

**MARGARET CHASE SMITH SCHOOL**  
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Skowhegan, ME 04976  
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[www.msad54.org](http://www.msad54.org)

<b>PARENT STUDENT HANDBOOK</b>
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**WELCOME TO THE MARGARET CHASE SMITH SCHOOL**

The purpose of this handbook is to help you understand the philosophy of our school.

Education must be a shared responsibility between home and school and I am asking you to join me and the staff in a common effort to provide the best education possible at Margaret Chase Smith School. Your active involvement is absolutely necessary to provide a successful and well-rounded education.

We urge you AND your child to take the time to read this handbook carefully. Please discuss with your child the regulations and procedures that every student is expected to follow.

We are very glad to have your child with us and look forward to working with you to make the school year an exciting and rewarding experience.

Do not hesitate to contact me or your child's teachers if you have any questions or concerns. We would also like to hear from you when you are satisfied with the job we do.

*Kathleen F.S. Harvey, Principal*  
*Margaret Chase Smith School*

**Maine School Administrative District No. 54/RSU # 54**

**MARGARET CHASE SMITH SCHOOL  
KATHLEEN HARVEY, PRINCIPAL**

**VISION STATEMENT**

All members of the Margaret Chase Smith School community will create a caring and safe environment which will encourage every student to strive to: Achieve high academic standards; develop character; be a life-long learner; and be a responsible, contributing member of society.

**MSAD/RSU #54  
PHILOSOPHY**

We, the Board of Directors of MSAD/RSU #54, believe that the education of our children is the responsibility of parents, teachers and the community. We believe that the purpose of education is to encourage the educational growth of each child to achieve his/her social, cultural, physical and intellectual potential now and in the future.

It is our aim to encourage all children to learn by example, direct teaching and participation so that they will develop the self-respect and confidence that a good education brings.

We support the practices of democratic tradition in our schools in order to acquire an awareness and appreciation for the rights and privileges of all citizens guaranteed by our form of government.

We believe that principles of this philosophy should begin at an early age so that each child can be helped to meet the needs of his/her individual growth.

**ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND TARDINESS**

The state law of Maine requires that all children between the ages of seven and seventeen shall attend school during the time school is in session. An absence of one-half day or more shall be deemed a violation of the requirement. If your child will be absent for any reason, **call the school office on the**

**morning of his/her absence.** It is expected that after each absence a child will bring a note from the parent to the teacher explaining the absence and/or call the school office at 474-9822.

If parents choose to take a student on vacation, they should consult with the teachers **and** principal about the required work, and make arrangements for the students to make up all missed work.

If a student is chronically tardy without a note from their parent explaining the circumstances, possible consequences and/or a parent meeting may occur. This is at the discretion of the principal after school.

## **ALERT SYSTEM**

It may be necessary during the school day, on rare occasions, for the school to attempt to contact all the parents/guardians of students in the school. If the school experiences a sustained loss of power, water, or heat, a decision might be made to evacuate students from the school. Or, in the event that a school bus bringing students back to the school from a field trip is delayed beyond the normal release time, an attempt would be made to contact parents. In such instances, we would want to reach parents/guardians as quickly as possible. In order to accomplish this contact process, we have a district wide school alert automated telephone and text message system. The system will deliver a text and/or telephone message to parents/guardians notifying them of the circumstances.

## **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Cell phones must be turned off and kept in students' back pack while at school. **“At school” includes school grounds, the playground, cafeteria and all classrooms.** Students may be contacted via message left at the office or during breaks by calling 474-9822. At 2:00 P.M. each day the office calls classrooms with messages for end of the day instructions.

If students are caught using cell phones at school or on the playground, the cell phone will be confiscated and kept in the office until the end of the day. **Texting and picture taking are included in the meaning of use of cell phones.** Parents may collect their child's cell phone at the end of the day and/or at their earliest convenience from the office. Phones are kept in a safe place and labeled with the student's name.

## **CHILDREN'S RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Children have the right to their feelings...**

And the responsibility to move beyond their feelings to action and to respect the feelings of others.

**Children have the right to their own opinions...**

And the responsibility to listen to the opinions of others.

**Children have a right to make their own decisions...**

And the responsibility to accept the consequences, good or bad.

**Children have the right to their own attitude...**

And a responsibility to learn from their mistakes and to correct them.

**Children have the right to make mistakes...**

And the responsibility to learn from their mistakes and to correct them.

**Children have the right to learn...**

And the responsibility not to interfere with others' rights to learn.

## COMMUNICATING EDUCATIONAL CONCERNS

From time to time parents have concerns which they need to have addressed. The following procedure should be followed:

First, meet with your child's teacher and explain your concern. If your concern had not been resolved to your satisfaction, make an appointment to discuss it with the principal. Your next step would be to discuss your concern with the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent. If your problem is still unresolved, contact your local school board director to bring the matter before the school board.

To contact your child's teacher, please call the school before 8:00 a.m., or after 2:30 p.m. Messages for teachers may be left at the office throughout the day.

## CURRICULUM INFORMATION

The MCSS offers a comprehensive, sequential Health/Guidance Program. Some areas of this curriculum are:

1. Emotional Health
2. Physical/Medical/Nutrition Health

## CUSTODY

If there is a court order that relates to the custody of your child, please provide a copy to the principal so that it can be included in your son's or daughter's file.

**If you have a particular concern regarding your child's right to privacy, this should be discussed with the building principal.** If the building principal/designee has reason to question the authenticity of any written or verbal communication regarding the release of a student, the parents/guardians shall be contacted for confirmation. The building principal/designee has the authority to deny the release of students to unauthorized or unknown person(s).

## AFTER SCHOOL DANCE POLICY

When a dance is held at Margaret Chase Smith School as a fund-raiser event for after school, the following criteria is in place for admission:

- All overdue work must be passed in the week prior to the dance
- All schoolwork must be up to date and meet teacher's approval
- No detentions or suspensions
- Transportation arrangements must be made in advance

## DELAYED OPENINGS AND WINTER STORM CANCELLATIONS

MSAD/RSU #54 may on occasion utilize one or two hours delays in the morning when it is determined that we can safely hold school, if we were afforded the delayed start time.

The procedure for announcing a delay would be the same as for closing school for the day or an early dismissal. Announcements will be made on the same TV and radio stations as usual, and will also be posted on our website at [www.msad54.org](http://www.msad54.org). Buses and start times will be one or two hours later than normal. Staff and students would report to school one or two hours later than a normal day and be dismissed at the regular time.

## DELIVERY POLICY

Students and staff are only allowed to accept delivery of small gifts, small floral arrangements and Mylar balloons (**no latex balloons**) at school. **School deliveries should be made on a very limited basis** (home is preferred) as they may cause disruptions in both the school office and the classroom. In addition, they can pose health and safety issues within the school. Deliveries will be held in the school office until the end of the day.

## DRESSING FOR SCHOOL

It is expected that a student, with parental guidance, will use judgment when dressing for school. During the winter months, parents should make certain that their children are dressed properly. All students will be expected to be outside during recess periods. Please make sure that your child does not wear:

- Clothes that are offensive/in poor taste or advertise alcohol or tobacco products. If a student is found wearing clothing in the above categories, he/she will be asked to either change it or wear it inside out.
- **No student should have any part of their undergarments in view at any time.**
- From **November 1<sup>st</sup> until after April vacation**, enforcement of proper dress on school days may necessitate a call home.
- Students may begin wearing shorts (must reach the end of the child's finger tips when he/she rests their hands on their upper leg) and sandals when they return to school after April vacation.
- Tops with spaghetti straps, halter tops, sheer tops, and shirts with large armholes are **not permissible** attire for school.
- Underwear of any kind should not be visible; this includes straps of any kind.
- Skirts may be worn with the same rule for shorts. The hem must fall at fingertips when students' arms are extended downward at their sides.
- Due to safety issues Heelys are restricted from MCSS.
- Pajamas of any type should **not** be worn at MCSS.
- Remember that flip-flops or slides are not good running gear for Physical Education Classes.

## ELECTRONICS AT SCHOOL AND ON THE PLAYGROUND

Please do not bring radios, IPODS, electronic games, cameras, cell phones (see cell phone policy), skate boards, scooters and/or valuables to school!

## GUIDANCE

The elementary Guidance services in MSAD/RSU #54 are for all students. This program recognizes each student as a unique individual with particular needs. The focus is on assisting students in dealing with decision-making skills, friendship, self esteem, social skills, divorce, anger management and personal loss and development. The elementary guidance counselor gives assistance to students and to classroom teachers by providing the following services:

1. Consulting with teachers, parents, and administrators regarding an individual student's program.
2. Individual or small group counseling to assist students to function at their best in the school environment.
3. Classroom presentations focusing on social, emotional, and academic development. Parents are encouraged to call the Guidance Counselor with any concerns.

## HARASSMENT

- Harassment includes but is not limited to verbal abuse based on race, color, sex, religion, ancestry or national origin, or disability. Harassment that rises to the level of physical assault, battery and/or abuse is also a violation of School Board policy. Such conduct may constitute illegal discrimination under state and federal law.
- **Sexual harassment** includes but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or pressure to engage in sexual activity, physical contact of a sexual nature, gestures, comments, or other physical, written or verbal conduct that is gender-based that interferes with a student's education. School employees, fellow students, volunteers and visitors to the school, and other persons with whom students may interact in order to pursue school activities, are required to refrain from such conduct.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

All students attending school, grades K-12, must meet minimum immunization standards as required by state law or be covered by exemptions.

1. No child should be sent to school if there is any symptom of illness present. This is to assure the quick recovery of the sick child and to protect other children.
2. A child may be sent home if there is any suspicion of a contagious disease.
3. The District Nurse visits all elementary school on a regular basis, maintains all health records and conducts routine screenings. In case of a child's illness or accident at school, the school will contact the parent to care for the child.
4. Please be sure to include emergency numbers to call when filling out the Emergency Card; a work number, cell number, childcare provider, and a neighbor's number would be helpful. **Please notify the school office of any changes during the school year.** If your child is involved in an accident which, at the discretion of school personnel requires medical attention, **you will be contacted using the information on the Emergency Card.**

5. For children bringing snacks or lunches to school, we encourage good nutrition – lots of fruit, vegetables, cheese, nuts, etc. rather than sweets.
6. Regular fire drills and lock down drills will be conducted.
7. Students will not be allowed to stay in for recess without a note from a parent.

## HOMEWORK

Reading at home by your child, to your child and with your child is encouraged at all levels of homework! Children in all grades may be given school work to do at home. There are different types of work children may be asked to do at home. Incomplete class work may be asked to be done at home; however, the teacher and parent should monitor the student's need and causes for incomplete work very closely.

Children may become very involved in a unit of study and may read or construct something at home related to it. As children get older and become better readers, they are given more specific assignments which require the use of encyclopedias, dictionaries, maps, newspapers, magazines and other reference materials. Students may be asked to interview their relatives and gather information about family customs, origins, etc.

Assignments may require writing letters and mailing them. Homework assignments that are responsible and are supported by the home provide opportunities for our students to learn good study habits to develop a sense of responsibility for task completion, to learn time management, to reinforce skills, and to extend or enrich their classroom experience.

Some classroom teachers have a "BLOG" or a Porta Portal on the MCSS website. The "BLOG" or Porta Portal will give parents/guardians information regarding homework and assignments. [www.msad54.org/mcss](http://www.msad54.org/mcss) click on "Staff Directory" and click on your student's BLOG.

## INSURANCE

Early in the school year, literature on student insurance is made available to all parents. This is the only coverage your student will have while at school. The District no longer has limited secondary insurance for the students over and above the offered insurance.

## LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found is where items, such as clothing, notebooks and assorted objects brought to school and then misplaced may be found. **Please label all clothing as well as personal belongings with your child's first and last name.** Lost and found items are located in gym. Many items go unclaimed and the collection becomes too large for available storage space, therefore, unclaimed items are donated. Parents are encouraged to come to school to look through this collection. We would like to be able to return every lost item to the rightful owner.

## LUNCH AND BREAKFAST

Hot lunches and breakfasts are available to all students at no cost. If a student wants an extra milk with his/her meal, it may be purchased. Please be sure to send money in with your child for this extra purchase, charge accounts are not available.

Menus for breakfast and lunch will be sent home with students, and may also be found on our website. If you have an e-mail address and provide it to the school, your child(ren)'s balances will automatically be updated weekly to your e-mail address. You may receive reminders via e-mail if you include your e-mail address on your emergency cards at the beginning of the school year.

## MEDICATION

Medications will be given at school only when it is absolutely necessary and meets all of the following criteria:

1. Medication is part of a doctor-established medical plan of care. This applies to pain relievers and cough syrups.
2. It has been determined that there is no other way to give medication.
3. The need is based on an acute/long term health problem.
4. The medication must be taken on a schedule that cannot be adjusted to outside school hours. (i.e., three times a day medications can be given before school, after school, and at bedtime.)

Medication is only to be given by school personnel with written permission from the parent and a written order from the licensed physician. A medication must always be properly labeled to include student's name, name of drug, and dosage. No other medication will be accepted in any container but the original prescription bottle. The parent will be notified if the medication cannot be given. Written orders received will be attached to the health record of the student and kept in the nurse's office. Student's who are receiving medication daily throughout the year should have a medication record initialed, which will be attached to the health record at the end of the school year.

All non-licensed personnel responsible for giving medications shall participate in an in-service training by licensed school nurses and have access to continuing consultation.

Prescription **Medications should be delivered to school by parents/guardians** whenever possible; however, if this is not possible, parents need to send medications in a properly labeled bottle with student's name, name of drug to be given, and dosage. **No more than a five (5) day supply** of medication may be transported by a student. Controlled substances (i.e., Tylenol with codeine, Ritalin, etc...) must be delivered to school by a parent/guardian.

Medication must be stored in a secure area at the school.

**NO** Medication shall be provided by the school.

### **Insect stings:**

1. Parents will be responsible for providing precise instructions from the physician for action to be taken when students who are allergic to insect stings (bees, wasps, etc.) are stung during school hours. These instructions should be signed by both the physician and parent/guardian.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the appropriate **bee sting kit** for those students who require epinephrine.



# MCSS COMPACT

## **A. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES** – each student is expected to:

- Believe that it is possible to learn
- Come to school each day supplied with pens, pencils, paper and other tools necessary for learning.
- To make every effort to do his/her best at work and in behavior.
- Follow school rules
- Show self-respect and respect for the personal rights and property of other people and animals.
- Accept responsibility of own actions.
- Work to resolve conflicts in positive, non-violent ways.

## **B. PARENT/FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES** – Parents of MCSS students are encouraged to:

- See that child is punctual and attends school regularly.
- Support our school discipline policy.
- Establish a quiet time for homework and review it regularly.
- Encourage child's efforts and be available for any questions.
- Stay aware of what your child is learning.
- Share reading and learning with your child.
- Sign and return all papers that require parent/guardian signature.
- Attend parent/teacher conferences.

## **C. PRINCIPAL/STAFF RESONSIBILITIES** – Staff will strive together to:

- Communicate and work with families to enhance students' learning.
- Respect the cultural differences of students and their families.
- Continue efforts to develop professionally.
- Provide curriculum that promotes literacy through the study of literature, math, science, social studies, and the arts.
- Explain assignments clearly and provide homework that supports the curriculum.
- Encourage students and parents by providing information about student progress.
- Provide a safe, pleasant, and caring atmosphere.
- Provide resources to help all children be successful in their school experience.
- Maintain high expectations for self, students and other staff.
- Assist students in the development of a sense of personal and civic responsibility.
- Help students to resolve conflicts in an appropriate and positive manner.

## **NO SCHOOL/UNEXPECTED EARLY RELEASE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In case of inclement weather conditions, please listen to local radio and/or television stations for school cancellations. School may be dismissed when severe and threatening weather conditions exist. When school is closed without prior notice, instructions will be followed on the Unexpected Early Release form sent home in the fall. Parents should see that children have an alternate plan in the event the school is dismissed because of an emergency of any kind.

1. Make arrangements with a neighbor to receive your child if you are away from home during the day.

2. Give your child specific instructions so that he/she will know what arrangements you have made.
3. If possible, a parent alert will be sent to parents/guardians through with voicemail and text messages.

## NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

### **Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action**

The RSU 54/MSAD 54 Board is committed to maintaining a workplace and learning environment that is free from illegal discrimination and harassment.

In accordance with applicable Federal and/or State laws and regulations, RSU 54/MSAD 54 prohibits discrimination against and harassment of employees, candidates for employment, students and others with rights to admission or access to school programs, activities or premises on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry or national origin, age, or disability. For the purpose of this policy, sexual orientation means a person's actual or perceived heterosexuality, bisexuality, homosexuality, or gender identity or expression.

Bill Pullen, Assistant Superintendent/Affirmative Action Coordinator  
MSAD/RSU #54  
196 West Front Street  
Skowhegan, ME 04976  
(207)474-9508

Inquires concerning the application of MSAD/RSU #54's Public School's nondiscrimination policies also may be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), John W. McCormack Post Office and Court House, Boston, MA 02109-4557, telephone (617) 223-9662, TTY (617) 223-9695.

### **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT**

The family Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA) affords parents and students over age 18 years old ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believe are inaccurate or misleading.
  - a) Parents or eligible students may ask MSAD #54 to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.
  - b) If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the students' education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
  - a) One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an

administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

- b) Upon request, the District may disclose education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
  - c) The District may also disclose directory information without consent. Directory information would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Directory information includes student's name, date of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, degrees, awards, and the most recently attended school.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

**MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS**  
**IF YOU AND YOUR FAMILY LIVE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:**

- In a shelter
- In a motel or campground due to the lack of an alternative adequate accommodation
- In a car, park, abandoned building, or bus or train station
- Doubled up with other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship

**You may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act.**

**Eligible students have the right to:**

- Receive a free, appropriate public education.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment. • Enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents.
- Enroll in the local school; or continue attending their school of origin (the school they attended when permanently housed or the school in which they were last enrolled), if that is their preference and is feasible.
  - If the school district believes that the school selected is not in his/her best interest, then the district must provide the student with a written explanation of its position and inform the student of his/her right to appeal its decision.
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested.
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to the students' needs.

If you believe you may be eligible, contact the local liaison to find out what services and supports may be available.

If you need further assistance with your educational needs, contact:

Local Liaison(s) Dan Hylan –Skowhegan Area High School 474-5511

Ann Belanger or Erica Thompson – Special Services Department 474-7424

State Coordinator:  
Jacinda Goodwin  
Truancy, Dropout, Alternative Education and McKinney-Vento State Coordinator  
Maine Department of Education  
207-624-6637  
[jacinda.goodwin@maine.gov](mailto:jacinda.goodwin@maine.gov)

The National Center for Homeless Education: 1-800-308-2145 \* [homeless@serve.org](mailto:homeless@serve.org) \*  
[www.serve.org/nche](http://www.serve.org/nche)

## PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Parents are encouraged to initiate contact with their child's teacher(s) in the event of any concerns or problems that arise.
2. You are urged to share with us any information about how we can provide your child with the best education possible.
3. Please be sure that your child is well rested so he/she can attend to learning activities.
4. We urge parents to read to their children, have children read to them, share books, magazines and newspapers. Parents should supervise their children's television viewing habits.
5. Parents can be supportive of their children's formal education by showing an interest in their child's school day. Talk to them about what they did at school; review with their children any papers brought home; inquire about their reading and writing programs.
6. Review with your child his/her rights and responsibilities.
7. Many children will bring toys, games and dolls etc. to school. We cannot be held responsible for their repair or replacement if damaged or lost.
8. Parents should help students to be responsible for all books and equipment that they use. The parents or child will be expected to pay for lost or damaged books or equipment.
9. Please help us with the safety of your child coming to and from school: **Send a note if your child is changing his/her normal going-home plans or call the school office before 2:00 P.M.**
10. If a student has to stay after school (normally until 3:00), it will be the responsibility of his/her parents to arrange for transportation home.
11. The use of the school telephone(s) will be restricted to emergency use only for students. Students may not arrange social engagements during the school day.
12. **School hours are: 8:15 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.**

**Supervision begins at 7:45 A.M.**

**For your child's safety, please do not send or allow your child to arrive at school prior to that time. (This is subject to change, families will be notified.)**

13. Students will be released only to parents, legal guardians and other person(s) specifically authorized to pick up a student(s) by written notifications from parents/legal guardians. **Only persons listed on your child's emergency card may pick up your child from school, unless a note or call is received by the school office.**
14. All students dismissed early must be signed out through the office by a parent/legal guardian or person(s) specifically authorized to pick up a student(s) by written notification from parents/legal guardian.

15. Students who arrive at school late must report to the office first, accompanied by a parent/guardian, to receive a pass. No student should enter or exit the school via portable classroom door if they are tardy or leaving early. They must be signed out at the front office.

## **PHONE CALLS AND VISITORS TO CLASSROOMS**

Telephone calls from outside the school building will be put through to classrooms from 8:00 – 8:15 a.m. and between 2:15 – 3:00 p.m. All other phone calls will be handled by leaving a message for the staff member. Student messages for end of day instructions will be announced to each room at 2:00 p.m. each day. You may call the office to leave those instructions at any time. If you must speak with your child, we will give them a message to contact you prior to the end of the day. The school hours are teaching and student learning times and should be “interruption free” during the school day.

## **POLICIES**

REVISED: December 15, 2005

### **MSAD/RSU # 54 POLICY ON CHEMICAL ABUSE AND CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY (STUDENTS)**

#### **Philosophy**

Chemical use, abuse, and dependency (including alcoholism) are a major health problem resulting in increased human tragedy and economic loss. MSAD/RSU #54 recognizes chemical dependency (including alcoholism) as a progressive illness and believes: 1) The use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and/or other drugs in such a way that the individual's performance in school, school related activities, or on the job is impaired must be prevented; and 2) The abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs is a progressive illness with social, emotional and health related problems. The school and other organizations in the community must be capable of playing a helping and an encouraging role with individuals as they seek and receive assistance to alleviate their substance abuse.

#### **Policy**

MSAD/RSU #54 believes that its primary responsibility regarding substance abuse is to present a curricular program concerning chemical use, abuse, and dependency to all of our students K-12. In this program, efforts will be made to familiarize the students with the disease concept of chemical dependency; the effects of chemical use on the family; the nature of the law regarding particular chemical use and/or abuse; and an emphasis on non-use. MSAD/RSU #54 believes that an active curricular program is the best possible measure the schools can take towards preventing individuals from becoming chemical abusers or chemically dependent. MSAD/RSU #54 has committed the resources of the district towards developing, implementing and maintaining such a curriculum and will devote resources towards providing continuous in-service in this area for the staff of MSAD/RSU #54.

MSAD/RSU #54 recognizes that despite the curricular efforts, some individuals will become chemical abusers and/or chemically dependent. MSAD/RSU #54 will encourage the individual who is chemically dependent, as determined by a substance abuse counselor, to seek help, and will aid the person and/or the family while the person is receiving help. MSAD/RSU # 54 will honor the confidential nature of the medical records of employees and students who suffer from chemical dependency (including alcoholism) and shall share such information where medically necessary with the consent of the individual or the individual's parents or guardians.

MSAD/RSU #54 believes a student shall not use, have in possession, buy, sell, or give the following: A beverage containing alcohol (regardless of quantity), tobacco, marijuana, an over-the-counter drug, a look-a-like drug, or any other substance defined by law as a drug, while in school, on school grounds, at school related functions, on the school bus, or at anytime or place that directly interferes with the operations, discipline or general welfare of the school. It is the expectation that students attending MSAD/RSU #54 schools and school events will be chemical free. This policy covers all extra-curricular activities and sports.

MSAD/RSU #54 also recognizes that many children in our schools are affected by substance use and abuse in their homes. Because these children come to school with a variety of needs as a result of substance use and abuse, programs and services will also be available through curricular programming.

## PROGRESS REPORT

Pupil Progress Reports are provided at the closing of each trimester to allow parents to follow and understand the progress of their child.

It is expected that the parents will meet with their child’s teacher and pick up their child’s first progress report each fall at conference time. An optional spring conference is available. A student’s progress can be discussed with the school staff at any time during the school year.

## RECESS – INSIDE/OUTSIDE

Students shall receive a lunch recess of 25 minutes. Before school begins students will gather in the gym, during this time they may eat breakfast before being dismissed to their classrooms. All recesses are expected to take place outside the building. Students will enjoy stretching their legs and enjoy the fresh air. **In the event of inclement weather i.e. rain, or frigid temperatures below 10 degrees, to include the wind chill factor, the students will be inside. If the temperature is 10 or above, including the wind chill factor, students will go outside.**

Students are not allowed in the building or on the playground until 7:45 A.M. when teachers will begin their duties. If students are dropped off earlier they must wait outside the building. Please keep this in mind during frigid days or inclement weather.

In the event of inclement weather at the end of the day, students will be released at the normal time for walkers and bus students will wait for their bus in the gym with duty staff members.

## RESPONSIBLE ACTIONS

1. Ignore
2. Walk away
3. Tell them “Stop”
4. Be Assertive

Alternatives:

- Apologize or write a letter

# RULES

## BEHAVIORAL RULES AND CONSEQUENCES

MCSS is a community of learners. In order for students to be safe and productive we need rules and consequences just like a community. The following section is an outline of the rules and the guidelines we all need to know and follow, as well as the consequences when rules are broken.

We are very proud of the behavioral record of the vast majority of our students. They show us every day by their commendable behavior that they wish our school to be safe and productive. With that in mind, please review these rules and rest assured that the staff at MCSS will work with you in every way to make our school the best and safest place in which to work and play. Due to safety considerations, students are prohibited from bringing knives, matches, etc., to school. These and other things that are designed to be used as a weapon, to inflict bodily harm, and/or used to threaten, intimidate, coerce, or harass another person(s) will be taken away from the student and result in an investigation and appropriate action by the building administrator/designee.

MCSS students are encouraged to use the following Responsible Actions and/or Alternatives when they are in conflict:

## CONSEQUENCES

If, by chance, a student makes an unwise decision and breaks a rule, we ask that he/she accept the consequences and learn from the mistake. The staff member who observes the inappropriate behavior (i.e. not following one or more of the four rules) will speak to the child about the rule(s) not followed. The staff member may issue a disciplinary form to the student with copies for the principal, the homeroom teacher and him/herself. The student will then take the disciplinary form home, have it signed by his/her parent/guardian and return it to his/her homeroom teacher the following school day. **The student will have to stay after school for 45 minutes for every day he/she fails to return the signed form to school.**

**Violent or threatening behavior, in verbal, written or physical form, is prohibited.** Because of the seriousness of violence and the potential for danger, in cases of threatening or other violent acts of behavior, we reserve the right to apply more serious measures which may include, but are not limited to, loss of privileges, detention, suspension, etc.

These more serious procedures and consequences will also apply if a student is found smoking on the school grounds, in possession of any form of tobacco, skipping school or leaving the school grounds without permission.

Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, there may also be legal consequences and school board action in addition to the sanctions mentioned above.

## **RULES FOR PLAYGROUND JUNGLE GYM**

- **NO standing on top bars**
- **NO sitting on top bars**
- **NO penny drops**
- **NO jumping from platforms**
- **NO chasing through the bars (while other students are using it)**
- **NO running through the bars (while other students are using it)**
- **NO flips off the bars**
- **Students may slide down fire pole**

## **SCHOOL RULES**

1. We are respectful of others, their belongings, property and ourselves.
2. Fighting, threatening or any act of violence will not be tolerated. Report immediately to a teacher the occurrence of all accidents, and any acts of violence or other unsafe activities.
3. We follow directions.
4. We use appropriate language and quiet voices.
5. We will walk slowly, quietly and on the right side of the hallway.
6. We are responsible for the cleanliness of our own space.
7. We act and play safely and use all equipment appropriately. Barn ball is not permitted.
8. We ask for permission before leaving the playground, building or classroom.
9. We dress appropriately for the weather.
10. We observe the boundaries, i.e., chain link fencing, roadway at the edge of the football field, Memorial Field fenced enclosure, and gate.
11. Food, candy, gum and drinks are not allowed on the playground or in the hallway. Gum chewing is not permitted inside the building.
12. No hats may be worn in any school building.



## SECURITY

Dear Parents & Guardians,

The beginning of the school year is a good time to start stressing safety and security. Due to incidences that have occurred to children in schools across our country there will be necessary safety changes that need to take place at the Margaret Chase Smith School. The school shootings have made it top priority to put in place tighter safety precautions.

All doors to the building are locked. A doorbell system is at the front door for visitors to use for entrance into the school. **All parents/guardians who come to the school should push the button for the doorbell, sign in at the office, and have their child's classroom called. All children who are picked up will report to the office and be dismissed from the office. The portable classrooms will be locked from 8:00 A.M.-2:15 P.M. Identification may be required by the office staff.**

I understand this will create an inconvenience for some people. However, the time spent coming through the front doors could save years of pain and sorrow. It is more important to be proactive versus reactive when it comes to the safety of the children and staff.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and assistance in the commitment to lifelong learning and excellence in our caring school.

Sincerely,  
Kathleen F.S. Harvey  
Principal

## SNOW OR INCLEMENT WEATHER CONDITIONS

Because of the size of our school district, safe traveling in inclement weather conditions can be quite different between one area and another. Therefore, if school has not been canceled, you have the right as a parent or guardian to keep your child home if you feel that the road conditions are too hazardous for travel in your area. Please notify the school and your child's absence will be considered an excused absence.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

Maine's regulations governing the provision of free appropriate public education and equal educational opportunities to all students with exceptionalities were revised in 1988. Parents of children with exceptionalities or of children referred for special education services may notice some changes in the criteria for identification of more students with exceptionalities and changes in the terms of labels identifying the exceptionalities. Efforts will be made to inform interested and concerned parents of the specific changes in the regulations and in what way, if any, the revised regulations will affect the services provided to their children. Parents may contact the district's special education director if they have questions about the revised regulations or if they have other questions about the district's special education programs.

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is provided to all students living more than a mile from the school. Bus routes are determined by the Business Manager. Specific bus routes, bus numbers, drivers and estimated pickup times are printed in the local newspaper prior to the opening of school for the year. Parents should send their children on the bus the first day of school to receive proper information on which bus the child(ren) will be traveling to and from school. Parents who want their child (ren) picked up or returned to a place other than their own homes (on a regular basis) must obtain prior approval from the Business Administrator.

Any change from a child's normal going-home routine will require a written note, **which has been signed and dated**, from the child (ren)'s parent/guardian. The bus shall be considered an extension of the classroom and students are expected to conduct themselves, while on the bus, in the same appropriate way as in the classroom. The bus driver has the authority and responsibility to maintain orderly behavior of students on the bus. In case a student loses his/her riding privileges, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian of the student(s) involved to see that the student(s) gets to and from school safely and on time.

## VISITORS

For the safety and protection of our students, all **visitors** (meaning anyone who is not a student or staff of MCSS) **should push the front doorbell to be able to enter and through the front doors only** and will be required to check in at the office with the secretary or principal, wear a visitor badge, and sign the visitor's log. This includes visitors to classrooms in the portable units. Students should NOT be picked up or dropped off at the portable units.

Visitors to Portable Units **should also come through the main entrance** and not visit, drop off students/homework/etc. or pick up students at the portable unit entrance. There is no student pick-up log or visitor log or badges in the portable units.

Visitors who would like to visit classrooms may do so between the hours of 8:00 – 8:10 a.m. and 2:15 – 3:00 p.m. The school hours are teaching and student learning times and should be “interruption free” during the school day.

## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers in elementary school help teachers and students in innumerable ways: Assisting in the library; serving as tutors in the classroom; making learning center materials; accompanying students on field trips; running off papers and talking with students about their education and hobbies.

We encourage the use of volunteers to supplement programs within the school. If you have time, special talents, or interesting experiences to share, please contact your child's teacher or school principal and make arrangements to volunteer your services. All volunteers must wear a badge which indicates “Volunteer”. **All volunteers must complete a background check prior to any volunteering time.**

**LETTER TO PARENTS**  
**HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHER INFORMATION**  
**For Title 1 School and Programs Only**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We at Margaret Chase Smith School are notifying you this information as one way to fulfill our obligations under the “Parents’ Right to Know” requirements of the federal *No Child Left behind Act* (NCLB). Under these requirements, Title I teachers must meet general qualifications as well as the specific requirements, Title I teachers must meet general qualifications as well as the specific requirements of the subject they are teaching. This means we will be informing parents whenever a child is taught for four consecutive weeks by a Title I teacher who does not meet the new federal definition of “Highly Qualified”.

Maine has some of the most qualified teachers in the country, and we are extremely proud of our teaching staff. We work hard to assure that every class has a teacher with the appropriate background, experience, and credentials for his or her current teaching assignment.

We believe that a caring, competent, and qualified teacher for every child is the most important ingredient in education reform, and we want to assure you that we consider all our teachers to be fully qualified for their positions. All of our teachers are currently entitled to teach under Maine’s strict certification requirements. All of our teachers have college degrees and many have advanced degrees. In addition, every teacher continues his or her own learning through professional development activities and our teachers are evaluated each year to make sure that their teaching skills remain at the highest possible level.

Most teachers already meet the federal definition of “Highly Qualified”. Those teachers who do not meet this federal standard will be able to do so by engaging in additional professional development or by passing a test.

Additional information on the NCLB Act, as well as on the qualifications of your child’s teacher is available on request. Please contact Kathleen F.S. Harvey at (207) 474-9822 if you have questions or would like further information. Working with parents is an important aspect of our efforts to help students learn and we welcome your interest.

Sincerely,  
Kathleen F.S. Harvey, Principal