to school. In the event of a late opening, school will be delayed 90 minutes, with a starting time of 9:55 a.m.

If it becomes necessary to close school early, an automated message will be sent as soon as this decision is made. After that, we will contact the radio and television stations as soon as possible. We suggest you check your email or text messages, or tune into one of the above-named stations when a dramatic weather change occurs during the school day. We request that parents do not try to contact the main office or central administration unless this is absolutely necessary, as we must keep our telephone lines free so we have the ability to communicate as needed. If it becomes necessary to close school early, dismissal will be at 1:00 p.m. and all after-school activities, including the Spaulding After-School Program, are canceled. Please discuss with your child a plan of what to do in the event of an unscheduled early release day.

# Student Attendance

Connecticut law requires that the Suffield Public Schools provide you with written notice of your obligations under Connecticut General Statutes 10-184. This law requires each parent or guardian to make sure their children between the ages of five and eighteen attend school regularly during the hours and terms school is in session, unless such parent or other person shows that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction.

According to Connecticut General Statute 10-198a, “each local and regional board of education shall annually report to the state department of education on a school by school basis, the number of children enrolled in grades kindergarten to eight, inclusive, in schools under its jurisdiction, who are habitual truants.” Truancy is defined as four unexcused absences from school in any one month or 10 unexcused absences within a school year. Unexcused absence is operationally defined by each individual school district and has been defined by the Suffield Public Schools as any absence from a regularly scheduled school day for at least one half of the school day, which is not an excused absence as defined below.

Level	Total # of Days Absent	Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to be Considered Excused	Documentation Required within 10 Days
1	1-9	Any reason that the student’s parent or guardian approves.	Parent or guardian note only.
2	10 and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student illness (<i>Note: to be deemed excused, an appropriately licensed medical professional must verify all student illness absences, regardless of the absence’s length</i>).</li> <li>Student’s observance of a religious holiday.</li> <li>Death in the family or other emergency beyond family’s control.</li> <li>Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required).</li> <li>Lack of transportation normally provided by district other than the one the student attends (parental documentation <u>not</u> required).</li> <li>Extraordinary educational opportunities <u>pre-approved</u> by district administrators. (Opportunities must meet certain criteria as defined by the state. Please see school administration for details. Family vacations do <u>not</u> meet this criteria.)</li> </ul>	Parent or guardian note and in some cases, additional documentation (see details of specific reason).

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for success in school. Time lost from class is irretrievable in terms of opportunity for student interaction that results in learning. A student should not be absent without parents consenting. In addition, it is expected parents will allow their children to be absent from school only for health, or other extenuating circumstances.

It is the joint responsibility of school and home to confirm a child’s absence from school. Parents are asked to call the school office (860-668-3830) between 7:30 and 8:25 a.m. to notify us about their child’s absence. When parents have not contacted the school, office personnel will attempt to contact the parents of all children who are absent from school on a given day. In doing so, the school is responsible for verifying whether an absence is “excused,” or “unexcused.”

If your child is out of school for some time, but is able to do school work, we will provide activities to be completed at home. Teachers need some advance notice in order to collect materials, and it is important to realize that these activities can, in no way, duplicate the learning experiences your child would be involved in while in school.



# Arrivals and Dismissals

With student safety always first and foremost in our minds, we call your attention to our morning drop-off procedures. A map of these procedures is provided in the back of this handbook for your reference.

## Bus Drop Off

Our school buses enter school grounds using the east driveway that runs between McAlister and the Bright Horizons building and turn left into the front driveway of our school. Students riding the bus to school are dropped off right in front of school and directed by supervising staff members. Buses exit school grounds using the west McAlister driveway out to Mountain Road.

## Parent Drop Off

Parents dropping their children off in the morning must use the Suffield Middle School driveway and turn right to enter the side parking lot between McAlister and Suffield Middle School. Please do not attempt to enter McAlister Intermediate School grounds using either of our driveways between 8:00 - 8:45 a.m., or between 3:00 - 3:45 p.m., as these are reserved for buses only during these times.

When entering the side parking lot from the Middle School driveway, please proceed to the far right-hand lane of the parking lot and, staying to the right, drive along the perimeter of our parking lot to the back (northwest) corner of the tennis courts (please see map on page 33). A designated drop-off area will be established along the west side of the school building and extending around the corner and parallel and adjacent to the tennis courts. Students should exit their cars from the right-hand (passenger) side only, where they will be greeted by a McAlister staff member. Students should never exit their car until the car is stopped in the designated drop-off area. Students will walk in the crosswalk adjacent to the tennis courts and along the side of the school. Once children are dropped off, all vehicles should continue in a line and, staying to the right, exit back out the Middle School driveway from which they came. Your cooperation in following these procedures and driving with caution in our parking lot is appreciated.

## Dismissal

Children will be dismissed from their classrooms directly onto the buses. Children being picked up by parents, within minutes of the official dismissal time, create a burden in our office and hallways as we orchestrate our school-wide dismissal by calling vans and buses. Therefore, if you are picking up your child at dismissal, we ask that you follow these procedures.

- All children with notes being dismissed to a parent or another adult are called promptly at 3:05 p.m. to the cafeteria.
- Parents picking up their children at dismissal time should use the back cafeteria entrance in back of the school.
- To assist with the organization of our dismissal process, and to help us maintain a secure school environment, we request all parents picking up their children to wait in the back half of the cafeteria.
- Once students have assembled in the cafeteria for pick up, all parents and other designated adults must sign their children out with a McAlister Intermediate School staff member in the cafeteria before children are released. **We will not dismiss a child to an older sibling or other unaccompanied minor.**
- Please exit the building using the back cafeteria door, just as you came in.

## Arrivals and Dismissals (cont.)

All dismissals during the school day will be from the office. For reasons of security, parents must report to the office to sign their children out of school. **Adults must wait in the school office for their child. No child or adult will be permitted to wait in any other area of the school (e.g., the hallway outside the office).** If you plan to take your child out of school during the day, please write a note beforehand so we can plan for his/her special dismissal. Likewise, we request that parents write a note to the teacher anytime a student is to be dismissed any way or anywhere other than home or the usual day care. Please be sure the note includes the teacher's name, your child's first and last name, and the name of the person picking up your child. In the case of an emergency or unexpected happening, we will accept changes in dismissal plans from parents by telephone. However, such telephone requests are discouraged as a matter of course. No child will be dismissed to any person other than the parents unless parents provide permission. Once children arrive at school, they will not be allowed to leave school grounds unless the person with whom they are leaving school has signed the student out from the main office.

## School Grounds Safety

We provide some reminders and clarification relative to safety on our school grounds at school entry and dismissal times. First of all, we are concerned about student safety while buses are dropping off, or picking up children. On many occasions, we find cars entering the school driveway interfering with school vehicles and jeopardizing student safety. On many more occasions, we find cars passing buses on our school grounds despite flashing lights and stop signs. Please note that passing a school bus while lights are flashing and a stop sign is displayed is in violation of state law.



Each day, during the hours of 8:00 to 8:45 a.m. and 3:00 to 3:45 p.m., no vehicles will be allowed to enter or exit our school grounds via the short driveways located immediately at each end of the school. Instead, we ask parents dropping off or picking up students to use the Suffield Middle School entrance that connects to the McAlister Intermediate School parking lot. Your cooperation in this respect will help reduce traffic congestion and unsafe conditions on our school grounds.

Children being dropped off or getting out of cars should do so from the designated drop-off area parallel and adjacent to the tennis courts and along the west side of our school building. When walking to or from school, please use the white crosswalk that runs straight to the side doors and along the west side of the building. Do not walk through the parking lot.

Orange cones are also in place to help one distinguish between the parking lot and the playground area during school hours. Driving cars onto the playground area is prohibited during these times.

If you are coming to pick up your child at dismissal time, you, or your adult designee, must sign your child out with a McAlister staff member. Please refer to the dismissal procedures in the "Arrivals and Dismissals" section of this handbook. We will not dismiss a child to a parent or another adult waiting in the parking lot.

Finally, we suggest that you review these procedures with your child along with other members of your family or other persons who may, on occasion, be responsible for picking up your child at school. We realize that these procedures may create inconvenience on the part of all persons concerned. However, as we feel strongly about these safety issues, we look forward to your cooperation and support.

## Bicycle Rules

Students who ride their bicycles to school must have written permission from a parent or guardian. Bicycles must be walked at all times when on school grounds. Respect the bicycles and property of others. Use of bicycles during the school day is not allowed. Bicycles are never allowed on the playscape.



## No Smoking Policy

McAlister Intermediate School is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is prohibited on school property, outside of school buildings at any school-sponsored activities, and in school vehicles by all persons at all times.

## Custody of Children

For the protection of all concerned, it is imperative that we have updated information **in the form of court orders** related to the custody of children of separated or divorced parents. If the parents of such children do not have joint custody, a copy of the court order designating the parent to whom single custody has been awarded, or restricted visitation has been determined, by a court of law, must be provided to the school principal or assistant principal. In the absence of this information, we can only assume joint custody, and thereby cannot restrict parental release or visitation. The above-mentioned requests are made in order that we can fulfill our responsibility to you to ensure, to the best of our ability, the safety of your children while at school. We appreciate your cooperation and support relative to this issue.

## Student and/or Teacher Contact During the School Day

We work diligently to limit class interruptions to achieve the most effective and efficient instructional time for all students. Your cooperation in refraining from interruptions during class time is greatly appreciated. If you find it necessary to bring something to your child during the school day because he/she forgot an item needed for school, we request that you first sign in at the main office, or simply drop the item off at the main office.

Children are not permitted to make or receive calls except in an emergency as determined by the main office. **We understand that parents may want their children to carry a cellphone to and from school to improve communication and student safety, and we support and endorse this practice. However, current Board of Education policy advises us that during the school day, student cellphones should be stowed and turned off, as these devices can serve as a distraction and can lead to both unwelcomed and unsafe activities.** We will appreciate parents' support in reinforcing this policy with their children.

Also, if you find the need to make contact with a teacher during the school day, we request that you do so by telephone, email or in writing. Because classrooms cannot be unsupervised, and therefore, teachers may not be called to the office to respond to a telephone call when class is in session, the school office will gladly take a message or forward you directly to the teacher's voice mail. When the teacher is available, your call will be returned.



## School Breakfast and Lunch

Both breakfast and lunch are served at McAlister Intermediate School. Any child may purchase breakfast upon their arrival at school. The cost of breakfast is \$2.00, and the menu consists of bagels, yogurt, cereal, pancakes, and many other popular choices.

For the 2015-16 School Year, we have the following lunch and recess waves.

<b><u>GRADE</u></b>	<b><u>LUNCH</u></b>	<b><u>RECESS</u></b>
<b>3</b>	<b>11:00 – 11:25</b>	<b>11:25 – 11:45</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>12:25 – 12:50</b>	<b>12:50 – 1:10</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>11:55 – 12:20</b>	<b>12:20 – 12:40</b>

Children have the option of bringing a bag lunch or purchasing a school lunch, which includes a choice of milk, two side items, and the featured entrée of the day. The cost of school lunch is \$2.65. Children who bring lunch from home may purchase milk and snacks with money from a child's account or by cash/check. Milk is 50 cents. The choice of snacks varies from day to day, and children are limited to purchasing one snack per day. If you do not wish to have your child purchase snacks with money from his/her account, please contact our food services director, Ms. Sharon Strzegowski ([sstrzegowski@suffield.org](mailto:sstrzegowski@suffield.org)).

Balanced breakfast and lunch menus are planned in accordance with specifications established by the federal and state governments. Monthly breakfast and lunch menus can be found on the district website [www.suffield.org](http://www.suffield.org); under the parent/student tab and the drop down of Food Service Program.

### **Student Accounts:**

All students in the Suffield Public Schools have a Food Service Account. This account must stay current with a zero or positive balance.

- All students have been assigned an ID number to access their lunch account which works like a PIN for an ATM machine
- Students will enter their ID number into a PIN pad or scan their school id card at the cash register

Parents are strongly encouraged to setup a FREE account with [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) even if you do not use it to pay for meals so that you can track your child's account purchases and balance.

This account helps you keep track of your children's lunch account, offering several wonderful features, including the ability to:

- Check account balances
- Monitor daily purchases
- Receive email notification of low account balances

To set up an account through the Myschoolbucks.com website, simply log on to the Suffield Public Schools website ([www.suffield.org](http://www.suffield.org)), click on "Food Services," then click on "Myschoolbucks.com." All you need is your child's name, student ID number and school zip code. If you don't know your child's 5-digit ID number please contact our main office. There is **no fee** to set up an account.

## School Breakfast and Lunch (cont.)

### Payment:

#### Prepay to the student's account

Prepayment is easy and convenient. It eliminates having to make sure your child has lunch money every day. There are two ways to prepay:

1. Send a check/cash - Families may prepay using a check made out to "Suffield Food Service" (please be sure to write your child's full name and school on the check). If you send in a check and have multiple students, you may use the same check as long as the students are in the same school. If your students are in different schools, please send in separate checks. If you choose to send cash please, send it in an envelope with the student's full name, student ID number, and room number.
2. Families may also prepay using a credit card at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com). (Please note: a convenience fee of \$1.95 is added each time a deposit is made to the account. This is a bank fee and does not profit Suffield Public Schools or Aramark.) You can distribute the payment among more than one child if you have multiple children in the district without paying an additional fee.

#### Sending payments daily

Checks/Cash are also accepted daily. If a child forgets or loses his/her lunch money, he/she may charge lunch for that day. Payment is expected on the following day. Students may charge lunch, milk and one snack item per day.

#### Charging lunch

When students do not have sufficient money in their account, they will be able to charge their lunch. However, they will only be able to charge their lunch three times. After that, if a child continues to have insufficient funds, they will be served a cheese sandwich on whole wheat bread with milk and two sides (which will still be \$2.65). Our food service director will send home insufficient funds notices on a weekly basis and families will be contacted again when children have a negative balance of \$8.00.

#### Free and Reduced-Priced Meals

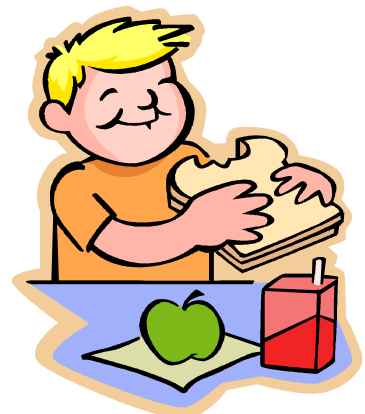
Applications for free and reduced-priced meals are available at each school or online at [www.suffield.org](http://www.suffield.org) under the parent/student tab and the drop down of Food Service Program. Parents must return the completed form to their child's respective school office. Only one form is required per household. Families who qualify for free or reduced-priced lunches also qualify for the same category of breakfast. If the income in your household changes during the school year, please feel free to fill out another application

### Parent Visits at Lunch

Parents are welcomed to share lunch with their child(ren). To help make your visit a positive one, we ask that you please follow these simple guidelines:

- Please be sure to sign in with an office staff member and wear a "Visitor" sticker.
- Allow students to be seated first.
- If purchasing ice cream or a snack, please purchase for your child only.
- If bringing lunch, please bring for your child only. This helps us ensure the safety of students with allergies.
- Please help us promote students' positive lunchroom behavior by modeling "The McAlister Way!"

Questions or suggestions regarding our school lunch program should be directed to our Food Service Director, Ms. Sharon Strzegowski, at [sstrzegowski@suffield.org](mailto:sstrzegowski@suffield.org).



## Snacks

Students may bring a daily snack from home that they will be allowed to eat at the teacher's discretion. We do recommend that snacks be nutritious, i.e., fruit, cheese, popcorn, etc. Furthermore, we kindly request your cooperation in providing simple snacks requiring minimal preparation that students may eat independently and clean up easily. Special snacks for the whole class may be brought to school to celebrate a birthday, holiday, or special occasion. Please consider healthy and nutritious snacks for such occasions as we work to promote students living and maintaining healthy lifestyles. Please notify the teacher in advance if you wish to do this, as there may be special dietary restrictions within the classroom.

## Lost and Found

The first floor hallway across the gym and just outside the main office maintains a collection of lost and found articles to be claimed by students. Students should feel free to check the lost and found in the hallway or inquire in the office about lost items as necessary. Whenever practical, any items brought to school should have a child's name placed on them to ensure return to the rightful owner. Unclaimed items will be displayed during parent-teacher conferences in December and March. Lost and found items that remain after each conference period and at the end of the school year are given to Goodwill, as we do not have the space to maintain these over time. Parents are notified in advance of this, and their prompt response is appreciated.



## Pets and Animals in School



Children should not bring pets and animals to school unless their parent or guardian has spoken with their teacher, and the teacher has secured permission from the school principal or assistant principal. This policy is implemented in light of precautions received by us relative to communicable animal diseases.

## Report Cards and Parent-Teacher Conferences

Report cards are issued three times each year in grades three through five (December, March, and June). Formal parent-teacher conferences coincide with the distribution of report cards in December and March. Students' final report cards are sent home at the end of the school year in June.

We strongly believe in the power of forging productive, working relationships between home and school. We welcome parents' interest and desire in discussing their children's educational growth and development and stand ready to respond to questions whenever they may arise. For these reasons, both parents and teachers may request a conference, by phone or in person, at any time during the school year.



# Technology Tools for Parents

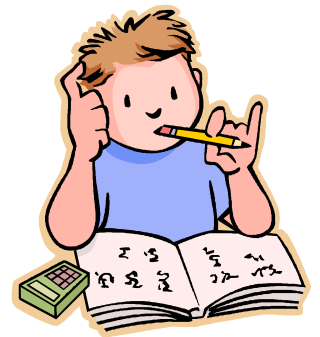
The PowerSchool Parent Portal and the Learning Management System (LMS) Parent Portal are two tools designed to keep you, our parents, informed and engaged in your children's education. The PowerSchool Parent Portal serves to enhance home-school communication, as parents can find timely information relative to their child's performance on homework, projects, quizzes, tests and other assessments, or complete a variety of online forms that provide the school with important information, such as emergency contact information. The Learning Management System (LMS) provides McAlister students and parents access to online links to helpful applications such as typing practice programs, reading resources, and other curricular resources. Both the PowerSchool Parent Portal and the LMS are accessible through the Suffield Public Schools website, [www.suffield.org](http://www.suffield.org), under the "Parents and Students" tab.

## HOMEWORK POLICY

Education is a life-long process, which extends beyond the school. It is important that students recognize that learning occurs in the home and community. Homework is one means of teaching necessary skills of independent study and learning outside the school. A broad definition of homework is considered here to include not only written work but also related activities such as conducting interviews and collecting data, viewing specific television programs, recreational reading and other activities that are related to classroom work.

Homework is assigned to fulfill one or more of the following purposes:

- reinforce skills and concepts taught in class.
- complete work started in class.
- expand and/or enrich regular class work.
- build interest in reading, math and learning.
- make up work missed due to absence.
- encourage parents' awareness of student learning.
- provide an opportunity to pursue special interest or ability areas.
- increase learning time and establish independent study skills.
- develop sound time management.



The manner in which and the degree to which homework is used vary from grade to grade. This is consistent with developmentally appropriate practice. Homework practices at McAlister Intermediate School reflect a natural progression in grades three through five. At the third grade level, content-related, project-oriented, homework activities are used to assist in facilitating students' successful transitions to grades four and five. Homework assigned in grades four and five further emphasizes the mastery of content-related information. In these grades, students are expected to complete a greater amount of independent work. The development of good study habits increases in importance in grades three through five.

Typically, homework should not exceed the following total amounts per day for an average student working at an average speed:

- Grade 3 - 30 minutes daily
- Grade 4 - 45 minutes daily
- Grade 5 - 60 minutes daily

## **Homework Policy (cont.)**

There may be situations when classroom instruction may not warrant homework assignments. The above time allotment is to be considered as a guideline only. Children should be encouraged to read for the suggested time when no specific homework is assigned. This encourages good study habits.

Specific expectations related to homework, and parents' involvement toward the completion of homework, are communicated by teachers to parents during the Annual Open House for parents, and as part of individual assignments as appropriate. The degree to which parental assistance with homework is desirable varies from grade to grade and from assignment to assignment. Parents are encouraged to contact their children's teachers if clarification with regard to homework is needed. In general, however, parents promote positive attitudes toward homework through regular exchanges with children and teachers, and by providing the time and a place for their children to complete homework.

## **Scientific Research Based Interventions, Pupil Services and Student Supports**

Our response to our students' diverse needs reflects both our ongoing belief that all children can learn and our commitment to the growth and development of the whole child. Students' academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs are identified through the knowledgeable and collaborative efforts of a caring school staff and an involved parent community. Driven by individual student needs and situations, a continuum of services, educational programs, resources, and interventions are creatively designed and flexibly provided.

Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) is an approach which provides services and interventions to all students based on academic and/or behavioral needs. The progress that students make at each stage of intervention is monitored closely. Results of this monitoring are used to make decisions about further need for research-based instruction.

The State of Connecticut mandates that all school districts in Connecticut use this process. Three tiers of support (or intervention) are developed to support student learning. Assessments and monitoring of student progress are additional elements of SRBI.

**Tier 1:** All children receive high-quality curriculum and best practice instruction in the general education classroom or program. Eighty percent of students are expected to achieve within the range of grade-level expectations without additional tiers of support.

**Tier 2:** Students may need extra help in addition to the high-quality instruction they receive in Tier 1. Students may receive additional teaching strategies or methods that are proven to be effective in helping children learn. These teaching methods can occur in large or small groups, as well as in or outside the classroom. Ten to fifteen percent of students in a school may need this level of support.

**Tier 3:** When a high level of support is needed, children are given individualized or small group instruction with more frequency. Up to five percent of students in a school may need this level of support.

Our classroom teachers are committed to helping every student learn and achieve the knowledge and skills necessary for academic, behavioral, social and emotional success. They



### **Scientific Research Based Interventions (cont.)**

draw from a wide repertoire of strategies and core interventions implemented both within and beyond their classroom walls. Through the use of a variety of curriculum-based performance assessments, anecdotal notes and standardized measures, teachers regularly monitor students' progress. Using both student performance and a "solution-focused" approach, teachers collaborate with parents and appropriate staff members to identify ways to better meet the individual needs and situations of students, and to foster their timely growth and development. These staff members may include our school psychologist or social worker, reading and math specialists, K-5 curriculum leaders, special education teachers, speech and language pathologists, teacher of English language learners, school nurse, occupational therapist, and school administration. All of us work collaboratively with classroom teachers to help identify teaching modifications, interventions, instructional strategies, and behavior management plans.

Sometimes a student does not make enough progress through the intervention used in SRBI. The teacher knows this from monitoring the student's progress. When progress does not occur, or occurs too slowly, the teacher tries a different strategy. The student's progress is checked again. If the student is still not meeting goals, the teacher may ask other teachers for ideas to solve the problem through grade level team and/or SRBI meetings with appropriate staff.

Revised intervention plans may be developed that will be instructed by other building specialists or support staff. If a student continues to struggle with learning, the child's team will meet with you at a Planning and Placement Team meeting (PPT). Together, we can decide whether additional information, including the possibility of an educational evaluation, is needed and how to best proceed in order to meet the learning needs of your child.

## **Paraprofessional Support**

We are fortunate to have a number of talented and dedicated paraprofessionals within our school who work to support classroom instruction and student learning, and who assist with the supervision of students during lunch and recess periods. The primary responsibility of some of these paraprofessionals is to provide instructional support to identified special education students. Most often this takes place within regular grade level classrooms either on an individual or small group basis. Other paraprofessionals are assigned to specific students identified in need, while still others are assigned to grade level teachers/classrooms. Non-special education students in need of "extra help" with a particular skill or concept on a given day, as determined by the classroom teacher, sometimes receive such assistance from a paraprofessional.

Paraprofessionals provide invaluable assistance in supervising children in our school cafeteria and on the school playground. It is important that children give the same respect and consideration to paraprofessionals as they would to a certified teacher, the assistant principal or principal. We appreciate parental support in reinforcing this with children.

# **NOTICE OF PARENT/STUDENT RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (commonly referred to as "Section 504") is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to nondisabled students.

For the purposes of Section 504, the term "disability" with respect to an individual means: (a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (b) a record of such an impairment; or (c) being regarded as having such an impairment. "Major life activities" include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working. A major life activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including, but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions.

Many students will be eligible for educational services under both Section 504 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), but entitlement to services under the IDEA or other statutes is not required to receive services under Section 504.

The following is a description of the rights and options granted by federal law to students with disabilities under Section 504. The intent of the law is to keep you fully informed concerning decisions about your child and to inform you of your rights if you disagree with any of these decisions. You have the right:

1. To be informed of your rights under Section 504;
2. To have your child take part in and receive benefits from the Suffield Public Schools' education programs without discrimination based on his/her disability.
3. For your child to have equal opportunities to participate in academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities in your school without discrimination based on his/her disability;
4. To be notified with respect to the Section 504 identification, evaluation, and educational placement of your child;
5. To have an evaluation, educational recommendation, and placement decision developed by a team of persons who are knowledgeable of your child, the assessment data, and any placement options;
6. If your child is eligible for services under Section 504, for your child to receive a free appropriate public education. This includes the right to receive reasonable accommodations and services to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities;
7. For your child to be educated with peers who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate;

## **Section 504 (cont.)**

8. To have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided to non-disabled students;
9. To review all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's Section 504 identification, evaluation, and educational placement;
10. To obtain copies of your child's educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records;
11. To request changes in the educational program of your child;
12. To an impartial hearing if you disagree with the school district's decisions regarding your child's Section 504 identification, evaluation or educational placement. The costs for this hearing are borne by the local school district. You and the student have the right to take part in the hearing and to have an attorney represent you at your expense.
13. To file a court action if you are dissatisfied with the impartial hearing officer's decision or to request attorney's fees related to securing your child's rights under Section 504.
14. To file a local grievance with the designated Section 504 Coordinator to resolve complaints of discrimination other than those involving the identification, evaluation or placement of your child.
15. To file a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

The Section 504 Coordinator for this district is:

Assistant Superintendent  
Suffield Public Schools  
350 Mountain Road Telephone: 860-668-3806  
Suffield, CT 06078

For additional assistance regarding your rights under Section 504, you may contact:

Boston Regional Office  
Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
5 Post Office Square, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02109-3921 Telephone: (617) 289-0111

U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
550 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-1100 Telephone: 1-800-421-3481

Connecticut State Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
and Pupil Service  
P.O. Box 2219  
Hartford, CT 06145 Telephone: (860) 807-2030

## Visitors

All visitors to the school should enter through the front doors and report to the main office for assistance. All persons visiting our school are asked to report to the office to receive a visitor's badge. This practice is implemented to monitor access to students, staff and facilities. While we recognize this may cause inconvenience, we appreciate the support of all visitors as we work to ensure the safety of all during the school day.



## Extracurricular Activities

The strength of human resources we possess as a school community is exemplified in the number of diverse, extracurricular activities we offer at McAlister Intermediate School. Designed to enrich the academic curriculum, these activities promote student choice in learning. Recent extracurricular activities facilitated by school staff members, parents or community resources include *Math Olympiads*, which promotes our students' efficient problem solving and critical thinking skills as they engage in complex problem solving activities, and *McAlister Milers*, which promotes students' healthy lifestyles and social skills as they start their mornings exercising with peers, parents and staff members who walk around the perimeter of our back field. We also offer our *Expanding Horizons* after-school enrichment program twice yearly. This program offers weekly classes for a six- to eight-week period. Recent classes included cartooning, Legos, Irish step dancing, cooking and active games. There's bound to be an extracurricular activity offered during the school year that catches your child's fancy.



Activities are scheduled on different days of the week, before, during and after school to encourage students' participation in one or more offering. Some extracurricular activities may only last a few weeks in duration, while others may run for an entire school year. When an extracurricular activity is scheduled, information is sent home to all students in the grade level(s) to which the activity is being offered. Through an assortment of offerings, yearly additions and varied schedules, all children are encouraged to pursue their interests and extend their academic learning.

## Student Insurance

The Suffield Board of Education makes school medical insurance available to all students. An informational packet will be sent home with each student shortly after the first day of school. Purchase of this program is optional.



## Medical Information from Our School Nurse

The school nurse's primary objectives are to service the ill or disabled student and to encourage good health practices. It should be emphasized that an ill child does not do his/her best in school, and should be kept home. Upon return, a note of explanation for the absence is requested.

Prior to school entrance in Connecticut, children are required by state law to have a physical and completion of their primary immunizations. Before students in school may take any medication prescribed or over-the-counter (OTC), a Suffield Schools' *Authorization Form* must be on file in the School Nurse's Office. No prescribed or OTC drug (aspirin, Tylenol, etc.) will be administered by the school nurse or self-administered until this form is on file. This form is available in the Nurse's Office.

This regulation complies with Connecticut Statutes and Suffield Board of Education Policy. Should it be necessary for the student to take medication during school hours, the nurse will dispense such medicine. Medications must be in the appropriate container dispensed by the pharmacist. Be aware that many types of cough drops and lozenges contain medication and fall under this requirement. No student should carry into school any medication whether it is a prescription drug, an over-the-counter medication (Tylenol, Advil, etc.), or an inhaler. State regulations require that an adult bring each type to the school nurse with written permission for administration in school.

In the interest of your child's health and the health of all children, please observe the following guidelines:

- If your child has been running a fever or has been sick during the night or before school, it is advisable to keep him/her home, since they usually do not do well in school and risk infecting other children. If your child has a fever of 100 or above, please keep him/her home for 24 hours after fever has subsided. Although good attendance is desirable, a sick child should never be sent to school.
- If your child has a contagious disease or is likely to be absent for three or more days, please notify the school nurse. The school nurse is required to report all contagious diseases.
- The student absent five consecutive days or more may be requested to see the school nurse upon returning to school.
- A written excuse should be sent to school for any absence. A note from your physician is required for prolonged or frequent absence.
- Any child well enough to come to school is expected to participate in all activities, including recess and physical education, unless a signed physician's note indicates otherwise. A parent may send a note to extend the excuse up to two days after the doctor's excuse ends.

Necessary health practices such as proper rest, diet, personal hygiene and hand washing must be constantly encouraged at home as well as at school. Since we encourage children to be outdoors when it is not actually snowing or raining, it is important for them to be dressed warmly with boots, hats, coats and gloves. Other appropriate clothing, such as sweaters, may be needed on chilly days. Shoes can get wet in early morning physical education classes. Extra footwear might be needed.

## Medical Information (cont.)

Throughout the school year, students are screened for vision, hearing and in grade five, scoliosis. Should any deviations from the accepted norms be discovered, parents will be informed. Grade four students participate in human growth and development sessions, which include a video and a discussion period. Parents receive information about this program and have an opportunity to preview the video prior to the student program.

As part of our state-mandated health curriculum, children in grade five are taught about AIDS and the HIV virus. This program is age-appropriate in both topical content and instructional approach, and as a result, has proven very effective in helping to relieve fears associated with this sensitive topic. The main goal of AIDS instruction at the elementary level is to teach children skills to protect themselves against this life-threatening disease. Parents of students in grade five are provided an advance copy of the syllabus used for instruction and the topics to be covered each year. It is helpful if parents have a discussion about this issue with their children prior to, and after, the class presentations. Through such discussion, parents will be able to check for their children's understanding, open lines of communication, and relay their ongoing support.

Any parent or guardian may request their child's release from the human growth and development program or the AIDS education program by writing to the school administration. Additional information is available upon request in the main office.

Should any questions or concerns arise during the year, feel free to contact our school nurse.

**HEAD LICE (Pediculosis):** The district is committed to maximizing students' academic performance and physical well-being in a healthy and safe environment. The district recognizes that head lice infestations do not pose a health hazard, are not a sign of uncleanliness, and are not responsible for the spread of any disease. Misinformation about head lice causes anxiety for parents/guardians and school staff. The goals of providing a healthy and safe environment of students with head lice are to (1) maximize academic performance; and (2) minimize absences due to unnecessary exclusion from school of students with head lice. The school nurse can be contacted for treatment guidelines.



## Emergency Contacts

Each year you are asked to supply or update the main office with your work and home phone numbers, doctor's name and hospital, and an emergency contact person if you are not at home should your child have a medical emergency. Please be sure to submit this information by going to the district website, [www.suffield.org](http://www.suffield.org), and clicking on "Parent Portal" under the "Parents and Students" tab. For the safety and comfort of your child, be sure to update this information as needed during the course of the school year.

Please keep in mind when you are choosing your emergency contact person that this person must be available to come to school when you cannot. At times, we have found some persons designated as "emergency contacts" unable to pick up children in emergency situations where parents are unavailable. As you consider the people you will list as emergency contacts, please be sure to first check their willingness and ability to pick up your child from school in an emergency situation during the normal main office hours of 8:10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## Class Placements

At the close of each school year, our school staff formulates class groups for the coming school year. The placement process begins with a student's present teacher, who reflects on each student's learning needs, school performance and educational progress. Concurrently, the principal receives the input of other faculty members, such as art, music, physical education, world language, special education, and reading and math academic support teachers, as well as our school psychologist, speech/language pathologists and students' past teachers, relative to the learning needs of individuals and groups of students.

To further enhance the process outlined above, we welcome parent input with regard to what you feel are your child's learning needs, your child's learning style, and the type of learning environment within which you believe he/she can be successful. If you feel that your input is necessary or appropriate, we ask that you share this with us at a time that we will relay in writing to you annually each spring. Any information you provided for your child's previous class placement will not automatically be considered in developing the next year's placement.

In offering your input, we ask that you refrain from requesting specific teachers, and that you rely on the professional expertise and judgment of our school staff to place your child in an educational setting that they feel will most appropriately provide for optimal learning and growth based upon all information to be considered. We are sorry that specific requests for individual teachers cannot be honored, and we thank you for your understanding of this. As we obtain your cooperation and support, we appreciate both your input and your understanding that final decisions must reflect class placements that are beneficial to all students.

Through further consultation between each teacher, the principal and the assistant principal, class groups are finalized so that they are as balanced as possible based upon the following: heterogeneity, social interaction, academic performance, special education needs, gender, and class size. As you can imagine, the entire process is a very complex, thoughtful and deliberate one.



# Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports: "The McAlister Way!"

We are ever mindful of the critical role a healthy and positive school climate plays in promoting student learning. We have a caring and dedicated faculty deeply committed to providing a school environment in which all students feel safe, supported, engaged, and helpfully challenged. Without question, McAlister Intermediate School is a happy, healthy place for our students to live, learn and grow.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a school-wide approach of applying proactive strategies for defining, teaching and supporting appropriate student behavior and character development. The McAlister Intermediate School PBIS Team, consisting of administrators, teachers, and support staff, has established "The McAlister Way" to clearly communicate "what we do at our school" and promote student behavior that is:

- ✓ **Kind**
- ✓ **Respectful**
- ✓ **Responsible**
- ✓ **Safe**






We use this common language when we speak with students about "how we act" and "what we do" at McAlister. "The McAlister Way" is posted throughout our school, in every classroom and in non-classroom settings such as hallways, the cafeteria, restrooms, and our school office, as a constant reminder of how we live and learn at McAlister.

Our entire staff – teachers, paraprofessionals, secretaries, bus drivers, custodians, administrators, kitchen staff – deeply believes all children are good and want to be successful. This core belief guides all adults at McAlister as we remain intentional and focused on recognizing students when they show "The McAlister Way" through their positive behavior. All teachers dedicate time during the first two weeks of school explicitly teaching school-wide lessons on expected behaviors in various school settings. When students demonstrate "The McAlister Way" with behavior that is kind, respectful, responsible, and safe, they are acknowledged and recognized with a "McAlister Way" ticket from an attentive staff member. Students may exchange these tickets for items from our new *Paws 'n' Go* school store. Daily morning announcements further recognize students for making good behavior choices, and school-wide morning meetings and celebrations unite our entire school community in learning about "The McAlister Way" and celebrating the many examples of respect and kindness that happen so frequently at McAlister.



# McAlister Way School-Wide Behavior Expectations

	<u><b>Kind</b></u>	<u><b>Respectful</b></u>	<u><b>Responsible</b></u>	<u><b>Safe</b></u>
 <u><b>Hallway</b></u>	Smile and greet people by name.  Help others in need	Keep hands by your side.  Walk quietly to your destination	Arrive to your destination on time.  Hold the door for the person behind you	Use "walking feet"  Stay to the right
 <u><b>Bus</b></u>	Share your seat.  Use appropriate language.	Listen to the bus driver.  Help younger students and be a role model.	Use a quiet voice.  Take care of your belongings.	Always remain seated.  Keep hands and feet to yourself.
 <u><b>Special Events, Trips, and Programs</b></u>	Say "thank you" and show appreciation.  Use supportive and encouraging words.	Clap appropriately.  Remain quiet and use listening ears.	Be a role model.  Sit appropriately.	Maintain your personal space.  Keep hands and feet to yourself.
 <u><b>Cafeteria</b></u>	Welcome others to your table.  Use appropriate language.	Follow directions.  Speak quietly.  Use good table manners.	Clean up after yourself.  Eat your own lunch.	Keep hands and feet to yourself.  Keep your body in control.
 <u><b>Recess</b></u>	Include others and invite them to play.	Play fairly.  Follow directions.	Use equipment properly.  When the bell rings, line up quickly and quietly.	Follow playground rules.  Keep your body in control.
 <u><b>Bathroom</b></u>	Wait your turn.  Use appropriate language.	Conserve soap, water, and paper towels.  Maintain everyone's privacy.	Use bathroom in a timely manner.  Flush toilet and wash hands.	Keep bathroom tidy.  Keep your body in control.

## Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (cont.)

The concept of “bucket-filling” is another strategy we use to teach students how to show “The McAlister Way.” “Bucket-filling” is an easy-to-understand concept: *Everyone carries an invisible bucket that holds our good thoughts and feelings. When our buckets are full, we feel happy and when our buckets are empty, we feel sad.*

Children quickly understand that they can fill buckets when they do and say things that are kind, considerate, caring, and respectful. They also learn that when they are mean, inconsiderate,

uncaring, or disrespectful, they dip into buckets and remove those good feelings. We all understand that actions and words can either fill a bucket or dip into it.

We also understand children sometimes make mistakes, and these mistakes are an important part of the learning process. When there is a problem or issue, it is usually handled by the classroom teacher. If your child’s behavior is inappropriate to the point where it warrants a visit to an administrator, we will work to have the child understand the reason for the visit and, depending on the child’s age or the issue, a phone call may be warranted. Our wish is to have all children assume greater responsibility for their own actions, which means accepting the consequences of any inappropriate behaviors.

Administrators also consult with the classroom teacher, school psychologist and other staff to determine the most effective course of action. We are aware there is no “one size fits all” model at the elementary level when problems come to our attention, and we make every attempt to individualize our responses and interventions when appropriate. However, there are also circumstances when district and/or legal issues prescribe responses and consequences.

We want students to understand how they choose to behave is up to them and to learn from their mistakes. Conflict resolution, restorative conferences, positive reinforcement, and appropriate consequences are strategies used to help students develop into good citizens.



# Maintaining A Safe Environment

The McAlister Intermediate School Community, in conjunction with the entire Suffield Public Schools, believes that a school environment in which all students feel safe, supported, engaged, and helpfully challenged, is optimal for learning and healthy development. All McAlister staff members, including teachers, non-certified staff and administrators, work together to create a climate in which students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe in an environment that is free of harassment, intimidation and mean-spirited behavior.

Children are explicitly taught they need to feel safe at school. We emphasize there is no such thing as “play fighting” or “joking threats.” Mean behavior, bullying, or unkind words are not tolerated. If a child is made to feel unsafe or uncomfortable, we want them to immediately tell their teacher or another adult.

Parents can be assured that such reports are taken seriously when reported at school or by a parent when the issue is raised at home. We aim to be pro-active, and not re-active. Whenever necessary we will take the appropriate action that will make all areas of our school a place where everyone is respected.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying behavior by any student in the Suffield Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

“Bullying” is defined as (A) the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or (B) a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district, that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property, (ii) places such student in reasonable fear or harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for such student, (iv) infringes on the rights of such student at school, or (v) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- physical violence and attacks
- verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs
- threats and intimidation
- taking or damaging another’s property
- exclusion from peer groups within the school
- “cyberbullying,” or the misuse of electronic text, (e.g., email, text messages) that demonstrates the bullying behavior described above.

Students who engage in any act of bully, while at school, on the school bus or school grounds, at any school function, or in connection to or with any district sponsored activity or event are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials. Bullying outside of the school setting will also be addressed if such bullying 1) creates a hostile school environment for the victim; 2) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or 3) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

## **Maintaining a Safe Environment (cont.)**

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected acts of bullying, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees, such as a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school psychologist, social worker, school nurse, or school paraprofessional. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action will be taken against the perpetrator in accordance with the Board's policies on student discipline.

**Weapons and Dangerous Instruments:** The Suffield Board of Education is concerned for the safety and welfare of all students and school personnel in school and at school-sponsored activities. For this reason, the Board prohibits possession and/or use of weapons or other dangerous instruments in any school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle, or at any school-sponsored activity. Such weapons include, but are not limited to, any pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, air gun or spring gun; slingshot; bludgeon; brass knuckles or artificial knuckles of any kind; knives having a blade of greater than two inches, any knife the blades of which can be opened by a flick of a button or pressure on the handle, or any pocketknife where the blade is carried in a partially opened position; martial arts weapon; destructive device. Consistent with Board policy, students are also not allowed to bring facsimiles (e.g., toy guns, toy knives,...) of these weapons into our school.

The possession or use of any such weapon will require that the proceedings for the suspension and/or expulsion of the student involved will be initiated immediately by the principal. In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes and Board of Education Policy, if the student is found to have possessed a firearm or other dangerous weapon in or on school property or at any school activity as defined in Connecticut Statute 10-233a, he/she must be expelled for one calendar year. The Board of Education or hearing board may modify the period of expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

**Sexual Harassment:** It is the policy of the Suffield Board of Education that any form of sex discrimination or sexual harassment is prohibited. The district wants all students to learn in an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment. This is defined as unwelcome sexual attention from peers, teachers, staff or anyone with whom the victim may interact. Sexual harassment, whether verbal or physical, includes, but is not limited to the following: inappropriate hugging or touching, inappropriate verbal, electronic or written comments about another person's body, drawing and distributing pictures of a sexual nature.

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately to his/her teacher, social worker, guidance counselor, administrator, school nurse or any responsible individual with whom the student feels comfortable, either informally or through the filing of a formal complaint. Sexual harassment is against state and federal laws. Any student or staff member who engages harassing behavior, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

The district will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) when the allegations are not minor and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment by a student or staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent informally to a staff member or in a conference with the principal or designee. If this complaint cannot be resolved at that level the District Title IX Coordinator may be contacted to investigate and resolve the concern.

# Playscape Rules and Procedures

Third grade students will receive instruction from our physical education teachers regarding the rules and use of the playscape at the start of the school year. Third grade students may not use the playscape until all classes have received this instruction. Students in grades four and five will review playscape rules and procedures with their classroom teachers. They may use the playscape beginning the first day of school.

The following general rules apply to the use of our playscape:



**Play safe! Be courteous!**

**Walk. Don't run.**

**Slides are for riding down, not climbing up.**

**Descend all slides and poles one person at a time.**

**Climbing is only allowed on the Space Net, ladders and stairs.**

**Leave wood chips on the ground. They make the ground safe.**



Rules specific to the safe and appropriate use of components of the playscape are listed below. Children should be made aware that failure to abide by these rules would result in "time out" from playing on our playscape. Appropriate footwear should be worn when playing on the playscape. Only properly secured, rubber-sole shoes are allowed in the playscape. Open-toe shoes, clogs, sandals and flip flops should not be worn, as these present a potential risk to students' safety.

## **SPACE NET: (Blue pole with red cables anchored to the ground)**

- 16 students maximum on the Space Net at one time.
- Only three students may climb above the second brown collar.
- Students waiting to climb to the top must count to 40 before asking for a turn.
- Bouncing, jumping or hanging upside down on the cables are not allowed.

## **SINGLE TRACK RIDER: (Green track with black sliding handle; rides parallel to building)**

- Students should go left to right and return to starting point.

## **DOUBLE TRACK RIDER: (Two red pipes with one white hand grip on each pipe; runs perpendicular to the building)**

- Students should begin near school and ride to the rear of playscape; one direction only.

## **MOUNTAIN: (Tan, plastic mountain shape with steps)**

- Climb up only; students should not jump off.

## **SLIDES:**

- Before riding down the slides, make sure that no one is at the bottom. Your feet go first, and you ride down only. Quickly clear away from the landing zone.

## **SWINGS:**

- Swings should be used in a sit-down position only.
- Swing facing the fields.
- Students should face forward when swinging.
- Students should wait on the grass and count to 40 before taking their turn.

# Bus Transportation Rules and Policy

Just prior to the opening of school, bus transportation schedules are published on our school website and printed in the local newspapers. On each bus route, the driver of that route establishes definite pick-up points. Students may be expected to walk a reasonable distance to this point. Parents and guardians are reminded that prior to pick up and upon drop off, it is the parent's responsibility to ensure the child's safety.

We urge parents to please review the following bus guidelines rules with your children:

## **WAITING FOR THE BUS**

On the way to school:

- Be at the bus stop on time.
- Wait on the sidewalk, in a driveway, or any safe area off the road.
- Be considerate of others at the bus stop.

When leaving school:

- Follow the directions of the teacher or paraprofessional in charge.
- Walk from classrooms through the hallways and remain walking outside, using the sidewalks until you reach the bus door.



## **BOARDING THE BUS**

- Wait until the bus comes to a full stop before walking toward the bus to board.
- Board the bus in an orderly manner; single line one behind the other; no pushing or shoving.
- Go directly to a seat and sit down.

## **WHILE ON THE BUS**

- Listen to and follow the driver's instructions at all times.
- Act courteously to the driver and to other students.
- Remain in the same seat and face forward until you reach the school or your home stop.
- In case of an emergency, remain seated and follow the bus driver's directions.
- Keep objects in your possession; do not throw objects in or out of the bus.

## **LEAVING THE BUS AT SCHOOL**

- Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Leave the bus in an orderly manner, row by row, front to back.



## **LEAVING THE BUS WHEN RETURNING HOME**

- Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- Move away from the bus as quickly as possible.
- If you cross the street, do so in front of the bus. Look both ways before crossing.
- Do not leave the bus at any place except your regular stop unless you have a signed note from your parent that has been approved by the school office.

# Bus Discipline

Bus drivers enforce state law and rules adopted by the Suffield Board of Education for the safe transportation of all children. They notify the school principal or assistant principal when a student violates a bus rule that jeopardizes his/her safety and/or that of others. A conference is held between the principal or assistant principal and the student as a result of all referrals made by a bus driver. Subsequently, the bus referral is forwarded to the parent from the school principal or assistant principal with a copy of this referral. The parent should sign and return the bus referral to school. In the case of repeated offenses, the parent is informed by telephone of the possibility and/or ultimate decision to temporarily deny bus privileges.

## Additional Student Rules

In addition to our McAlister Way Behavior Expectations, Board of Education policy on bullying, threatening behavior and harassment, and rules and procedures for safe playground and bus behavior, students should act according to the following:

- The wearing of hats or bandanas inside the school building is not allowed except in the case of special events or activities.
- The chewing of gum is not allowed.
- Students are not allowed to sell or buy any item on school property unless approved by the school administration under the supervision of a teacher.
- Students should not wear t-shirts to school that advertise tobacco or alcohol. T-shirts with otherwise inappropriate messages or content are also not allowed to be worn at school.
- Sneaker skates ("heelies") are not allowed to be worn in school. Slippers, cleats, and tap shoes may only be worn for special events (e.g., "Pajama Day"). In the interest of students' safety, such footwear is not permitted on the bus and should not be worn to school. On special event days, children should carry their slippers, etc. to school and change in the classroom.
- Toys, games, trading cards, "Silly Bands," etc. are not allowed, as these present a distraction to the educational process and we cannot take responsibility for missing items.
- Students are allowed to bring technology devices to school and use them at the discretion of their teacher as tools for learning. Students are not allowed to use their devices to take pictures of others, make phone calls, send text messages, instagram, tweet, etc. during the school day. In certain special circumstances, such as indoor recess, students may use their devices to play appropriate, non-violent electronic games in designated areas of their classrooms. Students must demonstrate **safe** and **responsible** use to maintain these privileges.



### **Additional Student Rules (cont.)**

- In accordance with Board Policy, dangerous weapons are prohibited and all infractions will be handled firmly by school administration with consequences that could result in suspension or possible expulsion. To avoid such consequences, we encourage parents to monitor their children to insure that any weapons kept in the home are not accessible to children. Similarly, we ask parents to monitor movies and television shows their children watch as research shows that many of the popular violence-prone movies and television shows send children a message that violence is the way to solve problems. Talking with children about situations that would make them feel they need protection and counseling children that violence creates more problems rather than solving initial ones is advised.
- Carrying or selling prescription or over-the-counter drugs at school is prohibited. Our school nurse or a certified teacher administers only drugs received through the parent and with the written permission of a physician to students (see pages 19-20).

## **Equal Opportunity**

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources. The District has a designated compliance officer, who coordinates compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

If an there is an issue related to equal opportunity that cannot be resolved through discussion with building level administration, the District Title IX Coordinator may be contacted to investigate and resolve the concern.

## **Technology Responsible Use: Filtering Access to Electronic Networks**

Electronic networks, including the Internet, are a part of the District's instructional program in order to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. The Suffield Public Schools *Responsible Use Policy* aligns with changing technologies and student learning expectations. Please visit our district website at <http://www.suffield.org> to view the *Responsible Use Policy*.



## **Policy on Pesticide Applications**

In accordance with Connecticut Public Act 99-165, "*An Act Concerning Notice of Pesticide Applications at Schools and Day Care Centers*", the Suffield Board of Education and school administration is providing you with this information regarding pesticide applications in our buildings or on school grounds.

- a. The Board is striving to develop an Integrated Pest Management plan (IMP) in accordance with Public Act 99-165 to minimize the amount of pesticides used.
- b. The Board employs certified pesticide applicators for non-emergency use of pesticides.
- c. The Board prohibits the non-emergency use of pesticides during school hours.
- d. The Board will approve the use of a pesticide only after all available options, including no action, have been considered.
- e. You have a right to be notified of each pesticide application, or any modification to the Pesticide Application Policy. Complete a "Pesticide Application Notice Request" (available in the principal's office) and send it to the address noted.
- f. The schools shall maintain a registry of persons requesting prior notification (item e. above) and shall provide for the mailing (or other practical means) of such notice no later than 24 hours prior to application.
- g. The Pesticide Application Policy (#3524.1) is available for review in the Principal's Office at each school, and in the office of the Superintendent of Schools.

Should you have any questions or comments, please contact the Business Manager at (860) 668-3802. We thank you for your interest and cooperation.

## **Asbestos Management**

An Asbestos Management Program has been developed to guarantee that those materials are maintained in a condition that does not pose a health hazard. Anyone wishing to know more about the Asbestos Management Program may see the Asbestos Management Plan that is on file in the Central Administration offices.

## 1st FLOOR

The floor plan is divided into several sections. On the left, a vertical strip of rooms includes 134 Academic Support, 133 Forrest/Tibbets, 130 Motter, 128 Rapuano, and a STAIRS area. To the right of this is another vertical strip with 135 Meyer, 132 McKenney, a Book Room, 129 Larson, Boys, 127 Custodian, and a STAIRS area. The central area features a large GYM (Desrosiers/Raymond) with a PE Office (118) to its right and a STAGE below it. To the right of the stage is a Faculty Room. Further right is a Kitchen (105) and Cafeteria (106). The bottom section includes an Entrance, Main Office, and several smaller offices (111, 112, 113) and storage areas. The far right edge shows additional storage and rooms like 103 Media Center Pakula, 104 Marzi Grasso, Boys, Girls, 108 MUSIC Engler, and 109 ART Bowe.

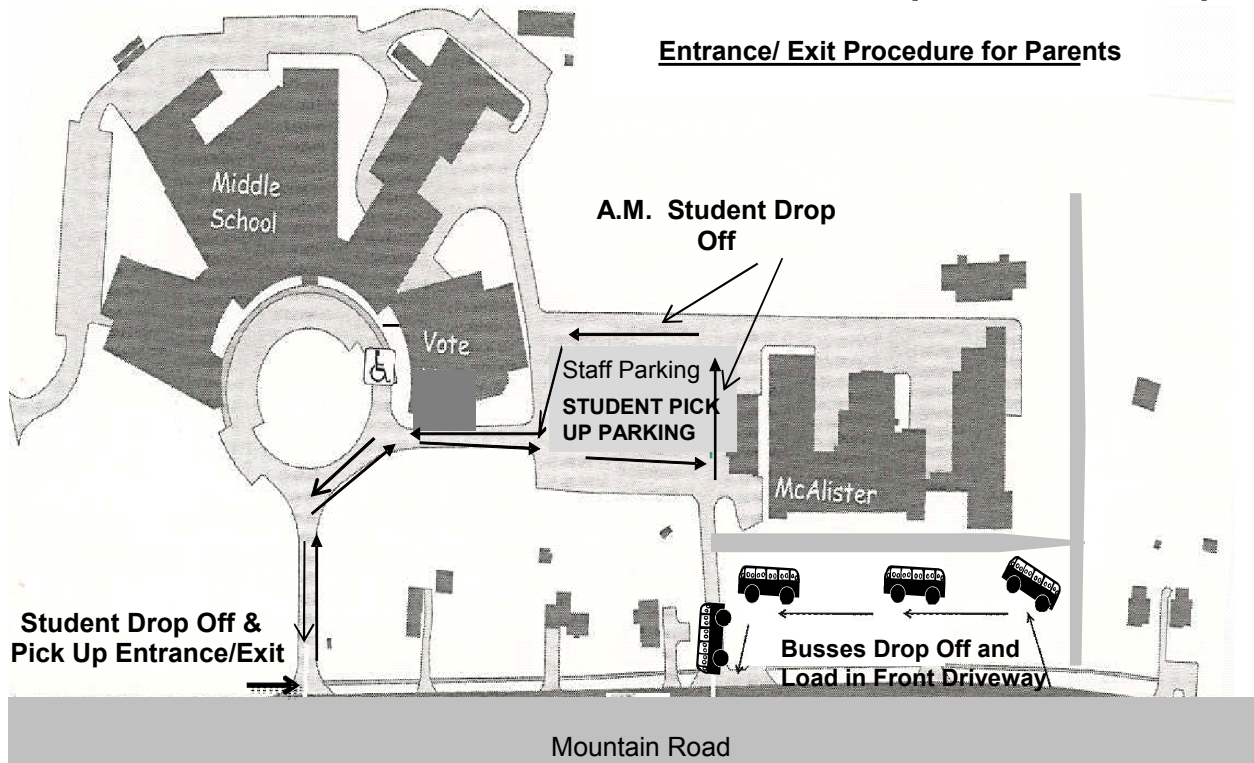
134 Academic Support	135 Meyer	Lav		Foyer	121 BAND Migliore	STAIRS Storage		Storage	Storage			
133 Forrest/ Tibbets	132 McKenney	GYM Desrosiers/Raymond		118: PE Office		105 Kitchen		103 Media Center Pakula				
130 Motter	Book Room									Boiler	106 Cafeteria	104 Marzi Grasso
128 Rapuano	129 Larson											
		122 PTO	STAGE		Faculty Room		Men's/Ladies Restrooms	Elevator	Math & Science Storage	Boys		
	Boys	Girls					O'Neil	Kolodziej	Restroom		109 ART Bowe	
	127 Custodian		123 Pupil Services		111 Powers		110 PALS Parnin Art Storage					
STAIRS								112 Health Office		113 Wagar		
126 Lockward	125 Fortin	124 Bennett		Entrance	Main Office		110 PALS Parnin Art Storage					
								Prin.	A.P.	Conf Room		

McAlister Intermediate School												203 Compton	202 Fontaine
2015-2016												204 Levinskas	Boys
													Girls
2nd FLOOR												206 King	205 Mitchell
													207 Kaulins
222 Moriarty	220 Neskie	219 Consolini	Girls	Boys	215 Copy Rm	213 Tierney	212 Nunes	211 Craven Steidler	Men's/ Ladies' Restrooms	Elevator	208 Pitocco	209 Lira	
STAIRS								STAIRS		STAIRS			

222 Moriarty	220 Neskie	219 Consolini	Girls	Boys	215 Copy Rm		213 Tierney	212 Nunes	211 Craven Steidler
STAIRS									
223 Scalise	221 Halzack	218 Cronin	Book Rm		216 Fortunato		214 Sullivan		210 OT/PT Zippoli Doerner

## MIS Student Drop Off and Pick Up

### Entrance/ Exit Procedure for Parents



**Student Drop Off Procedures**—Use the Middle School driveway to enter the side parking lot, then proceed alongside the perimeter of the parking lot to the student drop off area alongside the tennis court and extending back along the west side of the building. After dropping student off, cars continue and exit through the Middle School driveway.

**Student Pick Up Procedures**—Use the Middle School driveway to enter the side parking lot and park in designated spaces. Enter McAlister using the back cafeteria entrance and wait for students in the cafeteria. After signing students out with staff member, exit the parking area through the Middle School driveway.