

Mary E. Griswold School

133 Heather Lane
Kensington, Connecticut 06037

Phone: 860-828-6336

Fax: 860-829-2923

www.griswoldschool.org



Family Handbook
2022 - 2023

SCHOOL HOURS:

Regular **8:40 a.m. – 3:25 p.m.**

Early Dismissal **8:40 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.**

- ***Students may begin entering the building at 8:25.***
- ***There is no recess on Early Dismissal days.***

Late Opening_ **10:40 a.m. – 3:25 p.m.**

- ***Students may begin entering the building at 10:25.***



MISSION STATEMENT OF MARY E. GRISWOLD SCHOOL

The Griswold School Community is committed to encouraging children to develop their potential as life-long learners. To this end, we will provide experiences which enable children to meet academic and social challenges with perseverance, confidence, sensitivity and responsibility in order to make a positive influence on their world.

All Are Welcome!



General Information

AIDS CURRICULUM

It is the policy of the Board of Education to provide, during the school day, planned, ongoing and systematic instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). The Superintendent shall develop procedures concerning the exemption of pupils from such instruction upon written request from the parent/guardian.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Juila Dennis, President
115 Norton Road
Berlin

Kari Sassu, Ph.D., Secretary
69 Walden Court
Berlin

Timothy Oakes
31 Belcher Hollow Road
Berlin

Stephen Weber
255 Longview Drive
Kensington

Mark Pruzin
184 Hawthorne Drive
Berlin

Traci Sisti
286 Vineyard Drive
Kensington

Adam Salina
95 Spicewood Lane
Berlin

Jaymee Miller
710 Worthington Ridge
Berlin

Steven Jenkins
7 Sea Green Drive
Berlin

BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICE
238 Kensington Rd. Berlin, CT 06037
860-828-6581

Brian Benigni, Superintendent of Schools
Erin McGurk, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Linda Holian, Pupil Personnel Services Director
Michelle Zeuschner, Ed.D., Pre K – 5 Supervisor of Special Education
Cynthia Martin, 6 – 12 Supervisor of Special Education
Jeffery Cugno, Director of Business Operations
Ashley Dorsey, Director of Fianance
Denise Parsons, Human Resources Director

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Berlin Public School District is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and affirmative action for all qualified persons and does not discriminate in any educational program, activity, employment or

promotional opportunities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Inquiries regarding the Berlin Public School District's non-discrimination policies should be directed to Denise Parsons, Title IX Coordinator, Berlin Public Schools, 238 Kensington Road, Berlin, CT 06037. (860) 828-6581.

BICYCLES may be ridden by any child in grades 1 – 5 to and from school. Parents/Guardians are required to write a note informing the school that they give permission for this to occur. Only one note is needed to grant permission for the entire year.

Birthdays and Classroom Celebrations Per Board of Education policy 5141.25, no food is allowed for birthday celebrations or classroom celebrations. Birthdays may be acknowledged with non-food items such as stickers, colored pencils, classroom or library book donations, or extra recess.

BREAKFAST is made available to all students through Food Services and can be purchased through our school's mySchoolBucks system. Each morning, students who order breakfast go directly to the cafeteria. Upon arrival back at their classrooms, they will unpack and have a "working breakfast." If a class has a special first thing in the morning, this may vary. Breakfast items can vary day to day. Examples include a cereal bar, white milk and a fruit or an individual serving of cereal packaged in a bowl, milk and a fruit. All breakfast items are nut-free. The price for breakfast is \$1.55 per day.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY Students are supplied with materials for instruction including textbooks and library books. They are responsible for the proper care of these materials. Students will be assessed the cost of damages resulting from improper care beyond normal use or for loss of materials.

Vandalism by pupils involving damage to school property will result in disciplinary action. The repairs of school property from vandalism will be completed by the school or town and the cost of repairs must be paid by the parents or legal guardian of the pupil responsible.

CLASS LETTERS Parents who wish to distribute letters or communications to their child's class must have the permission of the building principal before being distributed.

CLASS LISTS containing phone numbers and addresses will not be distributed. Teachers may choose to collect contact information at the beginning of the year. If you are a member of the Parents Club, you will have the opportunity to opt into a distribution list.

CODE OF CONDUCT Griswold Eagles SOAR when we ...

- Are Kind
- Are Responsible
- Are Safe
- Make Things Better

Even with proper guidance from home and school, children will still have difficulty making correct choices from time to time. When they do, the school will use a variety of strategies to ensure that the discipline provided is a learning experience with the ultimate goal being that

the child will develop skills to solve future problems within the guidelines of our school expectations. Whenever possible, logical consequences are given related to the unsolved problem the student experienced. Some consequences used may include:

Verbal Warning

Note Home

Increased Structure

Separation from Peers

Assigned Seat

Written Reflection

Service to the School

Mediation

Phone Call Home

Loss of Privileges

Apology Note

Conference

In-School Suspension

Out of School Suspension

Expulsion

CONFERENCES for students in grades K-5 will occur during December and March/April. Conferences will be offered in the afternoon and during the evening. Conferences will be scheduled on-line via Canyon Creek Conference Scheduler (*unless otherwise indicated by the classroom teacher*).

DIRECTORY OF SCHOOLS

Berlin High School
139 Patterson Way
Berlin
860-828-6577

<i>Principal</i>	Eileen Eustis
<i>Assistant Principal</i>	Barbara Ventura
<i>Assistant Principal</i>	Katie Amenta
Berlin High School Guidance	860-828-4155
Adult Education Department	860-828-8135

Catherine M. McGee Middle School
899 Norton Road
Berlin
860-828-0323

<i>Principal</i>	Salvatore Urso
<i>Assistant Principal</i>	Timothy Chiaverini
<i>Lead Teacher</i>	Karen Despres

Mary E. Griswold School
133 Heather Lane
Kensington
860-828-6336

<i>Principal</i>	David Kitzman
<i>Lead Teacher</i>	Cara Quinn

Richard D. Hubbard School
139 Grove Street
East Berlin
860-828-4119

<i>Principal</i>	Alfred Souza, III
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Emma Hart Willard School
1088 Norton Road
Berlin
860-828-4151

<i>Principal</i>	Megan Sirois
<i>Lead Teacher</i>	Johnna Cunningham

DRESS CODE We request your cooperation with helping your student to choose appropriate and safe school attire.

- Shorts are acceptable but should fall mid-thigh or below.
- Shirts and tops may not depict violence, tobacco or alcoholic beverages or any other offensive or disruptive writing or pictures.
- Remind students that they may not show bare backs or midriffs.
- For safety reasons, high platform shoes and open-back or strapless sandals/shoes should not be worn.

The complete “Student Dress” guidelines can be located in the Board of Education Policies section of this handbook.

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION The Board of Education encourages and sanctions student field trips that are of value in helping achieve each participating student’s educational objectives. Each child must return a permission form signed by a parent or guardian before he/she will be allowed to participate on the trip. If the trip is within the Berlin school system, no form is required.

Teachers on field trips will administer all students’ medication normally administered during school. If the field trip is beyond normal school hours, an additional physician's authorization form and medication must be provided prior to day of the field trip to the school nurse.

FIFTH GRADE CULMINATING ACTIVITIES occur at the end of the school year. They include a sixth grade Orientation Program with a visit to McGee School and a Parents Club “Fifth Grade Party.”

FUNDRAISING Students may engage in raising funds for school-sponsored activities, subject to the regulations developed by the Superintendent. No such fundraising activities may involve door-to-door solicitation in the community by students.

GRADING of student progress occurs three times each year for students in grades K-5. Students are continually evaluated as to their individual progress and instruction is planned accordingly.

HOMEWORK is a vital part of school. This process is intended to reinforce and provide practice of prior learning or the day’s lessons. The Board of Education requires homework to be reasonable in length and appropriately challenging. The suggested homework guidelines for the elementary level are:

Kindergarten & First Grade:	Shall be discretionary
Second & Third Grades:	15 to 20 minutes per day
Fourth and Fifth Grades:	20 to 30 minutes per day

These guidelines do include time for long-term projects. However, they do not include time for independent reading. Students should read or be read to at least 15 – 30 minutes a night.

INVITATIONS for birthdays and parties are **NOT** to be distributed at school.

KINDERGARTEN PARENT ORIENTATION will occur in the spring. The purpose of the meeting is to inform parents about the kindergarten curriculum, services for students needing special education, as well as, immunizations and health forms. If you have specific questions regarding registering your child for kindergarten, please contact the Board of Education at 860-828-6581.

KINDERGARTEN WELCOME will occur in May or June and is designed to give incoming kindergarten students a chance to “experience” a kindergarten classroom. During this time, parents have the opportunity to speak with administrators, the school nurse, and the school secretary as well as learn about our Parents Club.

LOST AND FOUND items are located outside the hardtop recess entrance. Students are encouraged to check frequently for missing items. Parents are requested to label all articles of clothing and lunch boxes. Throughout the school year, items that have not been claimed will be donated to charitable groups.

LUNCH is scheduled for 30 minutes each day for students in grades K – 5. Paraprofessionals supervise the students during this time. If a child needs to borrow money for lunch, the lunch will be debited on their mySchoolBucks account. Forms for free/reduced lunch are available to all families throughout the school year.

<u>Lunch Prices:</u>	
Full Lunch Meal	\$2.80
Milk	.50
All Snacks	.10 to .60

Parents are welcome to join their child(ren) for lunch as long as the visits are infrequent and do not cause a disruption. However, parents are not permitted to attend recess for supervision and safety concerns. **As of July 24, 2020, guests and visitors are not permitted in the building due to COVID-19 related safety precautions.**

LUNCH PAYMENT is accomplished through our district’s mySchoolBucks.com system. Checks can be made payable to "Griswold School Cafeteria." Please put your child's name and room number on the check. Each child has a 5-digit student ID number that they use when they come through the café and for parents or guardians to use to set-up and access their online accounts. Your child’s account can be used to buy milk, water and snacks, along with their lunch. The student’s account is a debit account, **NOT a credit account.** There is a \$1.95 convenience fee every time you add money to your child’s account online. The fee goes to PayPal. You can still send checks or cash and we will add it to your child’s account with no fee. Students can still pay with cash. You can view a child’s transaction(s) online even if they pay cash.

You can set-up an account, access existing accounts and view transactions by going directly to www.myschoolbucks.com

OR

visit www.berlinschools.org--District--Food Services--<https://www.myschoolbucks.com>

Monthly lunch menus are available on our website (<http://www.berlinschools.org/page.cfm?p=525>). If your child or children are eligible for a reduced-priced lunch you may also use the mySchoolBucks system. Monthly reduced-price tickets are purchased in the same way as described above. All student lunch tickets with students’ identification numbers are identical in appearance and are kept in class envelopes at the cafeteria. For further information, contact Wendy Rawlings, the Food Service Director at 860-828-6581.

Children's health and safety is most important, so it is necessary for the school to know of any food

allergies your child(ren) may have. Please have your doctor forward a note explaining the allergy information to our school nurse, Judy McCormack. She will communicate the necessary information to the Food Service Director.

NOONTIME SPORTS is a direct outgrowth and extension of the regular physical education program at Griswold School. The Noontime Sports Program has become an integral part of the school's total educational process. During the course of the school year, various athletic activities are offered on a voluntary basis to fourth and fifth grade students. Activities may include: soccer, pickleball, team handball, basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, and bowling.

OLYMPIC DAY is held toward the end of the school year. The function is to emphasize the benefits of a healthy body. The teams are divided by classes: Kindergarten through second grade competing on one skill level and third through fifth grade on a slightly more difficult level.

RECESS is scheduled for 30 minutes. Students may alternate playground areas. For example, one day they may use the playscape area, while another grade uses the hardtop area. Then they switch the following day. For safety reasons, students should only wear secure shoes (closed toe and sturdy back) to participate during recess. Paraprofessionals supervise the students at this time.

Indoor recess is at the discretion of the building principal or his/her designee. General guidelines to be considered when determining between indoor and outdoor recess include, but are not limited to, 20 degrees or less with wind chill, excessive heat, precipitation, and conditions of the grounds.

REPORT CARDS for all students are sent home three times per year. Report cards are sent home via School Messenger with the email address provided by the family during registration or through PowerSchool. The general times for receiving report cards are the end of November, the middle of March, and the last day of school.

SCHOOL PICTURES occur typically twice during the school year. Your child will have a picture taken individually and with his/her class in the fall. You are not obligated to purchase any package or may choose to purchase parts of a package. A make-up date will be scheduled for children who were absent on the September date. There is no make-up for spring pictures.

SPECIAL SERVICES Some students require the services of special education staff to assist them in overcoming or adjusting to learning, emotional, and other problems which can prevent them from reaching their full potential in school. Pupil Personnel staff, including special education teachers, school psychologists, school social workers, speech-language pathologists and the occupational and physical therapists, work with students upon referral. Programs for students with a variety of disabilities are provided within the Berlin Schools. Cooperative arrangements are also made with the neighboring school districts and other public and private facilities to provide special diagnostic and educational services where appropriate. Any parent who feels his/her child has a speech, learning, social, emotional, or physical problem which might require special education, is asked to contact the building principal or Dr. Michelle Zeuschner, Special Education Supervisor, at 806-828-6581.

SPECIALS

- Art: Please provide your child with a smock or old lightweight shirt to wear during art class, so they can create without the worry of dirtying their school clothes. Students can leave these in their homeroom cubbies or closets and bring them to art each week.
- Computers: Children in grades K–5 complete projects in the computer lab, library media center, or in the classroom during the school year. Classroom teachers supervise children in grades 2 – 5 as they work on typing skills in the classrooms. Additionally, students in grade 2 receive further keyboarding support in the computer lab.
- Library: Students in grades K-5 visit the library on a weekly basis where students are encouraged to check out books for their enjoyment. All library books must be returned two weeks prior to the end of the school year. Final report cards will be issued when student book(s) are returned or the school is reimbursed for any lost or destroyed book(s).
- Music: All students in grades K-5 have general music two times per week. Students in grades three learn to play the recorder. It is important for these students to come to class prepared with their recorder and book. All students in grade 5 perform in the Griswold Chorus and give two annual concerts.
- Physical Education: Sneakers are required for physical education. Sandals, crocs, ballet style or heeled shoes, and boots are hazardous and may cause injury during P.E. activities. A child may be excused from physical education only for medical reasons with written permission from a parent or doctor.

VALUABLES Items of value should NOT be brought to school. Such items include trading cards, electronic games, iPods, iPads, cell phones, or anything that your child is especially concerned about losing or being damaged in some way. Any item(s) may be collected by teachers or staff members and turned into the principal or his/her designee. The principal will determine whether to return the item at the end of the day to be taken home by the student or whether the parent will be contacted to pick up the item. If an item is brought to school for the purpose of show-and-tell (and prior approval was received by the classroom teacher), the item should be kept in the child's backpack and only taken out during the time of sharing. Please consider leaving jewelry at home. Students are permitted to bring in and use their own personal E-READERS (Kindles, Nooks, etc.). However, they remain the responsibility of the student. The use of these devices to access Board Technology Resources are subject to the Board of Education Policy (5131.81) on the "Use of Private Technology Devices By Students" which was adopted on 1/29/13. A full copy of this policy is available on the district website.

WELLNESS It is the policy of the Berlin Board of Education to promote health and well-being of district students. In furtherance of this policy, the Board has created a Wellness Advisory Council to review any available state or federal guidelines on wellness issues and to assist in formulating recommendations for specific goals and guidelines aimed at promoting lifelong wellness practices among district students. Students are encouraged to make healthy food choices in order to develop life-long healthy habits.

Per Board of Education Policy 5141.25, the following foods are prohibited in PK – 5 classrooms (including specials areas): peanuts, tree nuts, fish, crustacean shellfish, soybean, and sesame. If a student brings in

a snack that contains one of these allergens, the student will not be permitted to eat the snack in the classroom. They may eat these foods in the cafeteria during lunch.

Health and Safety

COUGH DROPS medicated cough drops, per regulations from the State of Connecticut, have to be treated like medicine. Therefore, a Medical Authorization Form signed by the child's physician and parent/guardian is required. Medicated cough drops must be brought to school by an adult and given to the school nurse. Only send enough cough drops for one week. If your child still needs them after one week, you should consult your child's physician. Students are NOT allowed to carry cough drops in school, as they may be a potential choking hazard.

Non-medicated cough drops, such as Luden Throat Drops, Ricola Naturals and Halls Fruit Breezers, do not require a Medical Authorization Form and students may have them with a parent/guardian's written permission. Non-medicated cough drops must be brought to school by an adult and given to the school nurse. Only send enough cough drops for one week.

ALL cough drops must be kept in the nurse's office and consumed in the office prior to the student leaving. These policies are reflected in the Board of Education policy #5141.21.

EMERGENCY CARDS must be completed online through InfoSnap each year. It is necessary for you to update your information any time there is a change. This is how we will contact you if there is an emergency.

HEALTH ASSESSMENTS All students must present evidence of a physical examination upon enrollment in the district. All students in grades K-5 will undergo vision screening by the school nurse or school health aide. Hearing screening will be conducted for all students in grades K-3 and grade 5. If a student shows a decided loss and/or significant change from a past screening, parents are notified. Postural screening will be conducted for all students in grade 5. If a homeless student, as defined by federal statute, lacks immunization/medical records, the school will enroll the child and refer the parent/guardian to the district's homeless liaison.

IMMUNIZATIONS All students must be immunized against certain diseases and must present a certificate from a physician or local health agency. If the student should not be immunized due to medical or religious reasons, a statement from a physician or the parent as appropriate must be provided. The required immunizations are: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chickenpox), Rubella and Hemophilus Influenza Type B. Parents or guardians of any children unable to have the mandated immunizations prior to initial school entry and the boosters as required in the later grades may have the immunizations, on the recommendation of the Board of Education, be paid by the town.

In addition to the required immunizations for initial entry into school for kindergarten, regular and special education preschool programs, additional immunizations are required for entry into seventh grade and for entry into eighth grade. The school must enroll any homeless student even if the student is unable to produce the required medical and immunization records.

For further information regarding immunizations contact our school nurse, Judy McCormack at (860) 828-6336.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES can arise. The principal or designated personnel (the lead teacher, school nurse or health room aide) will contact the parent or other specified persons on the emergency card. If they are unable to reach a responsible party, the administration will pursue appropriate medical attention per the Board of Education policy adopted May 2009.

MEDICATION PROCEDURES authorization containing all the required information listed in the school policy must be on file in the nurse's office prior to the administration of any medicine. The policy regarding school personnel administering medicine to students at school complies with state law. Medication authorization forms are available in the health room.

The school encourages parents to request that their doctor prescribe medication dosage outside of school hours whenever possible. However, many students are able to attend school regularly only through effective use of medication in the treatment of disabilities or illness. Insofar as it is possible, provisions should be made for such medication to be given by the parent prior to or following the school day. The dispensation of medication during the school day will be done in accordance with the following:

1. An Authorization For The Administration of Medicines by School Personnel form requesting that the school administer the drug must be received by the School Nurse. It must be signed by the parent as well as the physician who prescribed the drug, and must include the following information:
 - a. Name and address of student.
 - b. School and class in which the student is enrolled.
 - c. Name of drug and dosage to be administered.
 - d. Times or intervals at which each dosage is to be administered.
 - e. Beginning date for administration of drug.
 - f. Date on which administration of the drug is to stop.
 - g. Any severe adverse reactions that should be reported to the physician and one or more emergency phone numbers for the physician.
 - h. Special instructions for administration of drug, such as sterilization and storage.
2. Parents must agree to provide subsequent physician statements should any of the initial information change.
3. The parent/guardian request statement and the physician's statement must be resubmitted to the school at the beginning of each school year. Medication remaining at the end of the time designated by the physician or at the end of the school year must be claimed by the parent within five days or it will be discarded.
4. The drug must be received by the school designee in the container in which it was dispensed by the physician or pharmacist. It must be brought to school by a responsible adult.
5. The Board of Education, administration, and employees who are designated to administer a prescribed drug and who have a copy of the most recent physician's statement shall not be held liable in civil damages for administering or failing to administer the drug unless he/she acted in a manner that would constitute gross negligence or wanton or reckless misconduct. The Berlin Visiting Nurses Association shall provide training to designated principals, teachers, and school staff. Only these trained individuals shall be allowed to give medications to students.

6. A physician's verbal order, including a telephone order for a change in any medication, can be received only by a school nurse. Any such verbal order must be followed by a written order within three (3) school days.



The complete Board of Education policy can be found in the Policy Section of this Handbook.

REPORTABLE DISEASES If your child has contracted a contagious disease, including Fifth Disease, notify the school nurse for proper procedures. In no case should a student be sent to school unless he/she is in good health and ready to resume activities.

Reportable Disease Chart – School Guide

Disease	Excluded from School	Readmitted On
Scarlet Fever and all Streptococcal Infections on the throat	24 hours on antibiotics/fever free	School Inspection
Chicken Pox	Until all primary lesions have dried, 5-7 days	School Inspection
Measles	5 days from time rash appears	School Inspection
Mumps	As long as glands remain swollen	School Inspection
Impetigo	Until dry or adequately cured	School Inspection
Pink Eye	24 hours and no drainage	School Inspection
Fever	Fever free for 24 hours and off fever lowering medications	School Inspection
TB	Need proof from MD follow up and chest x-ray	School Inspection
Vomiting	Vomiting has stopped for 24 hours	School Inspection

Case Where Contacts are Excluded from School Family and School Contacts

Disease	Excluded from School	Readmitted On	Basis of Readmission
Meningitis	14 days or until culture is negative	Note from attending physician	

SCHOOL INSURANCE

Berlin Public Schools has made arrangements to offer optional student accident insurance for all students. This coverage is available to parents for their children who are students enrolled in our schools. The Berlin Public School District does not provide insurance coverage or make medical reimbursements to parents for injuries that occur during school, including those incurred during gym

classes and recess. For insurance information, view the flyer on the Business Office page of our website at berlinschools.org under resources.

SCHOOL SAFETY procedures require students to conduct themselves in a safe manner at all times.



Teachers will review classroom rules and school rules with their students. Students and teachers will routinely practice fire drills and lockdown procedures. The main entrance is locked and equipped with a buzz-in system and adults are required to wear identification (staff badges, substitute teacher badges, or visitor/volunteer stickers).

Procedures

ATTENDANCE contributes to student achievement and success in school. A student is considered “in attendance” on any day in which the student is present for at least half of the regular school day. Any student dismissed from school prior to 3:05 will be recorded as “Early Dismissal”. **ALL absences MUST be followed by a written explanation as to the reason for the student's absence.** Please use the table below, provided by the Connecticut State Department of Education, to refer to when determining the level of documentation needed for your child’s absence.

Level	Total # of days Absent*	Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to be Considered Excused	Documentation Required within 10 days
1	One through nine	Any reason that the student’s parent or guardian approves	Parent or guardian note only.
2	Ten and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student illness (Note: to be deemed excused, an appropriately licensed medical professional must verify all student illness absences, regardless of the absence’s length). • Student observance of a religious holiday • Death in the student’s family or other emergency beyond the control of the student’s family. • Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required). • The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one student attends (parental documentation is not required for this reason) 	Parent or guardian note and, in some cases, additional documentation (see details of specific reason)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extraordinary educational opportunities preapproved by district administrators. 	
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**Note: The total number of days absent includes both excused and unexcused absences.*

The administration encourages parents to have their children in school as many days as possible to facilitate their social, emotional, and academic growth as well as to support the school-family partnership.

Attendance Call-In Procedure

Call in student absences and homework requests between 8:00 and 9:15 a.m. daily at 860-828-6336. It is essential that absences are reported on a daily basis. If known, multiple day absences can be reported with a single call. In the case of multiple day absences, call in only once and report the specific days. Report late arrivals due to medical appointments or other appropriate reasons in the same way that you report an absence.

As previously mentioned, **ALL absences must be supported with written documentation upon the student’s return to school.**

Requesting homework may be arranged during the call-in. All work can be made up with full credit. Students shall have two days available for every one day absent to make up work.

In any case where the school is not contacted regarding absence, verification will be made with the home phone number unless a preferred number is listed on the emergency card.

Unexcused Absence

Unexcused absences are those which do not fall under any of the excused absences or absences that the school does not receive written documentation for following five days of his or her absence. Students who have unexcused absences may be denied makeup privileges.

In the event of an unexcused absence:

- ✓ No school work shall be given prior to the absence.
- ✓ Students shall have two days available for every one day absent to make up work.

Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards.

Parents are also encouraged to contact the teachers, school counselor and administrators to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

Generally, when a condition causes the student to be absent for at least three consecutive weeks and nothing in the condition precludes instruction, home instruction shall be provided after two weeks absence. Students in grades K-6 are eligible for one hour per day or five hours per week. Forms by which parents may apply for home instruction are available in the principal’s office of the student’s school. Parents having questions relating to home instruction may call the office of Pupil Personnel Services at 860-828-6581 for further information.

EMERGENCY

SCHOOL MESSENGER CLOSING CONTACT: Griswold School utilizes a rapid communication service known as School Messenger. This service will make phone calls to designated phone numbers with a recorded message from the principal or Superintendent if an emergency closing occurs. Please listen carefully to the message to avoid calling school for the same information.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS (inclement weather) are announced on the Board of Education answering machine. The automatic system is used to notify families of an emergency situation. You may also call 860-828-8594 if you suspect winter weather conditions may mean an early afternoon closing, morning delay, or the cancellation of school. The guiding factor in such a decision is the safety of the pupils. When schools are closed on short notice, it is usually for one of the following reasons:

1. A sudden overnight snowfall that ties up traffic and makes it too difficult for buses to cover their routes;
2. Freezing rain that makes it hazardous for buses to run; or
3. Extremely low morning temperatures which make it a health hazard to wait at the bus stop.

School closings will also be reported to local radio stations and TV stations. In the event of an unscheduled early dismissal, PLEASE *plan with your child what he/she should do if you are not home*. Prior planning with your child is essential.

MOVING If you are moving out of the Griswold School district, please notify the office at least two weeks prior to your anticipated move. At that time, you need to sign Release and Withdrawal Forms so records can be sent to your child's new school.

PARENT PICK-UPS Parents are asked to form a line and wait for their children outside of the reading room's exit doors (west side of the building) and verify the student pick-up with the adult on duty. Please do not walk to classrooms at the end of the day to visit or pick up children. Teachers appreciate this uninterrupted time to get children organized and ready for dismissal. Likewise, please do not ask your child to meet you at the front door or leave the building out the front door unaccounted for. If you arrive to school after 3:15 pm to pick up your child, we ask that you **do not enter the pick-up loop** with your car, but rather park in the designated parking spots in the upper parking lot and walk down and pick up your child. Cars arriving prior to 3:15 may park in the designated parking spots in the lower parking lot (outside of the pick-up loop driveway). In addition to the above, the following procedures will also be in place:

- When sending in a note about a parent pick-up, indicate if someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up the child (identification will be required)
- Children will not be allowed to be picked up from the office after 3:05
- Parents/guardians should form a line outside of the pick-up area
- Parents/guardians will be required to sign out children with the staff member on duty
- Parents/guardians will need to present their identification (driver's license) to the staff member on duty

PARKING/STUDENT DROP-OFFS Parking is available for parents and visitors in designated parking spots in front of the school as well as in our side traffic loop and upper parking lot near the ball fields. Please use the upper parking lot if you need to leave your car during morning drop-off to avoid traffic around the buses. Please do not pull your car around the buses when they are parked in the lot. We kindly ask that you observe all parking rules including usage of handicap spaces and fire lane access. If you are

dropping your child(ren) off at school in the morning, please observe drop off signs. Students should remain inside the vehicle until the car reaches the designated drop off location where they will be met by a Griswold staff member between the times of 8:25 – 8:40 a.m. Please be sure to pull up as far as possible when dropping your child off in our traffic loop to allow for other cars to pull up and drop off at the same time. Students should only exit on the sidewalk side of the car.

PERMISSION NOTES for any transportation changes must include the child's full name, teacher's name, bus number, and full parent's name and destination. Telephone permission can be accepted only in an emergency. If necessary, please contact the school prior to 2:00 regarding an emergency change of dismissal.

Permission notes must be brought to school if your child is:

- ✓ Going home other than the usual way;
- ✓ Staying after school for activities;
- ✓ Riding a bicycle to and from school;
- ✓ Being picked up by a parent at dismissal time; or
- ✓ Being picked up prior to dismissal time.

Our buses at Griswold are quite full, with many filled to capacity. Children may not change buses to ride to other children's homes.

PUBLICITY Articles, photographs, and videotapes of students are often posted to district, school, and/or teacher websites. In addition, since all Board of Education meetings are televised, student presentations to the Board will be cablecast by Nutmeg Television following each Board meeting.

If you would prefer that your child's name and/or photo/video image not be included, please send a note to the principal. Additional information can be found in Board Policy 5125: Confidentiality and Access to Education Records.

RETENTION is the process of determining whether students will be promoted or not. All teachers must evaluate students' educational progress during the school year. This progress, or lack of progress, is communicated to parents through written report cards and parent-teacher conferences. Parents will be notified well in advance and **no later than March 1** if retention is being considered. Please refer to Board of Education Policy 6147.1.

STUDENTS ARRIVING AT SCHOOL EARLY will not be supervised. Please plan to get students to school no earlier than 8:25 a.m. We cannot be responsible for them prior to this time. Children who walk and parents needing to leave before the bus arrives at their home are asked to make appropriate arrangements to ensure that everyone arrives between 8:25 and 8:40. (See "School Hours")

STUDENTS LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY must be signed out by a parent or legal guardian. A note to the teacher on the morning of the day a student will leave early will be needed to help the teacher plan better for the student's instructional day. (See *Permission Notes*)

TARDY STUDENTS (after 8:40 a.m.) **MUST** report to the main office before entering classrooms. Tardy students are given a tardy slip that records the time of arrival. Students are also able to order lunch from the cafeteria at this time.

VISITORS come to the school for many reasons. In order to maintain the security of the building, however, we request that all visitors report to the office, sign in, and wear a badge before entering the

halls or classrooms and sign out before leaving the building. Please see the Visitors for the Schools Administrative Regulations in this Handbook. **For safety and confidentiality reasons, it is important that visitors and volunteers remain in the area to which they are signed in.**

***Visitors and guests are not permitted in the building for the 2020-2021 school year, or until COVID-19 safety precautions have been lifted.**

WALKERS should arrive at school no earlier than 8:25. (*See Students Arriving at School Early*) Dismissal is 3:25.

WEBSITE can be accessed at www.griswoldschool.org. Information is continually updated. Please refer to it often to receive the most up-to-date school, district, and community news.

Parent Participation

PARENTS CLUB is a non-profit organization which provides programs and materials to enrich our children's extracurricular, social, and educational activities. Fundraisers are the main source of income for these projects. The Parents Club has enhanced Griswold School with many contributions including playground equipment, library resources, field trip transportation, computer hardware and software, the presentations of many cultural programs, and curriculum enrichment. Meetings are held monthly and membership is open to all parents and guardians of Griswold School children. Please visit "Parents Club News" at <http://www.griswoldschool.org>.

The goal of the Parents Club is to strengthen the relationship between school and community, realizing that it is through joint effort that we can build a better school system for our children.

The Parents Club needs your support in order to maintain its programs. Your family membership will be appreciated by the children and staff of Griswold School.

Just a few examples of Parents Club activities:

- *Book Fairs* are planned in fall and spring. These provide children and parents an opportunity to purchase an assortment of child-oriented books.
- *Cultural Arts Programs* are presented to students during the school year and selected by The Cultural Committee, in conjunction with Griswold faculty.
- *Curriculum Enrichment Programs* are presented to the students during the school day and are designed to enhance the depth of knowledge on specific curricular topics.
- *Fund Raisers* are held throughout the year. They are the main source of funds received by the Parents Club. The Parents Club uses the profits to provide the school and students with Educational materials and cultural events.
- *Miscellaneous Activities and family events* are held during the school year. Your support is greatly appreciated.
- *Parents Club Meetings* are held on the first Monday of each month (except in December). Times will be announced in the *Gazette*. The business session of each meeting may be preceded or followed by a program. Parents Club meetings offer parents an opportunity to become informed about school activities, exchange ideas, and to interact with other parents.
- *Product Label Collection* occurs each year. "Box Tops for Education" and "Campbell's Labels for Education" should be cut out and sent in with your child. Teachers will then send them all to the Parents Club.

SCHOOL STORE is run by parent volunteers and is open every other month during lunch times for children. School items include pencils, pens, erasers, paper, and materials that children may need in school or small gifts they may wish to give their parents during certain holidays. Any profits are given to the Parents Club. Volunteers are always appreciated and needed. Those interested may contact Sahar Noushia-Brochu at 860-539-9801 or Maire Schweitzer at 860-839-4000. Further information concerning the exact dates will be available following the start of school.



Special Programs

***Before and after school special programs are postponed until COVID-19 related safety precautions have been lifted.**

AFTERNOON ADVENTURES is an after-school enrichment program organized by one of our teachers, Ms. Spinella. The program allows students in grades 2-5 the opportunity to learn new skills and expose them to artistic, recreational, and academic experiences in a fun and safe environment. Each session lasts eight weeks and meets one day a week for an hour. Classes offered vary throughout the fall and spring sessions and are based on student interests, but include the areas of art, science, technology, physical education, and language arts.

ART ENRICHMENT is a program facilitated by our art teacher, Ms. DeSorbo for students in grades 4 and 5. It provides students with the opportunity to make up missed work and explore art concepts of their choosing.

CHOIRCHIMERS and CHORISTERS are enrichment program open to 4th (*4th graders may participate in Choirchimers only*) and 5th grade students (*5th graders can participate in both programs*). Led by Mrs. Reilly-Fazzina during recess, this program offers additional musical experiences for interested students.

ESOL is a support program designed to help students whose second language is English. Students who are identified as ESOL may receive services from Ms. Meehan both inside and outside the classroom. (Parents are contacted in writing and must provide consent for their child to be eligible.)

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC students in grades 4 and 5 have the option to play a band instrument. Students receive a weekly 30-minute lesson, from Ms. Wilson, in a small group setting. Lessons occur on a rotational basis so students won't be pulled from the same subject area each week. Students are responsible for making up any missed work from their classroom due to lessons. Instrumental students also participate in a 30-minute large ensemble rehearsal each week. The Beginning and Advanced Bands perform a concert in the winter and in the spring. Students will be expected to practice at home between lessons and rehearsals and bring their instruments and appropriate materials to school for lessons and band rehearsal each week.

JAZZ BAND is an outgrowth of the Afternoon Adventures program. Students participate in additional sessions beyond the 8-week Afternoon Adventures led by Ms. Wilson. Students learn about jazz and start to experiment with improvisation. Musicians will participate in the concert following their sessions.

MATH ENRICHMENT is designed to provide additional challenge and depth of instruction in mathematics. In addition to district assessment, teachers work with the math instructional support

teacher to identify children for this program. Identified students meet with the math instructional support teacher at various times throughout the school year, as time is allowed.

MATH INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT is provided to students who are identified through standardized tests or by classroom teachers. Parents are contacted in writing and must provide consent for their child to be eligible.

READING INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT encompasses a variety of programs designed to assist students in reading in grades K-5. Under the direction of our Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Erin McGurk, students are identified for services by school personnel. (Parents are contacted and must provide consent for their child to be eligible.) Services include direct instruction with decoding, phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, and fluency.

S.A.T. (Student Assistant Team) consists of a group of teachers and special services personnel who convene weekly to discuss teacher and/or parent concerns about students. The team develops strategies that classroom teachers implement to help students be more successful academically and/or behaviorally. After 6-8 weeks, a follow-up is provided to review progress and investigate if further interventions are necessary. Parents are contacted before their child comes to SHARES. After the meeting, the classroom teacher will inform them of the outcome. SHARES is not a referral to special education or a Planning and Placement Team Meeting but an opportunity for staff members to brainstorm and share strategies to help ensure student success.

UPBEAT – GRISWOLD TEAM works to enhance the school climate and promote positive self-esteem in children. Parents are welcome. If you are interested, please call the Lead Teacher to see how you can support us. Check the Griswold website for more information. Additionally, the team annually awards two (*or more*) scholarships to Berlin High Seniors who formerly attended Griswold and are enrolled in an institution for continued learning.

Updated Aug. 20, 2021

