

## **PRINCIPAL'S FOREWORD TO PARENTS**

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I am pleased to introduce you to the 2008-2009 William E. Norris School Student Handbook. One definition of a handbook is *a concise guide designed to help travelers and tourists find their way around a region, city, or other geographic location.*

It is our hope that this newly revised handbook will serve not only as a concise guide for young travelers journeying on the path of knowledge, but also as a useful tool of “must knows” for anyone interacting with our elementary school.

For ease of use, the Norris Handbook contains a table of contents and is arranged alphabetically. Inside, you will discover answers to the most commonly asked questions. The information in this handbook is designed to provide summaries, which are succinct and easily referenced. Much of the information found in this handbook has been compiled from the various school rules, regulations, and policies that govern the day-to-day operation of the school.

Because it is essential to the smooth operation of any organization that its members understand and agree to abide by a common set of guidelines, I request that once students and their parents have familiarized themselves with the contents of the handbook, they please sign and return the acknowledgment form on the last page.

Sincerely,

William E. Collins  
Principal

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## SCHOOL PERSONNEL

### Superintendent's Office

Superintendent of Schools -	Dr. Barbara Ripa
Assistant Superintendent -	Dr. G. Anthony Ryan
Director of Pupil Services	Laurie Farkas
Business Administrator -	Cindy Landers
Health Education Coordinator -	Mary Phelan

### School Office

Principal-	William Collins
Assistant Principal-	Barbara Barlow
Secretary-	Michelle Carmichael
Secretary-	Brenda Thibault

### Health Office

Nurse-	Barbara Midura
Nurse-	Carla McAvoy

### Guidance Office

Adjustment Counselor-	Jay Conklin
School Psychologist-	Jean Kuhn

### Special Education:

Grades K – 2 -	Lisa Palermo
Grades 3 – 4 -	Linda Braastad
Grades 5 – 6 -	Robert Smith
Special Education Reading –	James Tollefson
Speech and Language -	Erica Bell
Speech and Language-	Michelle Boisvert
Speech and Language -	Deb McNeice
Occupational Therapy-	Leslie Mish

### Remedial Reading

Reading Recovery Teacher-	Stacy Ashley
Reading Recovery Teacher-	Martha Morris
Remedial Reading Specialist-	Susan Hale

### Preschool:

Teacher-	Roxie DuVal & Pauline Webster
Paraprofessionals -	Amy Bzdel & Melissa Rogers

### Kindergarten:

Teacher-	Rita Smith	Paraprofessionals-	Judy Kukucka
Teacher-	Ruth Burnett	Paraprofessional-	Christine Leavitt
Teacher-	Laurie Frye	Paraprofessionals-	Connie Tanguay /
			Doreen Bashista/Pam Michaud
Teacher-	Gail Poulin	Paraprofessional-	Pamela Piper

### Grade 1:

Teacher-	Megan Johnson	Paraprofessional-	Karen Brown
Teacher-	Melissa Haskins		
Teachers:	Martha Morris / Pauline Webster	Paraprofessional-	Kathy Sullivan
Teacher-	Cheryl Salomao	Paraprofessional-	Becky Hazen & Bridget King

### Grade 2:

Teacher-	Shirley Anop		
Teacher-	Cindy Diemand	Paraprofessional-	Deb Bean
Teacher-	Johanna Keefe	Paraprofessional-	Mary Millay
Teacher-	Anne Marie O'Reilly/Becky Hazen		

**Grade 3:**

Teacher-  
 Teacher-  
 Teacher-  
 Teacher-

Lisa Bartlett  
 Elaine Dastoli  
 Denise Perkins  
 Mary Rivest

Paraprofessional- Kristine O'Connor

**Grade 4:**

Teacher -  
 Teacher -  
 Teacher -  
 Teacher -

Sharon Irwin  
 Susan Medeiros  
 Susan Teece  
 Shannon Trzcienski

Paraprofessional- Brenda Lego

Paraprofessional-Danielle Kowal

**Grade 5:**

Teacher –  
 Teacher –  
 Teacher –  
 Teacher –

Sunday Burke  
 Joseph Moynihan  
 Kristen Heath  
 Mia Chartrand

Paraprofessional- John McCarthy

**Grade 6:**

Teacher -  
 Teacher -  
 Teacher -  
 Teacher -

Brian Chamberlin  
 Matthew Meunier  
 Lisa Rice-  
 Kevin Hodgson

Paraprofessional- Sandy Klich

**Specials**

Art Teacher-  
 Librarian-  
 Physical Education Teacher-  
 Music Teacher-

Leslie diCurcio  
 Pati Mari  
 James Hallett  
 Diane Scott

**Custodial Staff:**

Custodian-  
 Custodian-  
 Custodian-  
 Custodian-

Daniel Demarey  
 Charlie Russell  
 Steven Silva  
 Robert Weeks

**Kitchen Staff:**

Cafeteria Manager –  
 Head Cook –  
 Kitchen-  
 Kitchen -  
 Kitchen -  
 Lunchroom Monitor –  
 Lunchroom Monitor –

Kathleen Keady  
 Renee Freniere  
 Holly Daniels  
 Beverly Foster  
 David Hayes  
 Lisa Shea  
 Beth LaBerge



## Daily Schedule

7:00	YMCA Before-School Program Opens
8:00	School Office Opens
8:30 - 8:50	Breakfast Program
8:35	Faculty & Staff Arrive
8:40 - 8:50	Students Arrive
8:50	School Begins/Morning Announcements
3:10	Student Dismissal
4:00	School Office Closes
6:00	YMCA After-School Program Closes

### Lunch Schedule

Preschool	N/A
Kindergarten	11:30 - 11:55
Grade 1	11:45 - 12:10
Grade 2	12:00 - 12:25
Grade 3	12:45 - 1:10
Grade 4	12:30 - 12:55
Grade 5	12:15 - 12:40
Grade 6	1:05 - 1:30

### **School Philosophy**

The philosophy of the William E. Norris is based on the underlying belief that all children can succeed in school when they are presented with high expectations and treated with respect and dignity. We believe that all children are unique and have special strengths and special needs. Our role is to help the children reach the highest level of development in all areas: intellectual, physical, social and emotional, in a safe, non-competitive and developmentally appropriate environment. Our hope is that all of our children become enthusiastic life-long learners.

### **School Mission**

Our mission is to develop a community of lifelong learners. We believe that each student has the ability to learn and succeed. The attributes necessary to achieve success include:

- A caring and supportive home environment
- A positive, safe school environment conducive to learning and growing
- A variety of teaching and learning experiences supporting different learning styles
- A cooperative relationship among parents, teachers, students, staff and administrators
- Self-discipline and good citizenship
- Mutual respect and understanding of individual and cultural differences

With everyone's patience, effort, perseverance, and commitment, we will accomplish our mission.

## Norris School Code of Conduct

All members of the Norris community have the right to work and learn in a safe and secure environment. To do this, we all have responsibilities to behave with courtesy and respect. All members of the Norris School community should treat others as they would like to be treated.

Our responsibilities include:

- To express one's own ideas, opinions and feelings and to listen respectfully to others
- To respect school, personal and other's property
- To do one's best and support others
- To accept responsibility for one's actions

Many children learn these responsibilities through instruction in the Responsive Classroom and PeaceBuilders curriculum.

Consequences for violations to the code of conduct We understand that people don't always behave in the ways they know they should. When violations to the code of conduct occur, there are logical consequences. Consequences depend on the age of the child, the seriousness of the offense, and whether it is a first time or repeated offense. Certain violations are considered **major offenses**. These include *fighting, intentional destruction of school property, foul language, not following adult directions, and intimidation and harassment of others*. When major offenses occur, the following steps will be taken:

1. The adult who observed the offense writes a description and sends it to the principal/assistant principal.
2. The principal/assistant principal follows up by talking with the adult making the report and with the child involved.
3. The child writes a description of the behavior and a plan for improvement.
4. The plan goes home for review and discussion with the parents or guardians, who sign and return the plan.

Repeated misbehavior may require additional consequences, which are discussed between the principal and parent or guardian. Possible replacement costs for damaged property may be required.

**Note:** Certain behaviors are more serious (such as physical aggression, use of drugs or alcohol, or possession of weapons) and may lead to suspension. Also, students on individualized education plans may require a modified response, to be determined by that student's team.

## Administration of Norris School

Southampton is a Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 6 school district. Elementary school students attend the William E. Norris School on Pomeroy Meadow Road in Southampton. The Norris School telephone number is 527-0811. Local authority for the Norris School rests with the five-member School Committee. School Committee members are elected to three-year terms in general elections. School Committee responsibilities include policy development and budget implementation.

### 2008-2009 School Committee Members

Don Abel	John Cowley	Lauren Carmichael
Kim Schott, Chair	John Fitzpatrick	

Students in grades seven through 12 may attend Hampshire Regional High School on Stage Road in Westhampton. The telephone number of the high school is 527-7680. Southampton has five elected members on the Hampshire Regional School Committee and one appointed member from the local school committee.

The Norris School Council is made up of staff and community members, including three parents. The School Council meets the second Wednesday of the month. The School Council develops the School Improvement Plan and advises the principal and School Committee on matters related to school function. Parent members are selected at the September PTO meeting (Second Tuesday of the Month).

### School Council Members

Stacy Ashley	Vijay Dalal	John Fitzpatrick	Julie Babyak	William Collins
Sunday Burke	Jim Hallett	Rev. Dee Ledger	Johanna Keefe	

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Absence and Tardiness**

**Please call the nurse's office at 527-1535 if your child will be absent from school.** Calls **must** be received before 9:15 A.M. Voicemail is available 24 hours a day.

The school day begins promptly at 8:50 A.M. All students should be in their classrooms at that time each day. If the parents are aware that the student will be late, they should call the office. Children who arrive late should check in at the main office before going to their classroom.

If you have not called by 9:30 A.M., the office will call your home, work, or emergency numbers to determine your child's whereabouts. If we are unable to reach you, and the school has reason for concern regarding the child's absence, the Southampton Police Department may be contacted and asked to investigate. These procedures are intended to safeguard your child. We appreciate your cooperation.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) regulations mandate that elementary schools maintain a minimum 92 percent average daily attendance. Both the state and the federal government mandate that we work to minimize student absenteeism because absences adversely affect academic progress. Many days of missed instruction create a burden for the absent student to keep up with the class. The Principal, Assistant Principal or Nurse may contact you should your child be absent or excessively tardy.

### **Arrival Procedures**

If children are attending our breakfast program they may arrive at 8:30. Otherwise, children **should not** arrive before 8:40. For security reasons, we do not allow parents to walk their children to their classrooms. (If you need to speak to a teacher, check in at the office and we will contact the teacher for you.) See the **Parking** section for important information regarding parking at school.

### **Bicycle & Scooter Riders**

Children may ride their bicycles or scooters to school. Children riding bicycles or scooters to school must wear a helmet. Bicycle racks are provided and must be used at all times. Bicycles should be locked to ensure their protection. Children must exercise extreme care when riding because buses and automobiles turn into the driveway. Children should not ride bicycles on the lawn. There will be no bicycle riding on school property during school hours. Students riding bikes must leave immediately at dismissal or wait until all buses are out of sight before leaving. Those abusing the privilege or disregarding the laws may not be permitted to ride their bicycles to and from school.

**Breakfast** *see School Breakfast and Lunch Programs*

**Bus** *see Transportation/Bus Safety*

### **Change of Address or Phone**

The school office must be notified when your address or phone number changes. When we are not notified of a change we are unable to locate parents in an emergency.

### **Children Remaining After School Hours**

A teacher or any member of the professional staff of the school may request that a student receive additional help after school. The student may only stay if his/her parent or guardian has been notified and has given permission for the student to remain after school. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange for the child's transportation home. Staff members cannot transport students.

A student may also be kept after school hours for disciplinary purposes. If there is a need, the teacher, principal, or professional staff member may detain a student until 4:00 p.m. The student will be given one day's notice in order to arrange for transportation. In all cases, parents will be notified of the specific arrangements.

**Computers** *see Technology Usage*

## **CORI Checks**

Schools in Massachusetts are **required** to perform CORI (*Criminal Offender Record Information*) checks on any current or prospective volunteers in the school department. Any parent/guardian that is interested in volunteering at the school or that may be interested in attending field trips should complete a CORI form. Forms are available at the school office. CORI checks can take up to several weeks to process. The school suggests completing the paperwork and having it on file so that parents may be available to volunteer or chaperone without any delay.

## **Dismissal Procedures**

Parents picking their children up prior to the 3:10 dismissal are required to park on Gunn Road Ext. and go to the main lobby to meet their children. **Please send your requests for early dismissals in writing with the date and your signature.** Parents picking children up at the end of the day must wait in the lobby for their children. Parents may not wait in the hallways outside of the classroom doors for their children to be dismissed.

## **Dress Code**

Our school is your place of business. The way you dress can affect your attitude, performance and behavior, as well as the attitude of others. The manner in which you dress should not be distracting and should not interrupt the educational process. Shirts, hats, buttons, belts, etc., which bear suggestive or offensive pictures and messages should not be worn to school. We ask parents to monitor their children's clothing choices in the morning. Clothing choices should be weather appropriate and suitable for daily activity. Students are not allowed to wear hats or visors in school.

## **Electronic Devices**

Electronic devices (CD players, MP3 players, I-Pods, handheld electronic games, digital cameras, laser pens, cell phones, pagers, etc...) present a distraction to instruction and therefore should not be brought to school. Any electronic device that is brought to school may be confiscated by school staff and kept for parental pick up. The school is not responsible for any electronic devices placed in lockers or lost at school.

## **Family Vacations**

We recognize the value of family trips and travel as worthwhile experiences. When students miss school for a period of time, it can have negative consequences as well. This is particularly true when some students return to school overwhelmed with make-up assignments. The entire learning experience that will be missed cannot necessarily be duplicated by outside assignments. In order to ensure a positive educational experience, we offer the following guidelines for you and your child when an extended absence is anticipated:

- If at all possible, schedule your vacation during a regularly scheduled school vacation.
- If this is not possible, parents should notify their child's teacher at least two weeks in advance of the planned absence. The teacher will then review your child's progress and suggest the best plan to compensate for missed learning experiences. Teachers may decide to provide assignments during the absence; however, teachers are not required to re-teach work or to tutor students when they return.

## **Field Trips**

**Parents and guardians must have a CORI check to chaperone field trips.** Field trips arranged by the school are an integral part of the elementary educational experience. Often there is a fee to attend field trips. Financial aid is available to any student who cannot afford to attend. Please call the principal for financial aid. Checks written for field trips should be made payable to the **Town of Southampton**. Written permission is a requirement for all field trips. Your child will not be allowed to depart from the school without your permission. Parent chaperones are asked to not bring siblings on field trips. Chaperones need to be able to provide undivided attention to the important task of chaperoning their assigned group of students. For this reason, parents and guardians should not bring other siblings along on field trips

## **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are scheduled and supervised by the Southampton Fire Department. During a fire drill, all children, staff and visitors will promptly and quietly exit the building to their designated area. Occasionally, unannounced fire drills are conducted. The teachers give instructions in advance so that children will know how to exit the building during a

fire drill. Written instructions are also posted in each classroom. Teachers practice the fire drill procedure with their children to make sure that every child knows what to do during an emergency.

### **Lockers**

A locker will be assigned to each child in grades three through six. Lockers are not secure (we do not allow the use of locks) and are for storage of school related materials (books, etc.) and outerwear. Children are encouraged **not** to keep valuables in their lockers. School lockers, desks, and cubbies are the property of the school. School authorities may search school lockers, desks, or cubbies at any time.

### **Lost and Found**

Small valuables are held in the office. Larger items, such as clothing, will be placed in a lost and found in the cafeteria. All articles of personal property should be clearly marked for easy identification. The school is not responsible for lost articles. Any unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of the school year.

**Lunch** *see School Breakfast and Lunch Programs*

### **Nut Safe School**

The cafeteria does not use nut or nut byproducts. **Children attending Norris should bring only non-peanut product snacks and sandwiches to school.** Although this may sound as simple as not packing PB&J sandwiches and cutting out peanut butter crackers, there are actually hundreds of foods containing trace amounts of peanut oil, either from “hidden” ingredients or production line cross-contamination. Please carefully check the ingredients of all foods brought to school.

### **Parent Organizations**

There are two parent organizations available for those parents interested in supporting our school. The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) provides support to the school in several ways and provides the community with family activities. The Special Education Parents’ Advisory Council provides support and information for parents of children with special needs and other interested parties. From time to time, fundraising activities may be conducted by organizations that support the school, or conducted by school personnel. Students and parents may choose not to participate. Children will not be issued products on consignment. Incentives and prizes for reaching fundraising goals are prohibited.

### **Parking**

Parking spaces in the front and rear of the school are reserved for **staff members only**. The one exception is for vehicles displaying official handicap plates or placards, which may park in the handicapped spaces provided in the front lot.

Parents dropping children off or picking children up should park on Gunn Road Extension only. School visitors and volunteers shall also park on Gunn Road Extension.

### **Party Invitations**

Please do not send your child to school with invitations to a private party if he or she is not inviting every student in the class. Students will not be allowed to distribute invitations at school which cause classmates to be excluded.

### **Personal Property and School Property**

Children are strongly urged to care for school property appropriately. Should damage be done to school property, the student responsible for the damage may be held responsible for the cost of repair. Students shall not bring expensive toys or electronic equipment to school. The school is not responsible if student property is lost or broken. Also, if personal property is being used at an inappropriate time, or in a way to distract from learning time, the teacher may confiscate the item and hold onto it for a period of time. If inappropriate use of personal property is a continued problem, parents will be called.

**Pets**

No pets should visit school without prior approval from the classroom teacher and the school nurse, since many children have pet allergies.

**Recess and Playground Rules**

PK-5 classes usually have recess for one or two periods per day, for a total of 30 minutes. Grade 6 has two 30-minute recesses each week. Children are expected to go out to recess and should be dressed appropriately. During rainy weather and extreme cold, recess may be held indoors.

In winter weather, we expect children to be clothed properly for outside play. Warm hats, mittens, coats, ski pants, and boots should be worn. The principal will reference the weather chart (see back cover) when determining whether or not recess will be outdoors. When children wear boots to school, they must also have something else to wear on their feet. Socks may become wet so we recommend that a pair of slippers or sneakers be left at school. Children may not go barefoot in school.

Toy weapons and sharp instruments of any kind are not permitted at recess or in the school. We do not allow certain games that are inappropriate or dangerous for elementary age children, such as tackle football, keep-away games, or King of the Mountain. No hardballs are allowed.

**Playground Rules**

Rules in a school setting are devised and enforced to protect the safety of all children. Regular school rules apply as well as special playground rules.

On the *play structures*:

1. Play is allowed on the inside of the play structures, no climbing on the outside.
2. Chasing games are not allowed around the play structures.
3. Walk on the woodchips.

On the *playing fields and the blacktop*:

1. Rules that apply in gym class apply here.
2. Tackling, tripping and other rough contact are not allowed.
3. If someone wants to join a game, he or she may. If there are too many students playing already, the existing team will help the new team get a game started.

*In general*:

1. Share all of the equipment and take turns.
2. Do not climb fences or leave the playground.
3. Stones, rocks, dirt, and sand are to stay on the ground. Throwing snow or ice during the winter months is not allowed.

If the above listed rules are not be followed, consequences will result. Consequences may include sitting out a portion of the recess period, a warning, and loss of recess privilege for a period of time, and/or a visit with the principal.

**Residency Verification**

Educational services at the William E. Norris School are available only to those students who live in Southampton or approved School of Choice students. Accordingly, the Southampton Town Clerk will be provided with a list of student names and addresses for purposes of verifying residency.

**School of Choice**

Southampton participates in the Massachusetts School of Choice Program. This program allows students from other communities to attend school in Southampton. There are a limited number of openings available to students outside of Southampton. More information is available on School of Choice at the school office.

## **Snacks**

**Norris is a nut safe facility.** Please be mindful of this and other classroom allergies when packing snacks. Children may bring a daily snack to eat during the scheduled morning snack time. We encourage healthy snacks from home. For example, snacks such as cereal, crackers, fruit, juice and/or vegetables are very welcome.

## **Toys**

Please do not bring expensive toys or electronic devices to school. We are not responsible for broken or lost toys.

## **Visitors and Volunteers**

All visitors and volunteers must be buzzed into the building at the main door and sign in at the office. All other doors are locked during the school day for the safety of our students and staff. Should a visitor wish to tour the building, the principal or a designee will gladly escort an individual or small group through the facility.

Parents may wish to visit their child's classroom to observe the offered programs. Please talk with your child's teacher to arrange for a visit. **Prior arrangements must be made.** If you have any questions, the policy is available in the school office for your review.

Volunteers are welcome in many of the elementary classrooms. Please contact your child's teacher for additional information. If you would like to volunteer in other areas of the school, please contact the school office. Volunteers must have a CORI check.

## **Weather/Emergency School Cancellations & Delays**

The decision to close or delay the opening of schools in bad weather depends on the opinion of the highway department supervisors and the bus companies, who contact the superintendent with advice about road conditions.

Whenever possible, a decision to delay or close is made by 5:30 A.M. The superintendent sends out a recorded ConnectEd message, notifies several radio stations, TV Channels 3, 22 and 40, and posts on the website [www.cancellations.com](http://www.cancellations.com). **All cancellations are listed under Hampshire Regional School District.** The school voice mail may also reflect any delays or cancellation information. Because it may be unsafe to send students home to an empty house, the superintendent avoids closing schools early.

## **Weather Chart on Back Cover**

# **INSTRUCTION**

## **Preschool and Kindergarten**

The town of Southamptton offers a public Inclusion Preschool to meet the mandate for educating preschool children with special needs. The program is open to families who have three and four year old children and five-year-olds whose birthdays come after September 1<sup>st</sup>. The morning and afternoon program can accommodate up to seven children with special needs and eight others from the community. By integrating children in this way, each population benefits and enriches the other. Carefully designed activities provide excellent social experiences, increased self-confidence, a base for understanding people with special needs, a foundation of preschool skills and joyful play that is so central to the early childhood stage of development.

Children are required to be 5 years of age by September 1st in order to enter Kindergarten. Kindergarten is a full-day program. The schedule will incorporate sharing time, thematic integrated activities, literacy instruction, snack, and recess time. In addition, all kindergarten students will have an opportunity to participate in physical education, music, library and art classes.

## **Classroom Curriculum**

Your child's classroom teacher offers instruction in reading, writing, language arts, math, science, and social studies. Teachers use a variety of materials and methods to meet the needs of all their students. Currently, the schools that

make up the Hampshire Regional District are re-examining the content standards for math, English/language arts, science, and social studies that will be consistent with the Massachusetts Frameworks for Education.

### **The Responsive Classroom and Social Skills Instruction**

Most of our teachers are trained in the Responsive Classroom method of social skill instruction and conflict resolution. The Responsive Classroom is used to increase student motivation, develop self-discipline and self-esteem. It stresses cooperation and personal responsibility, giving instruction in social problem-solving skills like listening, sharing, and working with others. We hope to develop a school environment where students feel a sense of community and learn self-control and appropriate responses in different situations. Students and teachers in the classroom will develop rules and logical consequences. Our goal is to prevent and correct misbehavior rather than punish.

### **PeaceBuilders**

PeaceBuilders is a school wide violence prevention program for elementary and middle schools (K-8). The program incorporates a strategy to change the school climate implemented by staff and students and is designed to promote pro-social behavior among students and adults. Children learn five simple principles: 1) praise people; 2) give up put-downs; 3) seek wise people; 4) notice and speak up about hurts we caused; and 5) right wrongs. Adults reinforce and model behaviors at school, at home, and in the community.

### **Art Instruction**

Art education provides an environment that allows each child to develop a strong sense of self-worth and individualism through the process of self-expression. Students discover and strengthen skills in visual communication, creativity, problem solving, perception, critical thinking, and interpreting the world.

The developmental curriculum emphasizes exploration, mastery of techniques, and the study of art elements as its basis for learning. The study of art and art history crosses all disciplines. Integrated lessons help the students make connections, provide a visual and manipulative approach to concepts, and stimulate the whole child to learn. Child-centered lessons require full participation and exercise right-brain functions of intuition and imagery not utilized in traditional academics. The process of art-making taps the potential inside each student and activates his or her powers of invention and exploration.

### **Library**

Mission of the Norris School Library: The Richard Dragon Library exists to support the students, staff, and parents of the William E. Norris School. The library promotes a lifelong love of reading by ensuring that each child has ongoing access to the library's collection and by continually improving the collection. The library provides access to information via print and non-print sources. The library conducts classes on information literacy. The library actively promotes collaboration with classroom teachers on research projects.

### **Music Instruction**

Children learn about music through movement, singing, playing and listening to music. Students in the primary grades concentrate on hearing and responding to steady beat. Children sing and move with and to music. We folk dance, play rhythm instruments and listen to music. In addition to these activities, third and fourth grade children are introduced to the recorder. Basic elements of music are introduced and explored. In fifth and sixth grade, children explore many different musical styles and composers. Fifth and sixth grade students can participate in weekly chorus and opt to take after school band and guitar lessons. Instrument rental is offered and a nominal fee is charged for band lessons. We have two concerts per year (winter and spring) for students in grades one through four, and 5/6 chorus.

### **Physical Education**

The physical education program takes a developmental approach, giving the children an opportunity to explore movement and sport skills at their own level. Lifelong appreciation for fitness begins during the elementary years by teaching the importance of daily stretching and using tag games for cardio-respiratory development. Other fitness enhancing programs used are the Exercise Across Massachusetts and the President's Physical Fitness Challenge. A program entitled Elementary Electives gives sixth graders a chance to further develop their skills by choosing to participate in movement and sport activities they prefer. Each activity runs for a duration of four 45-minute classes.

All children are required to wear comfortable clothing on gym day, i.e., shorts, T-shirts, wind suits. Sneakers with non-marking soles are also required. During the winter and mud seasons, we recommend that children have clean sneakers for class.

### **Sex Education**

School Committee policy governs the rights of parents or guardians in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. Parents must be notified about the curriculum and may exclude their child from portions of the curriculum, without penalty to the child.

The child may be given an alternative assignment in such cases. Parents may also inspect and review instructional materials. Please call the school office if you would like to see the policy or review the instructional materials.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Classroom Placement**

As the school's instructional leader, the principal is given the responsibility for assignment of children to classes using the knowledge and experience teachers have gained about each child. The principal is also responsible for the assignment of teachers to each class unit in a way that will best meet these needs.

The principal places children in classrooms for the school year with many factors in mind, including, but not limited to, learning style, personality, gender, behavior, and class size. The school staff recommends the formation of class groups only after completing a lengthy process of meetings and informal discussions. Parents are a very important resource to the principal because of what they know about their child's interests, aptitudes, learning style, work habits, aspirations, attitudes, and behaviors. Knowledge about these traits shared with the principal and/or classroom teacher will be considered when class units or teams are formed. Parents are asked not to request a specific teacher. After much consideration about each child's placement, the principal renders a final decision by assigning a teacher to each class group.

### **Homework**

Homework reinforces learning that has taken place in the classroom. It helps children develop good study skills, self-discipline, and responsibility. Homework will be used to assist the teacher in assessing your child's progress. In grades three through six, homework will be part of your child's letter grade. Homework may be given from three to five times a week.

In elementary school, we recommend that parents read to or with their child each night. Parents of first and second grade children should listen to their child read aloud each night. In first and second grade, children may have spelling words to study. Other assignments may be given occasionally.

A parent's major role is to provide an environment suitable for the completion of homework assignments, which may mean that students do their home assignments away from the television set and other distractions. In grades three and up, your child will have a homework assignment notebook. Parents will be notified about the cost of the assignment book.

You can expect that your child will have about 10 minutes of homework for each year in school (i.e., first grade has ten minutes, fourth grade has 40 minutes, etc.). If the homework seems excessive, is too difficult for your child, or takes much more time than expected, please discuss this with your child's teacher.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Personal conferences are an important part of communicating about children's progress. Two scheduled conferences are provided during the school year: October 29-31 & March 18-20. Teachers will notify parents of the date by sending home a conference slip that lists available time slots. Additional conferences may be arranged at a time that is convenient for both parties. A teacher or parent may ask that the principal attend a conference in certain situations.

### **Reporting Student Progress**

A report of progress will be sent home with students at the end of each of marking period (January 23 & the last day of school). The first report should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to school. After the last marking period, the progress reports become the permanent possession of the family. While we formally report progress twice each school year, parents are strongly encouraged to communicate with teachers throughout the school year. If a student is experiencing difficulty, interim progress reports will be sent home mid-term.

## **SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS**

### **Reading Recovery**

Reading Recovery is an early-intervention reading program developed in New Zealand. Reading Recovery is being fully implemented at the William E. Norris School. Reading Recovery is an intensive short-term program. First graders who experience difficulty learning to read receive one-to-one tutoring 30 minutes a day, five days a week with a trained Reading Recovery teacher. Students receive tutoring for approximately 12-20 weeks.

### **Special Education**

The William E. Norris School has a well-developed special education department. The department has specialists in the following areas:

- Special Education Instruction
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy & Physical Therapy
- Reading

The special education programs are designed to help each child achieve their potential by providing a variety of services as indicated on an Individualized Educational Plan. Services vary from consultation with the classroom teacher to a pullout program with one-to-one or small group instruction. If you have further questions regarding special education services, please contact the school or the Director of Special Education Services.

### **Remedial Reading Service**

Remedial reading instruction is provided for those regular education students in grades K- 3 who are having difficulty with the language arts. Our school's reading specialist provides instruction three times per week out of the classroom. The reading program complements instruction provided by the student's classroom teacher. Reading, writing, spelling, listening, and speaking are all components of the program. Eligibility for services is determined through evaluation by the reading specialist and recommendation of the classroom teacher.

A goal of remedial reading instruction is to increase motivation, interest, and attitudes about reading. Students are provided with experiences to increase their reading skills and strategies and to feel good about themselves as readers. The program is designed to create fluent readers who bring meaning to text. Parent involvement is also an important aspect of the remedial reading program.

### **Occupational Therapy**

Occupational Therapists (OTs) in the school evaluate certain functional problems that interfere with the child's ability to do school work. Families and teachers often ask the OT to assess a child's handwriting. Handwriting is a complex perceptual, cognitive and motor skill. The OT does a thorough evaluation to determine if there are any underlying sensory, motor (fine and gross), cognitive, perceptual or psychosocial deficits that are interfering with handwriting production. The OT also looks for environmental variables affecting the child's classroom performance. For some children, a short course of occupational therapy (individual and small group) may be necessary to help them develop the functional skills needed in the classroom. Sometimes, the OT recommends a specific home program to the family.

### **Speech and Language Services**

Speech and language services are provided to students identified with communication disabilities in order to help them to reduce or eliminate the disability and to develop compensatory learning strategies. Services are provided in individual or small group pullout sessions, in the regular education classroom, or in a combination of settings. As a member of both the pre-referral and referral teams, the Speech and Language Pathologist assists teachers in observing and referring students with suspected communication disabilities, and provides assessment and diagnosis of speech and language abilities.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Counseling**

The counseling program at the Norris School is designed to assist students, teachers, and parents with issues related to the social-emotional development. It also focuses on crisis intervention, advocacy, and prevention. Aspects include: individual counseling, group counseling, parent-teacher meetings, parent-student meetings, home visits, and in-classroom activities. Parental permission is requested unless it is a crisis situation. Confidentiality is respected at all levels.

### **Pupil Personnel Office**

Federal Law 94-142 and Massachusetts General Law Chapter 766 ensures that children with special needs, ages 3 through 21, get the education, training, and assistance that is necessary to develop their potential. Chapter 766 requires local school systems to find and evaluate children with special learning needs and problems, and provide the required services. Parents may refer their child for a TEAM evaluation. For additional information, please call the Office of Pupil Personnel Services at 527-7202.

### **Transportation/Bus Safety**

We want your transportation to and from school to be safe. The Norris School contracts with Strong Transportation to provide bus service for our students. Strong Transportation may be reached by calling **527-3430**. Please call the school office if you have problems or concerns regarding transportation.

#### **Guidelines to ensure the safety of students getting on and off the bus:**

1. Get to the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
2. Stand at least five giant steps (10 feet) away from the curb. Line up away from the street.
3. Wait until the bus stops, the door opens, and the driver says it is safe before stepping on to the bus.
4. Use the handrails while going up the stairs.
5. When getting on or off the bus, be careful that book bag straps and strings from clothing are not trapped in the handrails or doors. Also, be careful not to hit your fellow riders with these items.
6. NEVER walk behind the bus.
7. Walk at least three giant steps away from the side of the bus.
8. If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver. NEVER try to pick it up because the driver may not be able to see you.
9. Other arrangements should be made to transport oversized or delicate projects to school.
10. The driver will **not** discharge students at places other than their regularly assigned bus stop unless pre-authorized by the school.

#### **Bus Behavior Code:**

1. Norris School Code of Conduct applies on the bus.
2. No eating or drinking on the bus.
3. Keep the bus clean.
4. Follow the instructions of the driver.
5. Stay seated.
6. Keep hands, feet, and head inside the bus.

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Bus safety is a priority. Bus travel is part of the school day and school rules for behavior apply. Bus drivers can assign seats at any time. Behavior that interferes with the bus driver's attention constitutes a serious safety hazard and shall be reported to the principal/assistant principal. The buses are equipped with and may be using video and/or audio surveillance. Parents will be notified either by mail or by telephone of their child's bus rule infractions. Consequences for inappropriate behavior could include suspension from riding the bus from one day to an entire school year. The school buses are private property of bus contractors and destruction of such equipment may require appropriate payment for any damage.

### **School Breakfast and Lunch Programs**

The Norris school operates a breakfast and a lunch program. Breakfast is available to all students before the school day. All students remain at school for lunch. Reduced and free meals are available for those who meet the Federal Government's income guidelines. Application forms may be obtained at the school. If families qualify for Free & Reduced Lunch Program but do not sign up the school could miss out on grant money based upon the number of students who participate. The number of free and reduced recipients is used to calculate aid to the school. Recipients are kept in strict confidence.

Breakfast is \$2.00 per day. Students are admitted to breakfast beginning at 8:30. Students who ride the bus and are having breakfast are let off as soon as the bus arrives to allow them to eat before the school day begins.

Lunch is \$2.25 per day. Lunch menus are sent home monthly and are also published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette. A sandwich choice is usually available as a substitute for the daily entrée. The price of lunch includes milk. Students may also bring their own lunches from home if they prefer. Milk is available for those students with a lunch brought from home. Milk alone is 35 cents.

Kindergarten snack (including milk) is .75¢ per day.

Breakfast, snack and lunch payments are collected in advance on a weekly or monthly basis. Please send payment in a sealed envelope, noting the amount enclosed on the front. Checks can be made out the Southampton School Lunch Program.

Parents and guardians will be notified if student accounts become overdue and we will encourage you to apply for the Free & Reduced Program. If accounts become seriously overdue (greater than \$20.00) students will be offered a basic lunch.

We encourage healthy snacks, meals, and beverages and encourage parents to monitor what children bring from home. No glass bottles or jars are allowed.

### **Cafeteria Rules**

The general school rules apply to the students throughout the school day as well as in the cafeteria. Accepted standards of dining behavior are expected of students in the cafeteria. Students may talk with others seated near them and enjoy the breakfast or lunch period in an orderly, well-mannered fashion. At least two adults are available at all times to supervise the cafeteria.

#### Rules

- Appropriate line behavior is required. No cutting or saving places is allowed.
- Be polite and respectful to all.
- Use appropriate table manners.
- Students must remain seated while they are eating.
- Lunchroom staff will dismiss students by tables to return their trays to the kitchen or throw items in the trash.
- Indoor voices are to be used at all times.
- Students are encouraged to use the rest rooms before and after lunch.

The Talk Light is a sound activated traffic light to help reduce the noise level in the cafeteria during lunch. The light provides the students a visual indication of the level of noise in the cafeteria.

## GENERAL POLICIES

### Communication and Complaints

The School Committee requests that individuals or community members communicate with the school about important matters by bringing information, issues, or complaints forward within a reasonable time so that they can be addressed in an efficient and timely manner.

When you have a question or concern, we ask that you speak with the person most directly involved in the situation. If you are not satisfied with the response, you are welcome to talk with the principal about the issue. The School Committee has a policy related to communication with the school. For more information, or to see the policy, please call the school office.

### Student Records

The Southampton school district maintains cumulative records of student progress and achievement. These records include such items as academic work completed, level of achievement, grades, attendance data, aptitude or diagnostic test scores if administered, health data, and family background information. All student records are confidential and are primarily for local school use. The principal of the school is responsible for the maintenance of the records and shall maintain the records in a secure facility. School Committee policy and MA Department of Education regulates access to school records. The first two requests for copies of student records shall be at no charge. Subsequent requests for copies shall be 25¢ per page. Please ask at the office for more information.

### School Grounds and Building

School Committee policy regulates the use of the school building and grounds. No skateboarding or rollerblading is allowed on school grounds. No dog walking on school property. The grounds are also closed at dusk. Violators will be reported to the police.

Use of the school grounds and building is usually free to organizations from Southampton. A request form for building or grounds use is available in the office. Requests must be received **three weeks** prior to the date of anticipated events. The user group is responsible for paying a custodian to facilitate building use if the event occurs outside of regular custodian work hours. If users charge admission or tuition to an event or activity the school will collect a user fee. Users are expected to leave the building and grounds clean and in good condition. Any damages are the responsibility of the user. User groups (for profit or commercial) may be charged a fee for use. For more information, please call the school office.

### Harassment

The William E. Norris School will not tolerate harassment of its students or employees. Harassment consists of unwelcome actions or language of a sexual nature or with demeaning, belittling intent related to gender, race, national origin, religion, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or age made by one individual to another, which is affecting academic-related decisions or creating a hostile learning or working environment. Teasing, uncomfortable touching, and bullying shall be considered harassment. Any person found guilty of violating this policy would be subject to disciplinary action.

If the student experiences any words or actions that make him/her feel uncomfortable, he/she needs to tell a teacher, counselor, principal, supervisor, or school nurse. The student may also make a written report. The school district will take action if anyone tries to harm the student or harasses the student further due to the report. See School District Policy for more detailed information.

## **Threats**

Threats of violence made by a student toward another student, a staff member, or the school as a whole, shall be taken very seriously. A student who threatens violence will be removed from the school immediately pending a meeting with the student's parents or guardians and some or all of the following: the principal, assistant principal, adjustment counselor, the school psychologist, the child's teacher, law enforcement authorities and any other individual the principal deems appropriate. At this meeting, a course of action, if any, shall be devised. Children and staff members hearing a student make threats of violence are encouraged to report these threats to the principal or a staff member.

## **Smoking and Use of Tobacco Products**

Massachusetts Law prohibits smoking or use of tobacco products by anyone at any time on school grounds and on school busses. Student violators will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension from school or school sponsored activities. Violators will be asked to stop and to leave if they do not comply with the request.

## **Technology Usage**

The W.E. Norris Elementary School computer network provides open access to local, national, and international sources of information and collaboration vital to intellectual inquiry and democracy. In return, every user has the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user in our school community and on the Internet. Students are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with regulations of the school, missions and purposes of other networks used on the Internet, as well as restrictions of state and federal law. Students at the Norris School are partially, as much as is possible, blocked from access to unsuitable material by software designed to provide security for children.

Each year, students and other users of the available technological equipment and the local network shall be taught the rules pertaining to such use. Should a user choose to violate the regulations and guidelines provided by the school committee, that user will be subject to disciplinary action. This disciplinary action may include the suspension of usage privileges and other disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate by the school staff.

## **Federal and State Laws and Regulations**

Students have certain rights under state and federal law. Violations of those rights are taken very seriously by the Norris School administration. A brief description of those rights follows, along with the complaint procedure to be followed if a violation occurs.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)** The Southampton School District is committed to complying with the requirements in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. We are responsible for providing you and your child with access to school activities and programs. If you require accommodations due to hearing impairment, physical disability, or a medical condition, please call the school office at 527-0811.

**Anti-Discrimination Policy** The Southampton School District does not discriminate against, nor shall any student be denied admission to a public school, on account of color, sex, religion, national origin, physical handicap, or sexual preference. The compliance officer is the Director of Pupil Personnel Services and can be reached at 527-7202.

**Equal Employment/Educational Opportunities - Title IX** On July 21, 1975, rules and regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 became effective. Title IX provides that, "No person in the United States shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." Any parent having concerns relative to Title IX, please contact the Director of Pupil Personnel Services at 527-7202.

## **Parent Rights**

A non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:

1. the parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or to the custodial parent, or
2. the parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation, or

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

### **Sexual Harassment**

It is the policy of the Wm. E. Norris School to maintain a learning and working environment free from sexual harassment. No employee or student will be subjected to sexual harassment as defined by the Civil Rights Act and the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome advance, request, or conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's right to live and learn in the environment void of intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive behavior.

This definition applies to explicit or implicit harassment occurring within the school environment. The harassment can occur in a number of different relationships, including: student to student, staff to student, student to staff, staff to staff. In other words any person within the school community can be a victim or a perpetrator of sexual harassment.

Behaviors which can be identified as harassment include repeated remarks or written comments with sexual or demeaning implications; subtle or direct pressure for sexual activity; unwelcome touching or physical contact; suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's performance evaluation or grade as a student; nonverbal sexual intimidation.

### **Complaint Procedure**

Any student who believes that he/she has been subject to violation of any of the above laws should make a complaint to the building principal so that appropriate action may be taken. Complaints will be investigated promptly and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. No student will suffer retaliation or intimidation as a result of initiating a complaint.

All reasonable efforts will be made by the principal to resolve the complaint and reach a settlement between the involved parties. Should this informal process prove insufficient, a formal complaint may be lodged.

When a formal complaint is made, a formal resolution process will follow. This will include either mediation or a formal hearing. If mediation is called for, the principal will act as mediator. When either the complainant or respondent requests a hearing, the principal will inform the school committee and the case will be heard as soon as reasonably possible. The Superintendent or building principal will act as the presiding officer for the hearing.

**PENALTIES** Students found to be in violation of these policies may be subject to any of the following: verbal admonition (with parents notified), written warning to student and her/his parent, or suspension/ expulsion.

### **Health Services Information**

The School Health Program is designed to promote, protect and maintain the health of our students.

The basic two-fold purpose of a school health program is to provide the best possible health for each student and to prepare the citizens of the future to make intelligent self-directed decisions regarding health.

Services required by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health are:

immunizations	physical examinations
postural screening	vision screening
hearing screening	height and weight measurements

### **Immunizations required**

Children entering school for the first time will not be admitted without verification of immunization. The dates (month and year) that the immunizations were received must be on the record. Students transferring from another school system in grades pre-k through 12 must submit verification of immunization.

### **Physical Examinations**

A physician's report of a physical examination is required for each student prior to entering school for the first time. Examinations done within 12 months before entry into school or during the first year after entrance will meet this requirement.

Students must have at least four routine physical examinations between kindergarten and 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The interval should be at least every 3-4 years. In addition, physical examinations are required annually before participating in competitive sports, for children between 14 and 16 years of age requiring work permits, and when specifically requested by parents and teachers.

A student transferring from another school system shall be treated as an entering student, unless school health records are transferred with the student showing they have had an adequate health appraisal.

### **Postural Screening**

The best prevention of spinal curvature is early detection. This state-mandated screening is performed annually on students in grades 5 through 9. Students found to have signs of possible spinal abnormalities will have their parents notified and will be asked to see their own physicians for further evaluation.

### **Vision and Hearing Screening**

Screening to detect possible vision and/or hearing deficits is performed annually on all students in the elementary grades, and the 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. These are strictly screening tests, not diagnostic examinations. If your child has difficulty meeting State standards on these screenings, you will be notified by letter; this letter will be accompanied by a report form to be completed by your doctor.

Please ask your doctor to complete the form at the time of the examination, if possible, so that you may return the information to the school nurse. It is most important that the report of the assessment/recommendations be documented in your child's school health record.

### **Medication**

If it is necessary that your child take medication during the school day, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The parent/guardian or responsible adult will bring the medication to the nurse where it will be kept under lock and key. The student will come to the nurse when the medication is to be taken. Students are not allowed to carry medication to and from school
2. The medication must bear the pharmacy label and instructions. Over the counter medications must be in their original container. Please ask your pharmacy to provide separate containers for school and home.
3. It must be accompanied by a note from the parent/guardian stating that the student is to take medication and the reason for taking it.
4. A physician's written authorization is required if the medication is to be taken for more than 10 days.
5. No more than a 30 day supply of the medication should be delivered to the school at one time.
6. If your child is allowed to take aspirin substitutes at school, permission must be indicated on a parental permission form.

### **Communicable Diseases and Infestation**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has identified the following as being particular problems among the school population:

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Conjunctivitis                          | 5. Scabies     |
| 2. Impetigo                                | 6. Chicken Pox |
| 3. Streptococcal Infections (strep throat) | 7. Pertussis   |
| 4. Pediculosis (head lice)                 |                |

If the school nurse suspects the presence of one of these, or any other contagious disease, it will be necessary for you to take your child out of school and seek the advice of your physician. In the case of a confirmed diagnosis of a communicable disease or infestation, you will be required to keep your child out of school until the condition is treated and rendered non-communicable. Your school nurse is available to provide information regarding school

health policy and procedures. It would be most helpful if parents would report all cases of communicable diseases to their school nurse.

### **First Aid**

First aid is treatment given to protect the life and comfort of the child until authorized treatment is secured and is limited to first treatment only; following first aid, the child is to be placed under the care of his/her parent or guardian, upon whom rests the legal responsibility for subsequent treatment.

If a student becomes ill or injured at school, first aid will be administered in accordance with policies approved by the school physician. In the event your child becomes seriously ill or injured, every effort will be made to reach you. If you cannot be reached, your child will be transported via ambulance to the nearest hospital emergency room.

### **Pupil Emergency Information**

Each fall you will receive an emergency information form. It is vital to all concerned that you complete this form annually and return it promptly to the school. This information may change from one school year to the next. It is essential that the information on the form be accurate and up to date so that parent/guardians can be reached should illness or accidents occur. The form has space for the names of alternate persons to be called in case parents cannot be reached. Please be sure that the person you designate as an alternate is willing and able to serve in this capacity. Please use a person who lives in the area.

### **Health Records**

The school nurses maintain a current health record on each student. This record contains the data from each of the services included in the school health services program. If your child receives a physical examination or an immunization booster, please notify the school nurse to facilitate accurate record keeping. It is essential that the school nurse be alerted to any significant health problems which your child may have.

### **Staff**

A school physician is available on a scheduled basis as an advisor for the overall school health program, for consultation, and for preventative health programs. There is a registered nurse assigned to each school. The school health staff is pleased to work with you in promoting and maintaining optimum health in your child. If you have any questions, please contact the school nurse serving the school in which your child is enrolled.

