

Tisbury School



Parent and Student Handbook 2025-2026

Tisbury School
40 West William Street ~ PO Box 878
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568

Tel.: 508-696-6500
Fax: 508-338-2909

Visit our website:
www.tisbury.mvyps.org

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Telephone Directory

*Please keep this phone list handy. When calling the school, please use the individual teacher's number **FIRST** before calling the main office number. Each teacher has voice mail so you may leave a message. This will be of great help to the office. We appreciate your cooperation.*

Principal's Office696-6500
 Assistant Principal's Office.... 696-6546
 Main Office.....696-6500
 Nurse's Office696-6504
 Cafeteria. 696-6552

Name	Telephone number
Sue Adamo.....	696-6538
Laura Bernard.....	696-6534
Elizabeth Bradley	696-6544
Julie Brand	696-6509
Veronika Buckley	696-6553
Whitney Burke (LIBRARY).....	696-6527
Carolyn Caldwell	696-6536
Kate Cecilio.....	696-6510
Molly Chvatal.....	696-6545
Debbie Conroy	696-6506
Joan Creato	696-6543
Lorena Crespo.....	696-6550
Sean DeBettencourt.....	696-6541
Jen Demirs Gautier	696-6544
Hope Fecitt.....	696-6517
Reuben Fitzgerald	696-6530
Vanessa Forrester.....	696-6563
Meredith Goldthwait.....	696-6519
Mike Haas.....	696-6505
Kathryn Harcourt	696-6527
Kate Harding.....	696-6515
Sarah Knight.....	696-6531
Natalie Krauthamer.....	696-6513
Rebecca Laird.....	696-6547
Jennifer Larkin.....	696-6516
Kari Leal.....	696-6529
Sue Leonard.....	696-6561
Emily Levett	696-6524
Jennifer Lyonnais.....	696-6512
Ian MacFarlane.....	696-6542
Catherine Mafcher.....	696-6523
Melissa Mahoney.....	696-6545

Jin McCarthy.....	696-6537
Moiria Mercier.....	696-6562
Nicole Miranda.....	696-6539
Kevan Nichols	696-6533
Kenny Ponte.....	696-6540
Project Headway.....	696-6508
Jill Riedell.....	696-6507
Jessica Sanseverino.....	696-6535
Scott Schofield.....	696-6528
Danielle Sherman.....	696-6520
Nicole Shirley.....	696-6518
Alison Smith.....	696-6525
Julie Sneed.....	696-6553
Jane Taylor.....	696-6548
Ashley Tarter.....	696-6532
Mike Taus.....	696-6540
Kara Webster.....	696-6514
Laura Weisman.....	696-6539
Aly Wiesner.....	696-6521
Jennifer Wey.....	696-6551
Jessica Winters.....	696-6512

School Directory 2025-2026

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Amy Houghton, Chairperson
Jennifer Cutrer
Alicia Lesnikowski

ADMINISTRATION

Richard Smith
Megan Farrell
Mark Friedman
John Custer
Melissa Ogden

Superintendent
Assistant Superintendent
Business Manager
Principal
Assistant Principal

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT PERSONNEL

Esther Teves
Rachel Hickey
Dulcie Rutherford

CLASSROOM TEACHING STAFF

Jennifer Larkin
Kate Harding

Kindergarten
Kindergarten

Kara Webster
Natalie Krauthamer

Grade 1
Grade 1

Emily Levett
Alison Smith

Grade 2
Grade 2

Danielle Sherman
Nicole Shirley

Grade 3
Grade 3

Hope Fecitt
Meredith Goldthwait

Grade 4
Grade 4

Carolyn Caldwell
Jin McCarthy

Grade 5 Language Arts and Social Studies
Grade 5 Math and Science

Sean DeBettencourt
Ashley Tarter

Grade 6 Language Arts and Social Studies
Grade 6 Math and Science

Reuben Fitzgerald
Scott Schofield
Susan Adamo
Kari Leal

Grade 7, 8 Social Studies
Grade 7, 8 Language Arts
Grade 7, 8 Science
Grade 7, 8 Math
Grade 8 Algebra

Vanessa Forrester

UNIFIED ARTS STAFF

Julie Brand
DebbieConroy
Lorena Crespo
Rebecca Laird
Kevan Nichols
Michael Haas

Art K-8
Educational Technology
K-8 Spanish
Strings Program 1-8
Phys. Ed. K-8
Instrumental Music 4-8

Jessica Sanseverino
Jane Taylor

Vocal Music
K-8 Health K-8

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

Grade K-4 ESPs

Jessica Buckley
Elissa DeCosta
Sashana Wilson
Dwi Grandison
Emma Johnson
Mollee Lewis
Nika Mone
Sarah Hall
Rosemere Murray
Kathy Rogers
Pam Rogers

Grade 5-8 ESPs

MaryJean Connelly
Amy Custer
Heather McCarthy
John Mode
Pam Rogers
Amy Jones
Chinny So

ESP-ELL Laura Weisman

SUPPORT STAFF

Alyson Wiesner
Joan Creato
Catherine Coogan
Jessica Winters
Jennifer Lyonnais
Melissa Mahoney
Molly Chvatal
Barbara Bianco
Shane Schofield
Veronika Buckley
Vanessa Forrester
Sarah Knight

School Counselor K-4
School Counselor 5-8
School Nurse
School Psychologist
Speech Pathologist
Occupational Therapist
Physical Therapist
Inclusion Specialist
Shared Services Coordinator
Support Specialist K-4
Support Specialist Math 5-8
Literacy Specialist 5-8

Mike Taus
Kenny Ponte
Aaron Ashton, Mirtes DeMoura & Val Shaw
Melinda Maveety
Camilia Ramsey
Janet Ponte
Whitney Burke
Sue Leonard
Nicole Miranda
Elizabeth Bradley
Jen Demirs Gautier

Facilities Manager
Head Custodian
Custodians
Cafeteria-Head Cook
Cafeteria - Asst. Head Cook
Cafeteria - Helper
Media Specialist
Network Administrator
ESL Teacher K-2
ESL Teacher 3-5
ESL Teacher 6-8

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF

Catherine Mafcher	Grades K-2SPED Teacher
Julie Sneed	Grades K-2SPED Teacher
Moiria Mercier	Grades 3-4 SPED Teacher
Angus MacFarlane	Grades 3-8 SPED Teacher
Kate Cecilio	Grades 5-6 SPED Teacher
Laura Bernard	Grades 7-8 SPED Teacher
Jill Riedell	K-8 Behavioral Support Teacher

PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROJECT HEADWAY) STAFF

Amanda Pachico	Teacher
Dianne Booth	Educational Support Professional
Luciana Coutinho	Educational Support Professional
Jackie Zeilinger	Educational Support Professional

K-4 COMPASS PROGRAM STAFF

Emily Lima	Teacher
Prudence Fisher	Educational Support Professional
Christina Torres	Educational Support Professional
Jennifer Wey	Clinical Support

Tisbury School Organization

Tisbury School Committee

Members

Sets school policy adopts and oversees the school budget.

Amy Houghton 508-696-3924

Alicia Lesnikowski 508-693-9175

Jennifer Cutrer 774-836-8546

Tisbury School Advisory Council

Writes the school improvement plan and makes recommendations to the Principal for school improvement.

Members

John Custer – Principal

Elizabeth Clark-Derrick - Parent

Caitlyn Lundberg - Parent

Rebecca Nutton - Parent

Sarah Ward - Parent

Wiet Bacheller – Community Member

Mary Gosselin- Community Member

John Guadagno - Community Member

Wiet Bacheller – Community Member

Kate Harding and Catherine Mafcher – K-4 Representatives

Jane Taylor and Kevan Nichols —UA Representative

Kari Leal and Ashley Tarter — 5-8 Representatives

Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Richard Smith sets and supports district wide initiatives and works with the All Island School Committee to set policies and procedures common to all schools. Responsible for day-to-day operations of Superintendent's Office

Principal

Mr. John Custer is responsible for day-to-day operations of the school.

Line of Communication for Parents

1. Staff Member
2. Guidance
3. Administration
4. Superintendent
5. School Committee

Philosophy and Goals

School Philosophy

The Tisbury School recognizes that each student is a unique individual whose development is the responsibility of the staff, the parents, the community as a whole, and the child him/herself. It is our purpose, privilege, and obligation to create an educational environment that maximizes each student's individual talents. We support a school environment that emphasizes respect, tolerance, community service, personal integrity and sensitivity for diversity.

School Improvement Plan

Each year the state requires that the school file a School Improvement Plan with the State Board of Education. This plan is developed through input from the Staff and School Advisory Council. It is approved by both the Council and the School Committee. The plan is available on our website.

School Attendance

State Laws Concerning Attendance

State law requires that all students be in school for 180 days and that each student receives 900 hours of directed study every year (180 days x 5 hours per day). By state law, absences other than for health related issues and religious beliefs may not exceed 7 full days (or 14 half days) within six months. Chronic absences (as stated above) or chronic lateness to school will be documented and parents will be contacted. If tardiness and absences continue, the school will take further steps to correct the absences and tardiness, including, but not limited to, letters home, counseling, contacting the Department of Children and Families, or **filing a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) case.**

Absence Procedures

1. Parents or guardians should provide an explanation in writing, by e-mail or by telephone message for the absence and tardiness of a child. Please call the Main Office (508-696-6500) or email tisattendance@mvyps.org. This will be required in advance of types of absences where advance notice is possible.

If a child is absent, and the school has not received notification concerning the absence from the parents or guardians, an automated voice and email message will be sent out to the parents asking them to contact the school. If parent notification is not received within three (3) days, the child will be considered truant.

The Tisbury School District will notify parents or guardians if a student has at least five (5) days in which he/she has missed two (2) or more periods unexcused in a school year or has missed five (5) or more school days unexcused in a school year.

Principals or designees will make a reasonable effort to meet with parents or guardians of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences to develop an action plan to improve that student's attendance.

2. Absences, Tardies, and Dismissals are excused only for
 - a. Illness, quarantine or medical appointment
 - b. Bereavement or serious illness in immediate family
 - c. Weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child.
 - d. For observance of major religious holidays
 - e. A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the school principal
3. A student who misses school due to illness, an unexcused absence, or suspension may not participate in after school activities.

Truancy

If no explanation is received within three (3) days of an absence, the child will be considered truant.

Extended Absences

Occasionally, a student may have a medical condition that requires an extended absence. Please contact the school nurse and guidance office as soon as possible in this case so that we can determine how best to help your child academically during this time. Hospital Homebound Service may be appropriate and the counselor can help set this up.

Tardy Procedures

Students who arrive at school after 8:15am are late to school. All students who arrive to school after 8:15am should check in at the Main Office before going to their class. As stated in the Absence Procedures on the previous page, tardiness is only excused for specific reasons. However, chronic tardiness for these or other matters may require documentation and may be followed up with further inquiries similar to daily absences.

Early Dismissal Procedures

1. A student who needs to be dismissed before 2:40PM should come to school with a dated note from the parent/guardian explaining the reason for leaving early, the time of the dismissal and who has permission to pick up their child. The student will present this note to the homeroom teacher in the morning before class begins and the teacher will send the note to the main office.
2. The parent/guardian (or the authorized person as indicated on the dismissal note) will come to the main office, sign the early dismissal sheet, and wait for his/her child there.
3. Early dismissals are considered school absences because of guidelines for 900 learning hours for each child. Dismissals are excused for the same reasons as absences and tardies
4. A student who is dismissed early because of illness will not be allowed to participate in any after school activities on that day.

Vacation Dismissal Procedures

Extended or additional vacation days for students are considered unexcused absences. The school will not provide lessons for a child who is absent from school for vacations or family trips. The student may however, be allowed to make up work after school on his/her return.

General Information

Admission to School

A child must be five on or before September 1 to enroll in Kindergarten in that year. A child who is 6 years old as of September 1 is eligible to enter grade one in that year. Parents enrolling their children in school must present proof of residency, proof of current immunizations, a birth certificate and a withdrawal form from the previous school if transferring. The following forms can be used for proof of residency: copy of lease, rental contract or current utility bills.

Change of Address/ Contact Information

If you change your mailing address, street address, email or phone numbers, please notify the school as soon as possible by calling the main office at 696-6501 or you may email Esther Teves at eteves@mvyps.org

Dress Code

Staff and student attire must be appropriate for school.

If a student's appearance or dress interferes with the educational process, the student may be provided with clothing more appropriate or a parent/guardian may be called to provide a change of clothing.

Please help us by complying with the following standards:

- 1) All shoes should be practical in regard to safety of all students at school.
- 2) No short shorts, short skirts or spaghetti straps for girls in Grades 5-8.
- 3) No inappropriate messages or logos on T-shirts and sweatshirts (i.e. drug, sex or violent messages, etc.)
- 4) No clothing which exposes midriffs or underwear.
- 5) No defacing of self.

Driving & Parking Information

There is a separate bus driveway in the back of the school. Parents who drive their children to school should use the front drive for drop off and pick up only. For student safety, do not leave your car unattended in the front circular drive. In cases of fire the fire trucks would use this area. There is designated visitor parking at the end of the circular drive. More parking is available in the lower parking lot on Spring Street. (Please see the map on the front inside cover for more details.)

Emergency Dismissals, Cancellations, Delays

On days when there is no school, delayed opening, or early dismissal because of weather conditions or some other emergency, an automated email, voice mail and/or text message will be sent to parents and guardians. Also, announcements will be made on local television stations. Parents should make sure the school has emergency contacts for their child in case the parents are not at home or cannot be reached.

Counseling Program

The guidance program includes: individual and group counseling, screening evaluations, classroom guidance lessons, parent conferences and administrative tasks in student evaluation, including observations and assessments. In addition, counselors collaborate with outside agencies and social services regarding school, home, and/or community concerns.

Graduation Requirements

The eighth graders must have met the academic, community service and behavioral standards established by the faculty and administration to receive a diploma and/or participate in the formal graduation ceremony.

Homework

Tisbury School's literacy goal for our students is to ensure that they become effective communicators through a consistent, systematic, research-based teaching approach to reading, writing, speaking, and spelling. Students are expected to meet grade level and state benchmarks as a result of the partnership with school personnel and parents.

The Tisbury School staff asks that academics become a priority at home to help foster a love of learning in our children that will ultimately promote life-long learning. Homework is an integral part of every child's education. Family support is crucial for student success as students are accountable for all homework assigned. Parents can check their child's assignment books to be sure that homework is up to date. Homework may be accessed on the Internet: www.tisbury.mvyps.org and click on "homework".

Honor Roll

Students in grades 7-8 may qualify at the end of each trimester for the Tisbury School Honor Roll. To receive High Honors, a student must receive ALL A's in his or her academic subjects. To receive honors, a student must receive All A's and B's in his or her academic subjects. If a student has not completed work within two weeks after the trimester ends, he or she will not be eligible for the honor roll. Any grade change must occur within two weeks after the report card goes home in order to be considered for honor roll.

Morning Line-Up Procedures

Kindergarten-4th grade students enter the building from the west playground. 5th – 8th grade students enter from the east playground. **All students who are dropped off by car after 8:15am** should use the front door and sign in at the Main Office before going to their class.

Residency

Tisbury School is a school of choice. If a student from another town wishes to attend the Tisbury School the legal guardian must write a letter to the principal requesting that their child be allowed to attend. The principal will make a final determination on school choice applications.

School Hours

School begins at 8:15. Supervision is provided outside between 8:00 a.m. and 8:10 a.m. All students should be in their homerooms by 8:15 a.m. for announcements. **School is dismissed at 2:40 p.m.** Parents are responsible for their children prior to 8:00 a.m. when supervision becomes available. Afternoon school coverage is provided until 2:50 p.m.

School Property

Students are responsible for books or equipment that is assigned to them and must pay for any book or equipment damaged or lost. The student's final report card or diploma may be held until such debts are cleared.

Smoke Free School

Smoking is not allowed on the school grounds and buildings at any time by anyone.

Telephones

School telephones are for school business. In case of an emergency, a staff member will give the student permission to use the phone. Parents, please make after school arrangements before your children come to school in the morning. Use the phone number for your child's homeroom teacher listed in this handbook if you need to leave a voicemail message. Should you need to contact your child during school hours, please call the main office. Please, do not place calls or texts to your child's cell phone.

Valuables

We caution students against bringing valuables and large amounts of money to school. If such items are brought they should be kept on the person. Do not leave money, watches, etc. in desks. Students in grades 5-8 have lockers for regular use and gym use, but no locks are placed on lockers.

Videotaping/ Photographing of Students

During the school year students may be involved in school activities that are videotaped or photographed for sharing with newspapers or television. If you desire that your student not be videotaped or photographed, please send a letter to the front office saying that you do not want your child's picture used in videotaping or photographs.

Visitors

For student safety, visitors must check in through the front office and receive a visitor's badge. If you would like to visit in a classroom, please arrange a time with the teacher. If custodial parent(s) would like someone other than themselves to visit their child during school, prior notification needs to be given no later than the morning of the visit.

Visiting children are not allowed to attend classes at the Tisbury School without prior approval from the principal. These visits are generally kept to short amounts of time during lunch or an assembly so they will not interrupt the academic day.

Reminder: For everyone's safety and security, visitors are not allowed to use the playground during school hours.

Work Certificate

Students who attain the age of fourteen and who get a job may get a work certificate from the Superintendent's Office. There is no charge for this service. The student must have a prospective employer.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE REMINDER

If your child is.....

ABSENT: Telephone the main office on the morning of the absence and explain the reason for absence.

TARDY: Send a note in with your child explaining tardy.

DISMISSED EARLY: Send a note to school with early dismissal time and explanation.

Please remember a child may be excused temporarily from school for the following reasons: Health issues, bereavement, observance of major religious holidays or for other exceptional reasons with approval of the school principal.

Communication

Newsletter

A school newsletter, "Tiger Tales", is published every month. "Tiger Tales" is posted on the Tisbury School's website: www.tisbury@mvyps.org. The newsletter is emailed to all parents. Any parent that doesn't have access to a computer may get a copy of the newsletter in the Main Office.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

At parent conferences in the fall and spring, parents are invited to discuss strengths and goals for their child's academic performance and behavior. Please plan to attend parent conferences and meet with your child's teacher. Parents will receive instructions to book their conferences.

Parent Teacher Organization and School Advisory Council

The PTO and the SAC are both avenues for communication between parents and staff and community. PTO usually meets once each month and is open to all parents. SAC is held the last week of the month. Your SAC representatives will be happy to bring your input on school wide matters to the SAC meeting. The SAC helps to develop the annual budget and the school improvement plan. Letters and other information can be delivered to the SAC or PTO mailboxes at the school. Visitors are welcome to attend SAC and PTO meetings.

Telephones

All teachers are provided with a phone and voice mail in their rooms. Please keep in close communication with your child's teachers and set up meetings as needed throughout the school year. In addition, e-mail is available to all teachers and can be helpful in keeping the teacher informed of parent questions. Also, if a student is absent, please phone or e-mail: tisattendance@mvyps.org the Main Office as to why the student isn't at school.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Parents: Please inform the nurse and the office if contact information has changed. Up-to-date information is needed in case a parent needs to be reached in an emergency.

Health/Medical Information

We have a full time registered nurse at school. Please inform the school nurse of any health problems that might directly affect your child's school performance. In order to maintain up-to-date health records for each student, health information such as immunization boosters received and annual physicals should be relayed to the school nurse.

Any student who is ill should report to the nurse's office. If it is considered necessary for the student to be dismissed, school personnel will contact parents. Students are not to telephone home or leave school without the consent of the school and the parent. This card lists people to contact if parents cannot be reached in cases of illness or emergency.

Emergency

An emergency information is filled out annually through the parent portal in PowerSchool. This card lists people to contact if parents cannot be reached in cases of illness or emergency, and provides important medical information and permissions for the school nurse. It is imperative that you complete this information each year.

Illness

Please refer to the nurses webpages on the TISBURY school website for the most up-to-date information on illness and returning to school. You can also contact the school nurse at ccoogan@mvyps.org.

Health Screenings

Students will receive the following screenings during the specified years:

Vision screenings: Each year in grades K-5 and one time between grades 6-8.

*Parents and teachers will be informed of results not in the normal range.

Hearing screenings: Each year in grades K-5 and one time between grades 6-8.

*Parents and teachers will be informed of results not in the normal range.

Heights and weights will be done and Body Mass Index (BMI) will be calculated in grades 1, 4, and 7. This information will be submitted to the MA Department of Public Health. Letters will no longer be sent home.

If you do not want your child to take part in the BMI screening, a letter must be submitted to the school nurse.

Postural Screenings to detect any abnormal curvatures of the spine:

Each year in grades 5-8.

Parents will be notified of abnormal findings. If you do not want your child to take part in the Postural screening, a letter must be submitted to the school nurse.

SBIRT screenings: In 7th grade, students will go through a confidential Interview called the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and referral to Treatment) with either the school nurse or guidance counselor. The SBIRT interview provides a quick and simple method of identifying students who may use substances at at-risk levels, as well as those who are already experiencing substance use-related issues. A letter is sent annually to parents letting them know when this will take place, and parents may opt out of this screening by writing a letter to the school nurse.

Doctors' Physicals A physician's physical examination is required for students entering kindergarten and for students who transfer from another school system, unless the school records indicate that the student has had a physical examination in the school year of transfer. **All student physicals must be updated every 3-4 years or annually if they are playing interscholastic sports.**

Sports

All students in grade 6-8 who plan to play after-school intramural or interscholastic sports must submit the following to the school nurse:

1. A copy of a doctor's physical exam. Physicals expire after 13 months and the school nurse must have a copy on file before the start of the sport season.
2. Permission to play sports is listed on all emergency forms annually.
3. A Pre-Participation form to report a student's concussion history must be submitted EVERY year before EACH sport season. By signing this form, parents acknowledge their understanding of the Massachusetts Concussion Law.

Medications

If at all possible, medications should be taken at times other than school hours. If it becomes necessary for your child to take prescription medication during the school day, the medication must be brought to the school nurse by the parent and a permission slip filled out. A medication order, completed by the prescribing physician is also required for medications to be taken for more than 10 days.

All medicines must be in the original container and be clearly labeled with the child's name, date of the prescription, name of the medication, dosage, and times to be administered. During school hours, including on the school bus and on the playground, students should not carry any medication, including Tylenol and other over-the-counter medicines on his or her person. Exceptions to this rule include: inhalers, Epi-pens, enzymes, and diabetic medication.

Physical Education

The school nurse may excuse a student from PE for medical reasons. Any injury or illness which requires a student to be excused from PE, requires a letter to the nurse from the child's physician with the dates your child is to be excused and the date he or she may return to PE classes. Students with a cast / splint will not be permitted to take part in PE or recess for the child's own safety & for the safety of others.

Elevator Use

The elevator is to be used by students only with permission from a staff member. In the event of an injury which requires a student to use crutches or otherwise limits his/her ambulation the nurse asks that the parent and student report to her on the morning of the student's arrival in school. The nurse will evaluate the injury and give instructions for the proper and safe use of the elevator.

Accidents
Insurance

Any accident that occurs in the school building, on the school grounds, or on the way to or from school must be reported to the Main Office. Any accident during school time, which requires medical attention, will be covered by school insurance after your primary insurance is accessed.

In the event of an accident, an insurance form is available from the school nurse who will give you instructions in filing the claim. It will be the responsibility of the parent to complete the form and mail it within 90 days of the injury. Bills should not be sent to the Tisbury School.

ILLNESS

Parents are reminded that children should be kept home from school when they have fevers, vomiting, and/or diarrhea the night before or the morning of a school day. Children should stay home for 24 hours after last vomiting or until fever-free without medication for 24 hours. This will help prevent the spread of illness among students and staff.

The Manter Fund is available to help children in need. Please send a letter to the principal. All requests are confidential.

For information about health insurance, including MassHealth, please call Vineyard Health Care Access Program 508-693-0020.

ABSENCES

Please call the main office to report the reason for your child's absences. If your child is sick, please specify symptoms for the nurse including degree of temperature.

School Nutrition Program

Breakfast and Lunch Program

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM BY EATING WITH US; CHECK THE MONTHLY MENU FOR YOUR FAVORITE MEALS.

Our lunch program provides students with nutritionally balanced meals and a variety of menu options. The cost of breakfast and lunch is free and both include milk. Milk purchased separately is not covered under the free meal program. Monthly menus are available for students to take home and are on the school website. All students report to the cafeteria, and students who bring their lunch may have milk. Milk purchased separately costs \$.50

The following rules are observed in the cafeteria:

1. Students wait in line in a quiet and orderly fashion
2. Talking at the tables must be done in a quiet manner
3. Any disruptive behavior can result in loss of lunchroom privilege.

Parents who prefer that their children not eat lunch should discuss this with the school nurse. Snacks sent to school should be healthy and nutritious. We recommend snacks such as fresh fruit and vegetables, cheese, water, etc.

*The Manter Fund is available to help children in need.
Please send a letter to the principal. All requests are confidential.*

We are excited to update you with the news that Massachusetts students will receive FREE school meals in School Year 2025-2026 and in all future years! Last year, Massachusetts became the 8th state to make Free School Meals for All permanent which means that breakfast and lunch will continue to be served at no cost to all students for years to come. Since your child attends a school that participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), you are not required to complete the Household Application for Free and Reduced Price Meals.

If you are interested, please consider applying for SNAP, the federal nutrition program that provides eligible residents with monthly financial assistance to purchase groceries. More SNAP information can be found at gettingsnap.org or by calling Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline at 1-800-645-8333.

Our school also participates in the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables program, Department of Defense Fresh program and collaborate with Island Grown Schools to provide healthy snacks, fresh fruits and vegetables and locally sourced products to our students.

It is our privilege to provide breakfast, lunch and snacks to your children, supporting them with nourishing and healthy meals to power through the school day. Please reach out with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Melinda Maveety
Tisbury School Cafeteria
mmaveety@mvyps.org

Student Behavior

In order to create a positive, productive atmosphere at the Tisbury School, we expect our students to behave with respect and courtesy for *themselves, others, school property, and the learning environment* through their words, actions and attire.

Each school committee shall ensure that policies and procedures are in place that meet the requirements of Mass. General Law, Sections 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾, as well as 603 CMR 53.00.

If a student does not comply with these expectations:

- a. In cases of serious or persistent misbehavior, staff will contact parents and schedule a conference.
- b. Students may be suspended from school for a designated period and a parent conference may be required prior to re-admittance. Immediate suspendable offenses include but are not limited to: insubordination or defiance of staff, swearing, leaving school grounds, assaulting another student, smoking, threatening or harassment, and possession of alcoholic beverages, drugs, tobacco products and/or weapons on school property.
- c. Students may also be referred to the Principal or **Assistant** Principal for serious misbehavior, where appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- d. Expulsion can occur for possession of weapons*, drugs, or alcohol.

*The legal definition of a weapon is any instrument capable of creating or causing harm to or fear in another person.

Detention

A consequence for misbehavior for students in grades 5-8, detention runs from 2:45 until 3:30. Bus students will be given twenty-four hour notice unless other arrangements are made with the parents to provide transportation home. Detention is assigned for disciplinary reasons. Failure to attend detention may lead to further disciplinary action.

Student Guidelines

1. Respect the rights of others.
2. Prejudicial remarks or behavior will be addressed with all due haste.
3. Be courteous to other students and adults.
4. Take care of school property. Students will be responsible for any damage to or loss of school materials for which they are responsible (i.e. books, equipment, etc.).
5. Respect the property of others.
6. Walk and talk quietly in the building. Please be safe and respectful.
7. Use good manners in the cafeteria and clean up after oneself.
8. Outdoor clothing and hats are not to be worn in the building during school hours.
9. Gum chewing is not allowed anywhere on school grounds.
10. Throwing snowballs, or other objects, is strictly forbidden.
11. IPOD, cellular phones etc. are not to be used in school. Electronic devices, including cell phones, must be turned off during the school day.
12. Courtesy at assemblies and on field trips is expected.

We are proud of our school's positive reputation for exemplary student behavior, as we maintain high expectations for respecting others.

Special Education Corrective Action Plan

The school's Code of Conduct includes required procedural safeguards such as opportunity for a hearing (per Goss V. Lopez).

After a student with special needs has been suspended for up to 10 days in any school year, during any subsequent removal, the public school provides sufficient services for the student to continue to receive a free and appropriate public education.

The school provides additional procedural safeguards for students with disabilities prior to any suspension beyond 10 consecutive days or more than 10 cumulative days (if there is a pattern of suspension) in any school year.

Bullying and Intimidation

The administration, counselors, and staff of the Tisbury School recognize how important it is that children act appropriately with each other. In that light, we have outlined specific responses to negative social behaviors such as bullying and intimidation. Please talk with your child about this so that they understand our seriousness in addressing bullying and intimidation. Please read more on page 25.

Academic Alert List

The Academic Alert List is updated and distributed weekly. Students in grades 5-8 may be placed on this list by their teachers for not completing homework and/or failing grades. Students on Academic Alert may not participate in extracurricular school activities (sports, assemblies, social events, etc.) Only after the teacher has informed a student that he/she is no longer on Academic Alert may he/she resume participation. Students are notified in writing if they are on Academic Alert and in which class(es). It then becomes the students' responsibility to meet with teachers and complete missing assignments.

Safety Issues

Safety Drills

Safety drills are conducted on occasion during the year. Classroom teachers will inform students as to the procedure for each drill. Evacuation Maps and “Safe Spots” are posted in each room in the building.

Safety of Children

Learning in a safe environment is of utmost importance to the staff at Tisbury. Please help us by letting our head custodian or the Main Office know if you see anything that might be unsafe on the playgrounds or in the building.

At arrival and dismissal, please cross only with the guards. IF YOU DRIVE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL, use the front circle to drop your child off. Important: When you pull into the front circle, drive as far forward as possible to allow all the cars in the street to get into the drive. Traffic is ONE LANE and ONE WAY. The rear bus lane is not to be used for drop offs from 8:00-8:15a.m.

We strongly suggest that children be seated in the back passenger seats, wear seat belts, and exit the car on the right hand side.

Bicycles

It is strongly suggested that bicycles brought to school be locked. For safety reasons, bicycles are not to be ridden on the school grounds. Bicycle helmets are mandatory by law for children under sixteen.

Bus Safety

It is a privilege to ride the school bus. If you are well behaved and courteous, this privilege will not be taken away from you. If, however, you endanger the health and safety of other pupils, or if you do not obey the bus driver, you may be suspended from riding the bus. If parents have a concern about the bus, they may call the principal to ask for help. The bus driver shall be considered to have authority as a teacher in the classroom. These rules of behavior are for your safety.

1. Only those students assigned to a bus may ride it. Any exceptions require a note from home and approval of the principal.
2. Pupils who must cross the street at a bus stop shall not do so until they receive a signal from the bus driver. When crossing a street is necessary, it shall always be done in front of the bus, far enough ahead of the bus, so that the driver may adequately observe them. The driver shall hold his bus with warning lights flashing until the crossing has been completed.
3. Pupils shall be picked up and unloaded only at regularly scheduled stops.
4. Remain well back from the roadway while waiting for the bus.
5. Pupils must keep their hands, and heads inside the bus.

Bus Rules

1. Follow the instructions of the bus driver.
2. Remain seated until the destination is reached.
3. Maintain quiet voices and keep your hands to yourself.

Loss of Bus Privileges

1. Students reported by the bus driver for infractions will be given a warning or possible bus suspension.
2. Further reports by the bus driver may lead to suspension of the privilege of riding the bus.
3. In all cases of warnings or removal, parents will be notified.

Playground Rules and Regulations

Purpose

The purpose of recess is to provide students with time for physical activity and fresh air in order to help them improve physical skills, have a pleasant time in positive interaction with their peers, aid in socialization, and, in short, have a good time at no one else's expense. Inappropriate behavior may lead to temporary loss of recess privileges.

Behavior

Treat others with respect, as you would wish to be treated.

- a. Follow directions from recess staff the first time they are given.
- b. Safety rules apply at all times – before, during and after school
- c. Be responsible for your litter. Throw trash in the trash cans provided

Use equipment for the purpose it was intended

- a. No roller-blading or skateboards.
- b. Hard balls are not allowed. (No baseballs or lacrosse balls.)
- c. Only one person on a swing at a time. Do not twist the swings, climb the poles, or jump off while swing is in the air.
- d. Use the ladder to go up the slides. Sit feet first, on your bottom, to slide down.
- e. Play tag on the grass, not on the equipment.
- f. No climbing or hanging on the trees.
- g. Do not climb on the roof of the playhouse, the backstop or on fencing.
- h. Eat snacks on the grass or at the picnic table, not on the equipment

Playground Activity

The school is not responsible for activity on the playground before 8:00 a.m. or after 2:50 p.m. For safety and security reasons, visitors are not permitted to use the playground during the school day between 8:00 and 2:50. It is reserved solely for physical education and recess classes.

After School Rules for Students

1. When leaving school, please walk (no running or pushing).
2. Use crosswalks. Do not walk between parked cars.
3. Bicycles are to be walked on school property.
4. Skateboards, roller blades, and roller skates are not permitted on the school grounds.
5. Unless students are enrolled in the Homework Club, the After-School Program, or are participating in sports or music activities, there is no after school supervision and parents are responsible for their children.

6. Unless students are enrolled in the Homework Club, the After-School Program, or are participating in sports or music activities, there is no after school supervision and parents are responsible for their children.
7. If students return to the playground after school, they should be supervised by a family member. Accidents can occur and there is no nurse on site.

Parents: Please note our rules for cars. These are written for the safety of all of our students.

Areas Off Limits

Please enter and exit the campus using the paved walks and side walks.

Crossing Guards

Adult crossing guards will be stationed at the Edgartown Road/State Road crossing, the Oak Hill/State Road crossing, by the Cemetery, in front of the school and by the Superintendent's Office from 7:50-8:10am and from 2:40-3:00pm. We advise all parents of younger children, particularly those in kindergarten or grade one to have these children accompanied to school. In all cases, please advise your children to use good judgment in getting to and from school and to obey all crossing guards. Use crosswalks and sidewalks only.

Reminders

1. Supervision begins at 8:00am. Please have your child arrive after that time.
2. Students must be in homeroom by 8:15am if they are to be counted on time.
3. School wide announcements are usually sent home on Fridays. Please check book bags on that day!
4. Use sidewalks on school grounds and cross only at crosswalks when coming to school.
5. Leave toys, electronic devices, and any such personal items at home. The school cannot be responsible for them.
6. Play on the school playgrounds is supervised by school personnel until 2:50 each day.
7. Make sure your child understands how they will get home each afternoon.
8. Check to be sure your child brings home caps, sweaters, and coats.

Assessment and Testing

Reporting Procedures

In grades K-4, report cards are issued twice a year, in February and June. In grades 5-8, three times a year, report cards are sent home to parents. At each mid-term, 5-8 teachers send home progress reports to parents. These may be positive reports or reports of work needed. Special education students will receive "Progress Reports" on specialized forms in January and June, which correspond to a student's individual educational plan.

Assessment Information

Tisbury students are assessed in a variety of ways, including informal reading inventories, teacher-made and standardized tests, student presentations and performances. Rubrics and grades are widely used. We rely on multiple assessments to determine a student's final progress in a program of study. Tisbury School students also participate in the statewide Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System.

Student Enrichment Programs & Activities

Students at the Tisbury School have a rich variety of programs for which we thank the community for supporting. We offer solid academic programs in reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies. Unified Arts programs include Spanish, Computers, Art, Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, Library, Physical Education, Health/Human Development, and Engineering Technology.

Sports

Student participation in extra-curricular activities is actively encouraged for all students regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. We ensure all students have the opportunity to participate in sports according to their gender identity. At Tisbury School we believe that competition is inherent in sports. Our students have fun and grow in their social interactions, improved athletic skills and experiences. We do not limit a student's opportunity to participate in sports based on ability. However, coaches will exercise their discretion concerning actual game participation.

Tisbury School 6th – 8th students participate in track and field, basketball, and volleyball. We also have students who participate in the all-island junior high football team. Practices, meets, or games are usually held immediately after school. Students who fail to meet reasonable expectations in their school performance and behavior will be deemed ineligible to participate. Students are encouraged to become involved in such activities but are responsible for providing their own transportation home.

Field Trips

Field trips are an integral part of the Tisbury School program. In some instances the students fundraise to pay for their trips. Among our traditional trips are the 7th grade ski trip and the 8th grade Washington, DC trip.

All off-island trips require a signed permission slip. Parents are asked to sign a blanket on-island field trip permission form at the beginning of each school year. You will be notified when your child is out of the building. Ineligible students are not allowed to go on field trips.

Cultural Events

During the school year students may be exposed to a diversified group of cultural events. Programs range from artists-in-residence, ethnic music and/or dance assemblies, storytelling and plays to dress rehearsals of our local programs and local band recitals. We have high expectations of student behavior during these events. Students should be polite and show respect to invited guests. If a student's religious views do not allow them to participate they should notify their homeroom teacher.

Junior High Musical Each year the Tisbury School presents a junior high musical production. Auditions are open to all 7th and 8th grade students, and all students who audition will participate. Parts are cast based on musical and acting ability and are dependent upon the needs of each individual show. Faculty members serve as director, music director, choreographer, and handle costume and set design.

Past productions have included *My Fair Lady*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Peter Pan*, *The Wiz* and *West Side Story*. The junior high musical has become a highly-anticipated annual event, and we are proud of the fine tradition of excellence that Tisbury School students have achieved.

Memorial Day
Parade

A tradition of the Tisbury School is for the student body to march from the Tisbury School to Owen Park and to place flowers into the harbor to commemorate those who have given their lives for our country, particularly those that died at sea.

The ceremony takes place on the Friday before Memorial Day. The parade will begin outside the school on Spring Street at a time to be announced. The event runs approximately 45 minutes. All students will be dismissed from Owen Park after the ceremonies. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will take place in the gymnasium.

Media and Educational Technology Programs

Library Media Center

The mission of the Library Media Program is to empower all students with 21st century skills to be effective users, producers, and communicators of ideas and information.

The Tisbury School Library:

- fosters information literacy
- provides resources for all curriculum areas
- integrates research instruction into classroom assignments
- exposes students to a variety of literary genres
- strives to establish a life-long love of reading in students

Students, whose books are a month overdue, may be placed on the ineligibility list.

Parents are invited to volunteer in the Library Media Center, regularly or for our annual book fair. If interested, contact Whitney Burke at wburke@mvyps.org or 696-6527.

Lost/Damaged Books/Overdue Books

Lost books must be paid for, replaced, or compensated for by working in the library during a recess period, or after school. A receipt is issued when books are paid for. A refund will be made until the first day of school in September; after that, if the book is found, the student owns it.

Educational Technology

The Tisbury School is supported by a Microsoft NT network and uses both Apple and Windows machines in the classrooms, library and educational technology lab. We require that parents and students sign an acceptable use policy for Internet access. In addition we monitor the use of electronic materials and actively teach an educational technology curriculum, which includes video and computer skills. If you have a specific question regarding the use of technology in the school, please call Sue Leonard at 696-6561.

Multimedia and Technology Use Guidelines

1. All students must have parental permission for use of the Internet in school. A copy of our Acceptable Use Policy appears in the separate policy handbook.
2. Deliberate unauthorized use of software or systems tools by students will result in the loss of computer privileges throughout the school.
3. Unnecessary printing is discouraged. We encourage all students to take notes from these reference sources and use them as research sources for projects.
4. Students and staff are expected to know and abide by current copyright laws.

Support Programs

Special Needs Procedures (#766)

In compliance with Federal and State Laws, the Public Schools of Martha's Vineyard provide evaluation services and special educational programming. Parents or school personnel who work with a child can refer him/her for an evaluation, which explores the child's learning styles and academic abilities, as well as physical, emotional and social development. Once the evaluation is completed the team meets to determine the most appropriate educational program for the child. Parents have the right to request additional services from the team or to refuse the special services offered by the team.

Children usually referred for an evaluation are those who experience some difficulty with the regular school program because of academic limitations, learning disabilities, physical/motor, speech or language needs, behavior control difficulties, or emotional concerns. In most cases, a child study team, along with the parent(s), determines interventions, which may help the student become successful. These interventions are documented and reviewed at the end of a trial period (not more than 6 weeks).

If you have a concern about your child in any of these areas, you may request an evaluation through your guidance counselor.

Title I

Title I provides extra materials and expertise to help provide more time and opportunity for some of our students in reading and math. This intervention is used for remediation previous to special education referral.

Manter Fund

Under the terms of the will of Ellis H. Manter, the interest from money realized from the sale of property, which he owned at the time of his death (1835), would be used solely for the benefit of students of the Tisbury School.

The only stipulation in the will is that \$25.00 be used to purchase shoes for a needy youngster each year. The money is used to purchase clothing, equipment and help pay for school activities which are beneficial to the child's development. Also, it can be used for school wide programs. If you have financial needs please write a letter of request in advance to the principal.

ELL Support

We have three certified ELL teachers on staff. State guidelines are followed in assigning students for help and in assessing their progress.

Other Policies and Procedures

MVYPS

Policies

Please go to the Martha's Vineyard Superintendent's website at <http://www.mvyys.org/superintendent/policy.html> and <http://www.mvyys.org/rights/index.html> for a complete list of policies and rights.

Civil Rights

Martha's Vineyard Public Schools
Compliance Coordinators and Liaisons

INDIVIDUAL – AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

Richard Smith, Superintendent – Titles II, VI, and IX
Martha's Vineyard Public Schools
4 Pine Street
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568
Tel: 508-693-2007

Hope MacLeod, Director of Student Support Services – Section 504
Martha's Vineyard Public Schools
4 Pine Street
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568
Tel: 508-693-2007

Hope MacLeod, Director of Student Support Services – Homeless Education
Martha's Vineyard Public Schools
4 Pine Street
Vineyard Haven, MA 02568
Tel: 508-693-2007

Bullying Prevention And Intervention

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This new law prohibits bullying/cyber bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to addressing bullying/cyber bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

These requirements will be included in the school or district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan"), which must be finalized no later than December 31, 2010. The Plan will include the requirements of the new law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school or school district will follow to prevent bullying/cyber bullying and retaliation, or to respond to it when it occurs. In developing the Plan, schools and districts must consult with school and local community members, including parents and guardians.

Definitions

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.
Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression 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/herself or of damage to his/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. Bullying includes cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any 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.

Hostile environment is a situation in which bullying/cyber bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation is directed.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying/cyber bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying/cyber bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying/cyber bullying.

School Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Prohibition Against Bullying

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds;
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds;
- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school;
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a computer or over the Internet); or
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

Reporting Bullying/Cyber Bullying

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying/cyber bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the -

principal of your local school or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously.

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying/cyber bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, and paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying/cyber bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying/cyber bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of an aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Professional Development for School and District Staff

Schools and districts must provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying/cyber bullying. The content of such professional development is to include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying/cyber bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying/cyber bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying/cyber bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying/cyber bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying/cyber bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyber bullying; and (vi) internet safety issues as they relate to cyber bullying.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The new bullying prevention law prohibits bullying/cyber bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to address bullying/cyber bullying incidents. It is important for students and parents or guardians to know the parts of the law that are described below.

What is **Bullying**?

"A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself." Olweus

This definition includes three important parts:

- 1- Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.
- 2- Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
- 3- Bullying involves one person having power or strength over another.

Bullying can be written, spoken, cyber based, or physical, and is directed at a victim in a way that: causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; places the victim in fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; creates an unsafe or hostile environment at school for the victim; or takes away from the rights of the victim at school.

Cyber bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. This includes, bullying or harassment through email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. An example of cyber bullying is cruel messages being sent – either to the victim or to others about the victim through any electronic device.

Students who engage in bullying will be disciplined when the bullying behavior occurs:

- on school grounds;
- on property immediately surrounding the school grounds;
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds;
- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle used by a school district or school;
- through the use of technology or an electronic device;
- off school grounds but creates a hostile environment at school for the victim.
- against a victim who reports bullying/cyber bullying.

Definitions of bullying terms:

Victim is the *target* of bullying and is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation is directed.

Retaliation is any form of threats or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying/cyber bullying or provides information during an investigation of bullying/cyber bullying.

A **hostile environment** arises when and where bullying/cyberbullying creates an environment filled with great discomfort that impacts the learning of another student or students.

Reporting Bullying/Cyber Bullying

If you feel you have been bullied or have witnessed bullying, please let somebody know that will help you. **Anyone** can report bullying/cyber bullying. Students can make reports in writing or tell an adult staff member directly. Reports may also be made secretly using a note or tip line.

Staff members will report immediately to the principal if they received a report from a student or witness or become aware of bullying/cyber bullying or retaliation themselves. When the school principal receives a report, he or she shall investigate the bullying incident. If the school principal determines that bullying/cyber bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she will notify the victim's parents or guardians, including the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying/cyber bullying.

The principal also will notify the parents or guardians of the bully; take appropriate disciplinary action against the bully; and notify the local police if the school principal believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the bully.

K-4 STUDENT FRIENDLY VERSION OF THE MVPS BULLYING POLICY

What is Bullying?

Bullying is when a person or group of people repeatedly act in ways that make you feel scared, unsafe, embarrassed, humiliated, or alone. Bullying can be physical, like someone threatening to hit you or pushing you into something. It can also be actions that make you feel bad inside, like someone spreading rumors about you or saying things to make others tease you. Students who are bullied often fear coming to school because the behaviors are repeated so often that they don't feel safe at school.

What Should You Do if You Think You're Being Bullied?

The most important thing to do is to find an adult you trust and tell them what's happening. Tell them how you feel and ask for help. If you have trouble asking for help, get a friend to come with you. Sometimes it is easier to talk to an adult with a friend. If you see a friend that you feel is being bullied, tell an adult (even if your friend says not to).

MVPS Bullying Policy

Bullying of any type has no place in a school setting. The Martha's Vineyard Public Schools will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment free of bullying. Schools are meant to be safe and caring places where students can learn. As such, bullying in any form, as described below, will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of the entire school community to ensure that bullying is not allowed.

"Bullying", which is defined as the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- 1) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property;
- 2) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property;
- 3) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
- 4) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
- 5) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Certain students maybe more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based upon actual or perceived differentiating characteristics which include: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

The School Committee expects administrators and supervisors to make clear to students and staff that bullying in the school building, on school grounds, on the bus or school-sanctioned transportation, or at school- sponsored functions will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for students and termination for employees.

The District will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying. The principal, or his/her designee, of each building will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging bullying.

Each school district shall develop, adhere to and update, at least biennially, a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention. The plan shall apply to students and members of a school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals.

All schools and school districts must implement, for all school staff, professional development that includes developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a perpetrator, victim and witnesses to the bullying; research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

Revised 5.2014 LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.

Chapter 151C M.G.L.

Chapter 76 § 5 M.G.L.

Chapter 269 § 17, 18, 19 M.G.L.

Chapter 71 §§ 82, 84 M.G.L.

Chapter 71 §370, 380

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Martha's Vineyard Public Schools

Excellence and Equity For All Children

Physical Restraint Policies and Procedures pursuant to 603 CMR 46.00

Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

- (a) To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and
- (b) To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Use of Restraint: Mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion shall be prohibited in public education programs.

Prone restraint shall be prohibited in public education programs except on an individual student basis, and only under the following circumstances:

1. The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff;
2. All other forms of physical restraints have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others;
3. There are no medical contraindications as documented by a licensed physician;
4. There is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and there are no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional;
5. The program has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), and such use has been approved in writing by the principal; and,
6. The program has documented 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b) 1 - 5 in advance of the use of prone restraint and maintains the documentation.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.

All physical restraints, including prone restraint where permitted, shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.05.

Physical restraint shall not be used:

- (a) As a means of discipline or punishment;
- (b) When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;
- (c) As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or
- (d) As a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

2. The identified child will be accompanied by an adult to the office of the school Counselor (School Adjustment Counselor, Guidance Counselor, School Psychologist).
3. The School Psychologist or other qualified adult will be contacted immediately. The child will then be interviewed by the school psychologist and/or school adjustment counselor and an administrator. The child's level of risk will be assessed.
4. If the child is thought to be at imminent risk of self-injurious behavior, the SCT members shall follow protocol for a medical emergency, call an ambulance and/or Mobile Crisis Services and have the child evaluated at an emergency room. A staff member shall accompany the child in the ambulance and remain with them in the E.R. until a parent or guardian arrives.
5. Parents/guardians will be contacted.
6. If the risk is not thought to be imminent, the child's parents will be contacted and they will be asked to immediately pick up the child and bring them to an appropriate professional (i.e. the child's pediatrician, psychotherapist, mental health counselor) for further evaluation and intervention.
7. Incident Report Form will be completed by an administrator and parents signature will be obtained.
8. The identified child's re-entry to the district will follow the re-entry protocol for students at risk for self-injurious behavior.

De-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior: General guidelines for de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior include:

1. Remain calm -To possibly help prevent the likelihood of a student experiencing distress from escalating his/her behavior use a neutral and level tone of voice, control one's facial expressions and use a supportive non-threatening body language.
2. Obtain Assistance - Whenever possible, school personnel should immediately take steps to notify school administrators, the school's administrative response team and/or other school personnel of a potentially dangerous situation and to obtain additional assistance.
3. One Person Speaks - In order to minimize the likelihood of confusion and/or the likelihood of a student experiencing distress from escalating his/her behavior having one person providing overall direction to the response and the follow up procedures is advisable. This often may be either the first trained staff person on the scene or the staff person with the most information about the particular situation.
4. Remove Student If Possible - The feasibility of having a student experiencing distress leave an area with other students and move to another more private and safe area in order to de-escalate should be considered.
5. Remove Other Students - If it is not feasible to have a student experiencing distress move to a more private and safe area in order to de-escalate, consider the feasibility of having other staff assist and monitor the removal of other students to another area within the school until the student de-escalates.

- (b) **Methods for Engaging Parents and Students:** Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;

Any parent/guardian with concerns about the use of physical restraint at any school within Martha's Vineyard Public Schools may request a meeting with the building Principal or the Superintendent to discuss such concerns. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may also make use of the Grievance Procedure described in Section 10, below.

- (c) **Alternatives to Physical Restraint in emergency situations:** A description and explanation of the program's alternatives to physical restraint and method of physical restraint in emergency situations;

There are a variety of appropriate responses or interventions that should be used first when seeking to prevent challenging behaviors, student violence, self-injurious behaviors, or to de-escalate potentially dangerous or disruptive behavior among groups of students or with an individual student.

The following are examples of strategies that the district uses to support students prior to exhibiting challenging behaviors or as alternative to physical restraint when students begin exhibiting agitation:

Positive behavioral interventions: The district employs a variety of services and strategies to address the social, emotional and behavioral well-being of all our students.

- a. Anti-bullying curriculum is provided throughout the district utilizing developmentally appropriate lessons and activities

In-Depth Training Requirements

At the beginning of the school year, the building Principal or their designee will identify those designated staff who will participate in in-depth training and who will then be authorized to serve as school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint.

Designated staff members shall participate in in-depth training in the use of physical restraint, with at least one refresher training annually.

In-depth training will include:

- a. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
- b. A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
- c. The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
- d. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;
- e. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and
- f. Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects.

Proper Administration of Physical Restraint

(1) Trained personnel. Only public education program personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(2) or 603 CMR 46.04(3) shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. The training requirements contained in 603 CMR 46.00 shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

(2) Use of force. A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.

(3) Safest method. A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation subject to the safety requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.05(5). Floor restraints, including prone restraints otherwise permitted under 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), shall be prohibited unless the staff members administering the restraint have received in-depth training according to the requirements of 603 CMR 46.043(3) and, in the judgment of the trained staff members, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others present.

(4) Duration of restraint. All physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing.

(5) Safety requirements. Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint:

(a) No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration.

(b) Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.

(c) If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, program staff shall obtain the approval of the principal. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.