



Box 68 Jericho, VT 05465 899-3832

PARENT HANDBOOK

Mission Statement

Saxon Hill School Incorporated is committed to working in partnership with families and communities to educate and support children, while heeding their individual needs for growth and development.

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Saxon Hill School community! We believe that Saxon Hill School, Inc. (SHSI) is a unique and wonderful place for young children and their families. As a member of a parent co-operative preschool, you and your family are partners in your child's education. In addition to being involved in the classroom and working closely with our teaching staff, families also share in the responsibility for the school's operation and administration. While it is true that a parent co-op requires more parent involvement than a traditional preschool, the reward is a deep involvement in your child's first school experiences and a unique sense of community with the staff and other families at SHSI.

We've compiled this handbook to familiarize you with the school's history, philosophies, practices, and procedures. We recommend that you read the first twenty pages or so prior to the start of school. The other pages, containing policies, procedures and by-laws, are included for your information when questions arise. Please use this book as a reference tool and keep it handy for instant answers to many questions. If you have further questions, feel free to ask the Parent-at-Large (PAL) for your class, another Board member or one of our teachers. We look forward to supporting your child and family in the year(s) ahead.



THE FOUNDING OF SAXON HILL SCHOOL

In January of 1964, Saxon Hill School served its first group of young children and their families. Founded by DeeDee Jameson and Willy Cochran, the school was located in DeeDee's home on Skunk Hollow Road - in what was known as the "Saxon Hill" area of Jericho.

The first group of nine children - 8 boys and 1 girl! - was multi-age with two children entering first grade in the fall. The second year saw a kindergarten group meeting on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. An afternoon group was soon added, followed by Tuesday/Thursday morning and afternoon groups of four-year-olds in subsequent years.

The school's success was largely due to the commitment that parents and teachers brought to a "hands-on" education philosophy in which children were encouraged to investigate, explore, and create. Children were respected as young human beings of great value. Families were supported in their wishes to be involved in their children's education.

In a few years, the school outgrew the Jameson home and was moved to the present Town Hall. During the 1967-1968 school year, the parents were advised that DeeDee could no longer operate the school. They organized as a parent cooperative retaining the equipment and supplies, and Willy Cochran remained as Head Teacher.

In the ensuing years, the school saw several changes, involving moves from one location to another, the retirement of Willy Cochran, and the modification of programs to meet the changing needs of families.

DeeDee Jameson left this world in 2001 but her spirit lives on in her lasting gifts to this community. The success of the school can be attributed to the school's philosophy and mission and the deep commitment that parents exhibit to their children when they are active participants in their educational process. There is no question but that the commitment of capable and caring teachers throughout the school's existence has contributed significantly to the longevity of this parent cooperative. Special tribute must be paid to Michele Campbell, whose creative energy and unwavering devotion continues to make Saxon Hill School a wonderful and special place for children and families.

Being a Saxon Hill School family means more than filling out forms and writing tuition checks. It means making a commitment to participate in a cooperative educational adventure. Good luck to all of you!



PHILOSOPHY

As your child begins this year at SHSI, you will want to be aware of our goals so that you will have some idea of what s/he will experience. What is most important to us is that your child be successful and happy. Every child is eager and ready to learn at an individual and particular level of readiness. Our curriculum reflects that individuality, and we strive to facilitate the development of competencies. Throughout the year, both teachers and parents will keep in touch with each child's personal learning needs. With the appropriate tools and materials, and the guidance of trained adults, each child will gain knowledge and develop skills to the degree that is right for her/him.

SHS is a Reggio Emilia inspired school. In a Reggio school, education is seen as a communal activity and sharing of culture through joint exploration among children and adults who together open topics to speculation and discussion. This approach provides us with new ways to think about the nature of the child as learner, the role of the teacher, school organization and management, the design and use of physical environments and curriculum planning that guides experiences of joint, open-ended discovery and constructive posing and solving of problems. Reciprocity, exchange and dialogue lie at the heart of Reggio education.

All facets of the child's development will be given equal consideration (social and emotional, cognitive, language, and physical) as well as the complex interrelationship of those areas. We believe in approaching a child's education holistically, not in unrelated segments. Our curriculum is interdisciplinary and includes a diversity of areas in which the child can challenge and extend her/himself primarily through a wide range of experiences. We do not differentiate between play and work. Play is a child's work. Indoors or out, sitting still or moving vigorously, every experience is an opportunity to learn. Learning is active rather than passive. Your child will be encouraged to extract personal meaning from her/his experiences, consequently developing creative thinking and language skills.

Each child will be encouraged to take responsibility for her/himself as a group member. You will probably see enormous growth in your child's interpersonal skills as s/he learns to trust themselves and others, to gain an awareness of others and the ability to feel for and with them, to express their feelings, resolve conflicts and assume responsibility for her/his actions and words. At the same time, we will stress the distinction between a child's behavior and a child's self. This maximizes her/his good feelings about self regardless of behavior and performance. Each child will become aware of how unique and special s/he is and, at the same time, learn to work with a group.

We aim to nurture a child's creativity and ability to take personal risks to prepare her/him for meeting life's challenges. For us, the goal of creativity is not an art product, but an approach



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to problem solving. Providing a child with a wide variety of materials and the freedom to experience and experiment will help her/him create her/his own reality. The process rather than the product will be emphasized when appropriate. We believe that a child should be encouraged to work through a process experiencing all of the sensory motor elements, but the end result should be a product of which s/he is proud.

We work to support your child's extension of basic moving, manipulative, and communication skills. We champion children's motivation and the ability to be self-reliant and self-starting. Acquiring factual information, developing the capacity to conceptualize and represent ideas are attributes that we want your child to grow. Your child will have multiple opportunities to learn and practice new skills. We recognize that self-esteem grows from possessing knowledge and skills in a diversity of areas. We nurture an excitement in learning, foster the desire to try, the courage to fail, and the persistence to continue their effort.



THE VALUE OF NAEYC ACCREDITATION

Congratulations, parents! You have chosen an early childhood program that is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. NAEYC administers the largest and most widely recognized national, voluntary professionally sponsored accreditation system for all types of early childhood schools and child care centers. Saxon Hill School, Inc. (SHSI) has been NAEYC accredited since 1998.

Early childhood programs accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs have voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study, invited external professional review to verify compliance with the Criteria for High-Quality Early Childhood Programs, and have been found to be in substantial compliance. (A copy of the Criteria can be obtained from the NAEYC Academy.)

A high-quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young children.

In accredited programs you will see:

- ⤴ Frequent, positive, warm interactions among adults and children
- ⤴ Planned learning activities appropriate to children's age and development, such as block building, painting, reading stories, dress-up, and active outdoor play
- ⤴ Specially trained teachers
- ⤴ Enough adults to respond to individual children
- ⤴ Many varied age-appropriate materials
- ⤴ A healthy and safe environment for children
- ⤴ Nutritious snacks
- ⤴ Regular communication with parents who are welcome visitors at all times
- ⤴ Effective administration
- ⤴ Ongoing, systematic evaluation

SHSI has an excellent reputation in the community. This ongoing evaluation helps to keep the highly esteemed SHSI program philosophy a day-to-day reality for teachers, parents and children.



PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

SHSI offers three programs. All programs incorporate the highest standards of early education and teaching methods. Staff develops program content with guidance from the Director of Educational Programs. The SHSI philosophy is integrated into each program. The following chart gives a brief overview of each program.

Program	Age cutoff	Meeting Days	Meeting Times	Children	Teachers	Parent Helper
2 day	3 by 8/31	M, TH	8:30-11:30	15	2	1
3 day	4 by 3/01	T, W, F	8:15-11:45	17	2	1
4 day	4 by 8/31	T,W,TH,F	12:30-4:00	17	2	1

The programs differ from each other not only in meeting time, class size, and child-adult ratios, but in composition and the needs of the students at any given time. Our teachers tailor the routines and expectations of each program to the group enrolled in that program each year. The 4-day program is a Vermont State licensed kindergarten.

We have found that the consistency of a daily routine, within a given program, is essential. Children are more secure and ready to learn when there is a pattern which they can expect to occur during the day. This does not mean that we lock ourselves into a rigid structure. We often allow ourselves to depart from the usual schedule for the sake of a new experience. We are also not locked into a uniform structure for all programs. Program schedules are constructed to accommodate the needs of all enrolled children.

Developmentally appropriate teaching staff (or adult)-child ratios are maintained to facilitate adult-child interaction and constructive activity among children. The ratios, which vary by program, are maintained during all hours of operation including indoor time, outdoor time and during transportation and field trips.



THE DAY AT SAXON HILL SCHOOL

Possible components of daily routines in all programs include:

Literacy Activities

Our goals during this part of our day involve listening, speaking, reading and writing. Children work in small groups with a grown-up sharing ideas, listening to others, writing/drawing about feelings, thoughts, themes, projects, or responses to stories which have been read. Children conference with grown-ups about their writing/drawing. Children spend time reading books individually, in small groups, and with adults. Book borrowing is encouraged.

Meetings

We meet as a large group to greet each other talk about our plans for the day, share experiences, problem solve, perform music/movement activities, play learning games, identify "mystery" packages, and participate in math, science, or pre-reading activities. Meetings help build community among our classes.

Activity/Co-Op Time

Children work in small groups in learning centers on activities, which focus on practicing growing skills (sorting treasure tins, building blocks, reading a story and acting out with puppets, discovering properties of magnets and the like.) Projects are begun during this time and often take several weeks to complete

Explore/Choice Time

Social interaction with their peers and pursuing special interest areas are the children's chief activity during this time. Various activities and materials will be set up, and the entire room is at the children's disposal for this free choice time. Sometimes a directed activity occurs for individual children or small groups. Teachers and the parent helper interact with children observing, posing questions, modeling exploration, solving problems and recording discoveries.. Dramatic play, painting, working with playdough, woodworking, sand/water tables, and our outdoor playground are very popular choices.

Clean Up

Children share responsibility for our classroom. Children learn cooperation, organization skills, and develop a sense of community caring for their classroom.



Snack

This is another important opportunity for us to be together as a group. Birthdays are celebrated with a birthday wish from each child. Snack and beverage are brought each session by the parent helper after consultation with the teacher. SHSI encourages use of many raw foods and very little sugar/fat. If the teacher asks that your child choose their "favorite" foods for snack on the day you parent help, please guide your child in selecting an appropriate choice with these guidelines in mind. Do not offer children younger than 4 these foods: hot dogs (whole or cut into rounds), whole grapes, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, chunks of raw carrots, or uncut meat. Please cut grapes in half for all age groups.

Teachers may request that snack be related to a theme. Families are encouraged to share foods from their ethnic backgrounds. A list of nutritious selections is included in this handbook.

Staff work with families to ensure the snack meets the USDA's CACFP food guidelines. All foods and beverages brought from home are labeled with the child's name and date. Staff make sure food requiring refrigeration remains cold. Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Snack food brought for sharing must either be whole fruits or prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers ie: new jars of jelly, new boxes of crackers and cereal, new packages of cheese, hummus, yogurt.

Story

We gather on the rug again and the teacher reads a book aloud. Children are encouraged to respond to both fiction and non-fiction.

Outside Time

We play on the outdoor equipment, go for walks, slide in the winter, and release our energy. Generally activities are child-directed and sometimes organized games are introduced. The activities available depend upon individual, group, and teacher interests. Indoor gross motor activities are available when weather does not permit outside time. Children participate in gross motor activities, for example: obstacle course, dancing, yoga, parachute play, and creative movement.



PARENT HELPING

During each class session a parent (or guardian) of one of the students in that class acts as the “parent helper”. The parent helping responsibility rotates among the families based on the schedule devised by the “Parent-At-Large (PAL)” for that class. Parent helping not only assists the staff and school as a whole, it is a terrific opportunity for parents to observe the program, the staff, their child, and their child’s peers.

Some general guidelines for parent helping include:

- What you see and hear about children, their families, and their development is **CONFIDENTIAL**. Please do not discuss these issues with anyone but the teachers.
- In keeping with SHSI’s cooperative spirit, **YOU** are responsible for your assigned parent helping days. If you cannot work on a day, you are responsible for finding a substitute or arranging a switch and notifying the teacher of the change. You are responsible for parent helping even if your child is ill or will be missing school for some reason. Most parents are agreeable to arranging a switch, especially when approached in advance. Your class PAL **MAY** be able to assist if you run into difficulty. In the rare event that a paid substitute has to be called in, the assigned parent helping family will be responsible for paying the substitute teacher.
- **The parent helper provides snack.** Approximately one week before you are scheduled to parent help, contact the teacher to confirm your snack choice. Sometimes the teacher(s) will request a snack that is in keeping with a theme or skill (counting, sorting). Families are encouraged to share traditional foods. An idea list of nutritious snack choices can be found on the following page.
- Our classroom is an exciting and stimulating environment for very young children. Younger siblings, especially those that crawl, require your time and attention and often distract from the group routine. Ask yourself “Will I be able to assist staff and children with my full attention and carry out my parent helping responsibilities if I bring this younger child?” Please do not bring a sibling without first thinking this through and discussing it with the teacher.
- **Arrive at school FIFTEEN (15) MINUTES early.** Upon arrival, review the plan book and consult with the teacher(s) about the days activities. Ask questions and state your preferences! Set up snack, placing the juice or milk in two pitchers and water in two pitchers. (Fill pitchers only half full!) Place food in two containers or baskets. Locate utensils, napkins, cups, etc. and have them ready for use. Refrigerate drinks and food as necessary. Review other parent helping instructions posted in the classroom.



- On occasion, siblings may be permitted to accompany parents on their parent helping days, and alumni have sometimes participated as helpers and role models.

The enrolled children's needs should always be considered first and foremost. Therefore, sibling or alumni visits should be an occasional event rather than the rule. Depending on the situation, the presence of an older child can be an asset or a distraction, and this judgement will be made by the staff, in cooperation with the parents.

Please note that in general no more than one non-enrolled child, whether as sibling or as helper, should be in class at any one time. There needs to be advance notice to the staff, preferably at least 24 hours prior. Finally, all such visits should happen at the sole discretion of the teacher.

- During **Meeting and/or Book** time please join in! If your help is needed at this time to set up an activity, clean off tables, or prepare for a project, the teacher(s) will direct you. Children sometimes need your presence next to them at meeting or story.
- During **Journal/Co-Op/Activities and/or Projects**, please GUIDE children with directions/tasks. ASK THEM what they are doing or need to do. Gently encourage them and extend their ideas via language. Encourage them to fill in spaces and add details. Encourage INDEPENDENCE. Encourage a child's inventive spelling. Let them read to you!
- During **Explore/Choice** time join in the play. Extend and elaborate via conversation. Help print names (top left corner, capitalize first letter, others lower case) on artwork. If you are unsure of the spelling, consult the class list by the phone. Ask the children if there are any words they would like to say about their paintings or projects and write their dictation on the small cards provided at the top of the easel for this purpose.
- Please help children SOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS. Ask them...

What if...?

What would happen if....?

How could you...?

I wonder if anyone here has an idea?

What is the rule about...?

- Please find a seat, join in **Snack** and participate in conversations. WATCH the children pour their own beverage and help them clean up spills. Model acceptable table manners and enjoy conversation.



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- While the students are preparing to go **Outside**, you may begin clean up. If the teacher(s) want you to assist the students in dressing for outdoors, they will let you know. Otherwise, stand back and watch...you may be surprised by how independent most children are in dressing themselves!
- Plan on staying **THIRTY (30) MINUTES** after the scheduled end time to clean. **Clean up** after the morning programs includes, sweeping the linoleum floors, checking bathrooms (cleaning if needed), checking dress-up, woodworking, and other areas, washing snack dishes, and cleaning tables. Clean up after the afternoon programs involves, in addition to the above, vacuuming, mopping the linoleum, washing paint brushes, and taking out the garbage. More detailed cleaning instructions may be posted in the classroom. Please look for them.
- If you have questions about **ANYTHING** that happens in the classroom (activities, incidents, teaching techniques, etc.) please speak directly to the teachers immediately.

Because you will be involved with the children as a group, your child will need to understand why you are there. It is sometimes difficult for a young child to share her/his parent's attention. Try not to be overly concerned about your child's behavior the day you are in the classroom. Your relationship with your child is not being judged. Try to flow with what is happening and find a balance between giving your child some attention and helping her/him accept your role in the classroom that day. There are times when it is more beneficial for your child not to have you in the classroom. If we find this is true, you are welcome to fulfill your parent helping obligation in some other way.



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NUTRITIOUS SNACK IDEAS

Crackers and Cheese (try cutting the cheese with cookie cutters)
Papaya, Mango, Kiwi, Pineapple, Star Fruit
Fresh Vegetables and Dip
Taco's
Stir Fry Rice
Yogurt or Yogurt Pops
Graham Crackers and Fresh Fruit
Hummus
Dried Fruit/Raisins
Buttered Noodles
Vegetable Sushi
Rolled Lunchmeats, try spreading with cream cheese
Miniature Bagels with real Fruit Spread
Baba Ganoush (eggplant spread)
Applesauce
Celery with Cream Cheese
Pretzels – regular or yogurt dipped
Egg Rolls
Bread Sticks
Nachos with Salsa/Cheese
Cereal and Cereal Mixes (Cheerios, Raisin Bran, Rice Krispies, etc)
Deviled Eggs
Miniature Muffins
Cooked Pasta
Stuffed Grape Leaves
Fresh Fruit and Dip
Edamame (soy beans)
Cheese Spreads
Crackers spread with ricotta cheeses or cream cheese, raisins on top
Rice Cakes
Granola
Fruit and Milk Blender Drinks
Tortillas



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THINK HEALTHY, BE CREATIVE AND HAVE FUN

Beverage should be 100% fruit juice (pasteurized) or white milk/soy milk.
 Families are encouraged to share foods representing their heritage/cultural background.

Please remember that some children at SHS may have specific food allergies. Check with your PAL for individual program needs. Read labels carefully!

Saxon Hill School provides snacks in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines:

**Child Meal Pattern
Snack**

Food Components	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12¹
▪ 1 milk fluid milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1 cup
▪ 1 fruit/vegetable juice ² , fruit and/or vegetable	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
▪ 1 grains/bread³ bread or cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin or cold dry cereal or hot cooked cereal or pasta or noodles or grains	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/4 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/3 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1 slice 1 serving 3/4 cup 1/2 cup 1/2 cup
▪ 1 meat/meat alternate meat or poultry or fish ⁴ or alternate protein product or cheese or egg ⁵ or cooked dry beans or peas or seed butters or seeds or yogurt ⁶	1/2 ounce 1/2 ounce 1/2 ounce 1/2 egg 1/8 cup 1 Tbsp. 1/2 ounce 2 ounces	1/2 ounce 1/2 ounce 1/2 ounce 1/2 egg 1/8 cup 1 Tbsp. 1/2 ounce 2 ounces	1 ounce 1 ounce 1 ounce 1/2 egg 1/4 cup 2 Tbsp. 1 ounce 4 ounces

¹ Children age 12 and older may be served larger portions based on their greater food needs.

² Fruit or vegetable juice must be full-strength. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component.

³ Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour. Cereal must be whole-grain or enriched or fortified.

⁴ A serving consists of the portion of cooked lean meat or poultry or fish.

⁵ One-half egg meets the required minimum amount (one ounce or less) of meat alternate.

⁶ Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened.



MORE ABOUT SAXON HILL SCHOOL

The Home/School Relationship

A child is a whole being and her/his life reflects this integration. Home and school must not be separate as many learning experiences bridge the two. We need your cooperation to make your child's early education the best possible.

The channels of communication between home and school must be direct and open. It is always a joy to share with one another the many observations and pieces of information we have about a child's growing interests and development. It is also important for us to work together to solve problems. Saxon Hill School, Inc. will collaborate with a child's and family's school district in providing an interpreter and materials in the home language. If something that is going on at school--or not going on--presents a problem to you or your child, **PLEASE COME DIRECTLY TO THE TEACHER(S)**. The earlier we are all aware that there is a problem, the earlier we can begin to work on a solution. We can usually identify the source of the problem and work out some alternatives to try, much more quickly, if the parents and teachers approach one another directly. We are a team and work to compliment each other.

The days at our school are very full and it may not always be easy to have a private moment with your child's teacher. Communication between parents and staff is a priority, and, as such, teachers are also available via e-mail, telephone, Home/School journal, and parent teacher conferences.

The teacher(s) meet with families throughout the year. The first of these is a home visit, made in the summer, so that your child and your child's teacher can begin building their relationship before the first day of school. During the home visit, the teacher is primarily visiting the child and giving the child an opportunity to share the important things in her/his world. You and your home are NOT being judged. Feel free also to ASK QUESTIONS and SHARE EXPECTATIONS. All of the admission paperwork sent to you in May should be returned to your child's teacher at this time.

Teachers, parents and children will work together throughout the school year to record growth and development in various learning areas via a portfolio system. During the fall, the teacher(s) will write their first observation/evaluation of the child's progress at school. The teacher(s) will announce that conferences are available and post a sign-up schedule. It is up to you to schedule a conference with the teacher(s). It is always preferable that both parents attend, but we realize that this is not always possible.

At the end of the school year you will receive your child's portfolio to keep, complete with



samples of your child's work, teacher reports, records, and mementos of the year at SHSI. A final conference is optional. At any time during the school year you are welcome to schedule a special conference (or conversation!) with the teacher(s) to discuss any questions you have about your child or the school.

Arrival and Departure Times

It is important that your child arrive at school on time. It is also important that your child does not arrive earlier than five to ten minutes ahead of time, as preparation time is essential to the teachers. If you have a special need one day to bring your child early, please contact the teachers ahead of time to make arrangements.

You must pick your child up promptly at the close of each session, as the teachers have preparations to make for the next session and/or other kinds of work to do. Their time between sessions is limited, so please be considerate. The bell will ring at your program's end, and all children will be asked to enter the fenced playground. This will signify that the parents are now the owners of supervision. A child may reenter the field, woods, or onto the sliding hill with parental supervision. One staff member will head in to help the parent helper clean. The other staff member will be responsible for making sure children have their adult present or asking another parent to take on responsibility for supervising a child until his/her parent/guardian arrives. The staff will begin readying the playground for the next program.

Whether you drive your own child or car pool, an adult must **COME INTO SCHOOL** with your child(ren) at arrival and departure. Adults must sign in children at drop off and sign out children at pick up. Take a moment to read the daily plans posted to your child(ren). Encourage your child(ren) to remove outerwear, return books to the book box, and place belongings in their cubby. There may be an important message for you or a change of plans which will affect you. If you are a car pool driver, it is especially important for you to check the bulletin board for announcements or notices which you are responsible for delivering to other parents in your group. Please use caution in the parking lot as children may dart from behind and between other cars.

A WRITTEN NOTE is required if there are any changes in a child's departure plans, i.e. change in ride or early pick-up.

PHONE THE TEACHER IN ADVANCE if your child(ren) will be absent from school.



Security and Supervision

Our front door facing the parking lot is locked from the inside to the outside all the time. The doors to our classroom through the gate are not. The outside environment is considered our classroom, and children have access to it throughout the day just as they have access to the loft, studio, bathrooms, etc. Children are supervised in all areas by sight and sound. Children know that if they want to venture outside, they need to have an adult present.

Our woods, the ones behind and to the left facing the sliding hill, the field, and the sliding hill are classroom spaces. Children know that if they want to venture into the woods, they need an adult to accompany them. Again, we are supervising by sight and sound.

Parents/caregivers are responsible for making sure that the gates to the playground are securely closed upon entrance and exit.

Illness

Children who are ill should be kept home. A comprehensive health policy is included in the handbook to help guide your decision as to whether your child should attend school under certain conditions. If you are unsure what to do after consulting the health policy, contact the school health officer or your child's medical care provider. Notify staff that your child will be absent from school due to illness. (Saxon Hill School phone number is 899-3832).

Clothing

School is not the place for a child to wear best clothes. Although we provide paint shirts for use during messy projects, we cannot guarantee that clothes will come home free of paint or other messes.

Because the floor is cold and a stray nail or tack is not unlikely, each child must wear sneakers, shoes, or hard-soled slippers in the classroom. During the winter months, your child may want to keep a special pair for school in her/his cubby to change into after removing boots. Footwear may be brought each day if you prefer. Some kind of school bag is useful for bringing things to and from school.

We go outside daily during the last part of each session unless the weather is hazardously or dangerously inclement. We generally stay inside if the temperature is less than 10°F. If you do not want your child to be outdoors, please make a specific request in person or in writing. Please send your child dressed warmly enough to have a good time outdoors. In cold weather, snow pants, mittens, boots, and a hat are a must, children should wear dry and layered clothing for warmth in the cold weather. When the snow falls, we play on an excellent sliding



hill. If your child does not bring the necessary outerwear, the teacher(s) will explain to the child why s/he cannot slide or play outdoors that day. It is important for you to know that our play yard is shady and windy and may be 5-10 degrees colder than your own backyard.

We do keep a spare outfit on hand for the child who gets really wet or muddy. You are expected, however, to be sure that your child has some spare clothing at school, i.e. underwear, pants, shirt, mittens, socks, hat, etc.

Please label all clothing. Children dress and undress themselves. Articles of clothing which are not labeled can not be guaranteed to be returned to the correct cubby. Also, try to keep clothing in reasonable repair. Difficulties over ownership, broken zippers, and missing buttons can be overwhelming to a child.

SHSI does have a Lost and Found box which all parents are encouraged to check periodically for missing items.

Sunscreen and Bug Spray

Children have the opportunity to play in the shade. When in the sun they wear sun protective clothing, sunscreen, or both. The sunscreen should have UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15, and can be applied only with written parental permission. Bug Spray can be applied only with written parental permission.

Bringing Things from Home

Children love to bring things from home to share with their friends. Sometimes a child will be asked to bring an object representing the "theme" of the day. We ask that you help your child use discretion about what to bring. Although each child will have a cubby (private storage space), it is possible that something could be lost or damaged. Toys unrelated to themes should be left at home. If your child is eager to share about a specific toy, they will be encouraged to describe both their toy's physical appearance and function. We strongly ENCOURAGE children to bring books, objects found in nature, and things they make. A great deal of learning and language can stem from these kinds of things.

Hand Washing

Staff members and children who are able are taught hygiene and hand washing procedures. Staff assist children with hand washing when needed. Hand washing is required of all children, volunteers, and staff to reduce the risk of infectious disease transmission. Children and adults wash their hands upon arrival, after diapering or toilet use, after handling bodily fluids (blowing



nose, coughing), before preparing and eating snack, or after handling raw food. Hand washing is required after playing at the water table, handling pets, sand, and dirt. Adults are required to wash their hands after assisting a child with toileting and handling trash or cleaning. Staff/adult members are required to wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur. All sinks must be sanitized before food preparation if the sink is used for other purposes.

Independence in Toileting

All children attending SHSI are expected to be toilet trained or working towards that goal. We encourage independence in all aspects of this area including undressing, dressing and hand washing. We support each child's move toward this independence at their own pace. Please have a change of clothes in your child's cubby in anticipation of any "accidents" which may occur.

Field Trips

Field trips provide children with unique learning experiences, giving them an opportunity to make connections from the classroom to the world around them, and often providing a chance for children to conduct in-depth research about topics of interest. Teachers develop specific goals and objectives prior to each field trip, and document results.

You will receive advance notice of all field trips in your class newsletter/email. Parents are asked to drive whenever possible. Parents who transport children other than their own are required to complete and return an Insurance Verification for Field Trip Drivers form. Sign-up sheets for drivers will be posted on the message board. Staff will work with families to address specific procedures for children with disabilities or special needs.

Safety precautions will be used to safeguard children while on field trips. Staff will have on hand first-aid supplies and a communication device. Staff will provide each driver with a list of cell phone numbers for staff and the other drivers. Staff will provide drivers with a copy of emergency forms for any children they will be transporting. The emergency forms are confidential and will only be used in an emergency.

In the event of an emergency, staff, other drivers and parents will be notified as soon as possible. If alternate transportation is needed, staff will contact additional parents for assistance.

SHSI expects all parents providing transportation for field trips to fully comply with Vermont laws regarding child passenger restraining systems and safety. Parents are expected to provide the appropriate federally approved child passenger restraining system (car seat or booster seat) for their own child(ren).



Lending Library

Your child(ren) may borrow books from SHSI. We encourage you to share and enjoy these with your child(ren). SHSI has access to area libraries to expand our own lending library of children's books as themes are developed. We cannot be liable for books borrowed from us by families if they are lost or ruined. If a book is signed out to you or your child and not returned in reasonable condition, the fee levied by the lending library will be passed on to your family.

SHSI also has an excellent parent resource shelf, located just inside the door to the school. Parents with questions about development, challenging behaviors, etc, are encouraged to consult this library, sign out, and borrow materials.

Telephone

The school's phone number is 899-3832. We prefer that you do not call during a class session unless it is absolutely necessary. Feel free to call teachers at school when class is not in session or at home during reasonable hours.

Visits

Last but not least, please feel at home at SHSI. Visitors, such as grandparents, prospective SHSI parents, and community members are welcome to spend time at SHSI. Please refer to the Parent Helping section in this handbook regarding bringing siblings to class. Visits by guests, other than parents or guardians, must be arranged in advance with the teacher and are subject to the teacher's approval. We do limit the number of visitors on any given day so that the program remains child-centered. Before or after school is a great time to make contact with other parents and meet your child's new friends.

Come play in the sand or slide down the hill with us!!!

Traditions

SHS embraces diversity. We appreciate and celebrate the uniqueness of each child and his/her family, traditions, culture, patterns of living, and habits. We encourage families to bring in and share their home language, traditions and information about their family celebrations.



Holiday-related activities at SHS

Holidays are a time of excitement but also stress for children.

At SHS, staff is asked to think of the **why** of each activity. What will children learn? What purpose does this serve? We use the following guidelines:

1. Is it developmentally suited and related to this group of children?
2. How can I set up activities in the context of people's daily life and beliefs?
3. How can I honor every group that is represented in the classroom?
4. How can I make sure that any differences in how each family celebrates are evident and respected?
5. What strategies are in place for working with children whose families' beliefs do not permit participation in holiday celebrations?
6. Have I planned for the "stress" factor of families and children?
7. Because some holiday customs incorporate stereotypes about cultures, how can we help children to identify them and think critically about them?

Teachers may take the opportunity to discuss the background and meaning of holidays with the class, and to work through some specific holiday-related themes using a variety of teaching materials. Furthermore, families are encouraged to share how they celebrate holidays at home. At the same time, SHS aims to provide a safe harbor from holiday stress and a space where children do not feel excluded based on what holidays they do or do not celebrate. Therefore, SHS does not encourage in-class celebrations of holidays. In case an exception to this rule is made, e.g. for card-exchange around "Valentine's Day", the teachers will inform families ahead of time of the details of the planned celebration.



CURRICULUM

Programs are designed for individual children and groups of children. Curriculum for programs is guided by Vermont's Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities, Vermont Early Learning Standards, SHSI's Developmental Guidelines and developmentally appropriate practices based upon important kinds of information:

1. What is known about child development and learning, Knowledge of age-related characteristics that permit general predictions within an age range about what activities, materials, interactions or experiences will be safe, healthy, interesting, achievable and also challenging to children;
2. What is known about the strengths, interests, and needs of each individual child in the group;
3. Knowledge of social and cultural contexts in which children live in order to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant and respectful for participating children and families.

Curriculum promotes the development of knowledge and understanding, processes and skills, as well as, dispositions to use and apply skills and to go on learning. Curriculum content has intellectual integrity, reflecting the key concepts and tools of inquiry of recognized disciplines in ways that are accessible and achievable for young children (conducting scientific experiments, writing, solving mathematical problems, and collecting and analyzing data).

Assessment of individual children's development impacts the planning and implementation of the curriculum. Assessment and curriculum are integrated, with teachers continually engaging in observational assessment for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. Assessment is ongoing, strategic, and purposeful. The results of assessment are used to benefit children-in adapting curriculum and teaching to meet the developmental and learning needs of children, communicating with the child's family, and evaluating the program's effectiveness for the purpose of improving the program. The content of assessments reflects progress toward important learning and developmental goals. The program has a systematic plan for collecting and using assessment information that is integrated with curriculum planning. Saxon Hill School is using the Work Sampling System, which is a performance-based, curriculum-embedded assessment system for children ages 3 through grade 6.

Teaching strategies

SHS supports the development of relationships between adults and children, among children, among teachers, and between teachers and families. We recognize what is known about social construction of knowledge and the importance of establishing a caring community in which all children can develop and learn.



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Teachers:

- Work to achieve an optimal balance between children's self-initiated learning and adult guidance and support.
- Create an intellectually engaging, responsive environment to promote each child's learning and development.
- Provide children with opportunities to make meaningful choices and time to explore through active involvement.
- Incorporate a wide variety of experiences, materials and equipment, and teaching strategies in constructing curriculum to accommodate a broad range of children's individual differences in prior experiences, maturation rates, styles of learning, needs, and interests.
- Promote children's collaboration with peers and use a variety of ways of flexibly grouping children for the purposes of instruction, supporting collaboration, and building a sense of community.
- Help children develop their initiative, choose and plan their own learning activities.
- Pose problems, ask questions, and make comments and suggestions that stimulate thinking and extend learning.
- Extend the range of children's interests and scope of thought through the introduction of new ideas, problems and experiences.
- Select from a range of strategies to sustain an individual child's effort in a purposeful activity, such as, modeling, demonstrating specific skills, and providing information, focused attention, physical proximity, verbal encouragement, reinforcement and other behavioral procedures, as well as, additional structure and modification of equipment or schedules.
- Coach and directly guide children in the acquisition of specific skills.
- Calibrate the complexity and challenge of activities to suit children's level of skill and knowledge.
- Provide cues and other forms of "scaffolding" that enable the child to succeed in a task that is just beyond his or her ability to complete alone.
- Encourage children to reflect on and revisit their learning experiences.



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ASSESSMENT PLAN

Saxon Hill strives to provide families with a comprehensive picture of their children's experiences and progress across a wide range of developmental areas throughout the school year. Curriculum is planned and students are assessed via Developmental Guidelines that were developed to directly correlate with Meisel's Work Sampling System. Children's development is also assessed through informal observations, anecdotal records, photographic documentation, running records, time-interval recordings, and various checklists.

The Work Sampling System is a curriculum-embedded continuous progress performance assessment plan. It provides an integrated method for collecting children's work in a range of curriculum areas. The purpose of the Work Sampling System is to assess and document children's knowledge, skills, behaviors, and accomplishments on multiple occasions across a variety of classroom domains.⁷ It consists of three elements: a) developmental guidelines and checklists, b) portfolios, and c) summary reports.

- Developmental Checklists are designed to assist teachers in observing and documenting individual growth and progress. The Checklists cover 7 domains of development: personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts, and physical development. Checklists are completed and shared with families 3 times a year – Fall, Winter, and Spring. The checklists are used to create a profile of children's individualized progress in developing skills, acquiring knowledge, and mastering behaviors across developmental domains as demonstrated in *curriculum-embedded tasks*. Differences in development amongst groups of children is expected.
- Portfolios are purposeful collections of student's work that illustrate their efforts, progress, and achievements. They provide a rich documentation of each child's experiences throughout the year. Portfolio content parallels classroom activities and leads to the development of new activities based on interest, strengths, and challenges. New learnings and interests may result from joint teacher/student involvement in the process or reviewing, evaluating, and selecting portfolio content.
- Summary Reports are completed on each child, late fall and end of year in the 2 and 3 Day Programs and three times a year in the 4 Day Program. The report is a summary of each child's classroom performance. It is based on teacher observations, the checklists and portfolios.

Families are encouraged to discuss children's progress and interests as documented in Summary Reports and portfolios during Parent/Teacher conferences that are scheduled bi-yearly or upon request. Families are invited to participate in learning plans. Outside specialists (i.e. EEE, CCR) may be requested to aid in the collection of information about a child, to determine eligibility for

⁷ Meisels, Kiaw, Dorfman, and Nelson. *The Work Sampling System: Reliability and Validity of a Performance Assessment of Young Children*, *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 10, p. 280.



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special services or to evaluate program effectiveness. To aid in data collection, Saxon Hill teachers may assess children using other assessment tools. Assessment data are confidential and stored in a secure location.

Findings demonstrate that the Work Sampling System is a reliable and valid approach for assessing the achievement of children.⁸ It allows for a team approach amongst parents, students, and teachers to plan a developmentally appropriate, emergent curriculum that meets the needs and emphasizes the strengths and interests of each child.

⁸Meisels, Kiaw, Dorfman, and Nelson. The Work Sampling System: Reliability and Validity of a Performance Assessment of Young Children, *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 10, pp.277-296.



DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUM

Saxon Hill School's curriculum and assessment practices are guided by a set of values/dispositions about learning and instruction, and how children should be treated in order to enhance their growth and development. We have chosen to use the Work Sampling System because it calls for on-going assessment that reflects classroom goals and objectives, helps teachers monitor children's continuous progress, and places children's work within a broad developmental perspective. It supports our goals of championing children's motivation towards learning, assisting teachers in instructional decision-making, and serves as an effective means for reporting children's progress to families, educators and community. It is based on the attributes of well-functioning children, as suggested by the work of June Patterson, Lillian Katz and others.

We believe that **all children can**:

- ⤴ Learn to trust themselves and others;
- ⤴ Learn self discipline;
- ⤴ Gain an awareness of others and the ability to feel for and with them;
- ⤴ Be spontaneous when expressing feelings;
- ⤴ Become self-reliant and self-starting;
- ⤴ Develop a sense of humor;
- ⤴ Form creative ideas;
- ⤴ Extend basic moving, manipulating, and communication skills;
- ⤴ Listen with heightened and prolonged attentiveness;
- ⤴ Acquire factual information, develop the capacity to conceptualize and represent ideas;
- ⤴ Have a variety of interests and resources;
- ⤴ Find pleasure in the process as well as in the product; and
- ⤴ Show the desire to try, the courage to fail, and the persistence to continue their effort.



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POSITIVE GUIDANCE

Saxon Hill School promotes the growth and development of self-control, self-help skills, and ways to get along with others for all children. We believe that in order to develop self-discipline, children need to be offered choices and opportunities to make decisions, knowing what the logical consequences will be. This type of guidance helps a child develop self-control because it sets limits and offers a choice. It results in less anger and fewer power struggles than does punishment.

Methods of Positive Guidance

1. Show that you recognize and accept the reason the child is doing what, in your judgment, is the wrong thing: "You want to play with the truck, and..." Or "You want your mom to stay, and..."
This validates the legitimacy of the child's desires and illustrates that you are an understanding person. It also is honest from the outset: The adult is wiser, in charge, not afraid to be the leader, and occasionally has priorities other than those of the child.
2. State the "and": "You want to play with the truck, and Michele is using it right now." "You want your mom to stay, and right now she has to go to work."
This lets the child know that others have needs, too. It teaches perspective taking and may lead the child to develop the ability to put himself in other people's shoes. It will also gain you the child's respect, for it shows you are fair. It will help make the child feel safe; you are able to keep him safe.
3. Offer a solution: "You could play with the bus and ask Michele to let you know when she is done with the truck so you can have a turn." "You could go to the waving window and wave to your mom and then come and join your friends at the playdough table."
This lets the child know there are other choices available and helps the child use problem-solving skills to develop solutions to problems.

In guiding children's behavior, it is important to be clear, positive, firm and consistent. At Saxon Hill School, we have 4 Rules: We take care of ourselves; we take care of others; we take care of our school, and "you can't say, you can't play". Children develop respect for themselves, others and materials when they understand why it is important.



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STUDENT REFERRAL PROCEDURE

Our intent is to build a culture of ongoing communication with families in which we share observations about the day, the child's interests and challenges. When a student is showing consistent difficulty with personal, social and/or cognitive areas, staff will use the following steps:

1. Document concern through anecdotal records, assessments, screenings and/or photos. Keep a log of time of day, day of week and dates to look for patterns.
2. Share information with families and staff members for immediate suggestions. Plan for follow up within three sessions.
3. Set up a brainstorming meeting with parents, program teachers and director, if difficulty continues after three to six sessions. Set a timeline for goals and plan for follow up. (See attached forms for ideas. A copy of time log, blank sheet.)
4. Review goals and plans with parents every two weeks.
5. Discuss options with team, if significant progress is not met.
 - a) Identify obstacles.
 - b) Make changes in strategies and accommodations.
 - c) Identify potential outside support (pediatrician, EEE, Department of Children & Families, school districts, Childcare Resource Center).
 - d) Obtain permission from parents to share and receive information, if family chooses outside support.
6. If needed, collaborate on developing IEP/IFSP with family and appropriate school district.
 - a) Implement plan with family and school district
 - b) Comply with reporting requirements
7. Collaborate with consultants hired by individual families or school districts, as needed. SHSI does not enter into contracts with specialized consultants for individual children.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. If an enrolled student is eligible for special education and related services under IDEA, SHSI will collaborate with families, districts and/or public agencies to determine how to best meet the needs of the child, and follow the Student Referral Procedure as outlined above. For more information about IDEA, visit <http://idea.ed.gov/>.



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SHS DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDELINES*

* The Work Sampling System, Rebus Inc., P.O. Box 4479, Ann Arbor, MI 2001

domains	three year olds	four year olds	five year olds
Personal & Social Development			
Self concept	Demonstrates self-confidence. Shows some self-direction.	Demonstrates self-confidence. Shows some self-direction.	Demonstrates self-confidence. Shows initiative and self-direction.
Self control	Follows simple classroom rules and routines with guidance. Begins to use classroom materials carefully. Manages transitions.	Follows simple classroom rules and routines. Uses material carefully. Manages transitions.	Follows classroom rules and routines. Uses classroom materials purposefully and respectfully. Manages transitions and adapts to changes in routine.
Approaches to learning	Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner. Attends briefly and seeks help when encountering a problem.	Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner. Attends to tasks and seeks help when encountering a problem	Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner. Sustains attention to a task, persisting even after encountering difficulty.
Interactions with others	Approaches play with purpose and inventiveness. Interacts with one or more children. Interacts with familiar adults.	Approaches tasks with flexibility and inventiveness. Interacts easily with one or more children. Interacts easily with familiar adults.	Approaches tasks with flexibility and inventiveness. Interacts easily with one or more children. Interacts easily with familiar adults.
Social problem-solving	Participates in the group life of the class. Shows empathy and caring of others. Seeks adult help when needed to resolve conflicts.	Participates in the group life of the class. Shows empathy and caring for others. Seeks adult help when needed to resolve conflicts.	Participates in the group life of the class. Shows empathy and caring for others. Seeks adult help and begins to use simple strategies to resolve conflicts.



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<p>Language & Literacy Listening</p>	<p>Gains meaning by listening.</p>	<p>Gains meaning by listening.</p>	<p>Gains meaning by listening.</p>
<p>Speaking</p>	<p>Follows two-step directions.</p>	<p>Follows two- or three-step directions.</p>	<p>Follows directions that involve a series of actions.</p>
<p>Reading</p>	<p>Shows beginning phonological awareness.</p> <p>Speaks clearly enough to be understood by most listeners</p> <p>Uses expanded vocabulary and language for a variety of purposes.</p>	<p>Demonstrates phonological awareness.</p> <p>Speaks clearly enough to be understood without contextual clues.</p> <p>Uses expanded vocabulary and language for a variety of purposes.</p>	<p>Demonstrates beginning phonemic awareness.</p> <p>Speaks clearly and conveys ideas effectively.</p> <p>Uses expanded vocabulary and language for a variety of purposes.</p>
<p>Writing</p>	<p>Shows appreciation for books.</p> <p>Shows interest in letters and words.</p> <p>Not expected at this level.</p>	<p>Shows appreciation for books and reading.</p> <p>Shows beginning understanding of concepts about print.</p> <p>Begins to develop knowledge about letters.</p>	<p>Shows interest in and knowledge about books and reading.</p> <p>Shows some understanding of concepts about print.</p> <p>Knows letters, sounds and how they form words.</p>
<p>Mathematical Thinking</p>	<p>Comprehends and responds to stories read aloud.</p> <p>Represents ideas and stories through pictures, dictation, and play.</p> <p>Uses scribbles and unconventional shapes to write.</p> <p>Not expected at this level.</p>	<p>Comprehends and responds to stories read aloud.</p> <p>Represents ideas and stories through pictures, dictation, and play.</p> <p>Uses letter-like shapes, symbols and letters to convey meaning.</p> <p>Understands purposes for writing.</p>	<p>Comprehends and responds to fiction and non-fiction text.</p> <p>Represents stories through pictures, dictation and play.</p> <p>Uses letter-like shapes, symbols, letters, and words to convey meaning.</p> <p>Understands purposes for writing.</p>
<p>Mathematical processes</p>	<p>Shows interest in solving mathematical problems.</p> <p>Begins to use words to describe mathematical ideas.</p>	<p>Begins to use simple strategies to solve mathematical problems.</p> <p>Uses words to describe mathematical ideas.</p>	<p>Begins to use and explain strategies to solve mathematical problems.</p> <p>Uses words and representations to describe mathematical ideas.</p>



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Number and operations	Shows curiosity and interest in counting and numbers.	Shows beginning understanding of number and quantity.	Shows understanding of number and quantity.
Patterns, relationships, and functions	Sorts objects into subgroups that vary by one attribute.	Sorts objects into subgroups that vary by one or two attributes.	Begins to understand relationships between quantities.
	Not expected at this time.	Recognizes simple patterns and duplicates them.	Sorts objects into subgroups, classifying and comparing according to a rule.
Geometry and spatial relationships	Identifies several shapes.	Begins to recognize and describe the attributes of shapes.	Recognizes, duplicates, and extends patterns.
	Shows understanding of several positional words.	Shows understanding of and uses several positional words.	Recognizes and describes some attributes of shapes.
	Shows some understanding of some comparative words.	Orders, compares, and describes objects according to a single attribute.	Shows understanding of and uses direction, location, and position words.
Measurement	Participates in measuring activities.	Participates in measuring activities.	Orders, compares, and describes objects by size, length, capacity, and weight.
	Not expected at this time.	Participates in measuring activities.	Explores common instruments for measuring during work or play.
	Not expected at this time.	Not expected at this time.	Estimates and measures using non-standard and standard units.
	Not expected at this time.	Not expected at this time.	Shows awareness of time concept.
	Not expected at this time.	Not expected at this time.	Begins to collect data and make records using lists or graphs.
Scientific Thinking Inquiry	Uses senses to observe and explore classroom materials and natural phenomena.	Asks questions and uses senses to observe and explore materials and natural phenomena.	Seeks information through observation, exploration, and descriptive investigations.
	Begins to use simple tools and equipment for investigation.	Uses simple tools and equipment for investigation.	Uses simple tools and equipment to extend the senses and gather data.
	Make comparisons among objects.	Make comparisons among objects.	Forms explanations and communicates scientific information.



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Physical science	Uses senses to observe/explore.	Asks questions and uses senses to observe/explore.	Identifies, describes, and compares properties of objects.
Life science	Uses senses to observe/explore.	Asks questions and uses senses to observe/explore.	Observes and describes characteristics, basic needs, and life cycles, of living things.
Earth science	Uses senses to observe/explore.	Asks questions and uses senses to observe /explore.	Explores and identifies properties of rocks, soil, water, and air. Begins to observe and describe simple seasonal and weather changes.
Social Studies			
People, past and present	Begins to recognize own physical characteristics and those of others. Not expected at this level. Not expected at this level.	Identifies similarities and differences in personal and family characteristics. Not expected at this level. Not expected at this level.	Identifies similarities and differences in people's characteristics, habits, and living patterns. Demonstrates beginning awareness of state and country. Shows some awareness of time and how the past influences people's lives.
Human Interdependence	Begins to understand family structures and roles. Describes some jobs that people do. Not expected at this time.	Begins to understand family needs, roles, and relationships. Describes some people's jobs and what is required to perform them. Begins to be aware of technology and how it affects life.	Begins to understand how people rely on others for goods and services. Describes some people's jobs and what is required to perform them. Begins to be aware of technology and how it affects life.
Citizenship and government	Shows awareness of group rules. Not expected at this time.	Demonstrates awareness of rules. Shows awareness of what it means to be a leader.	Demonstrates awareness of the reasons for rules. Shows beginning understanding of what it means to be a leader.
People and where they live	Not expected at this time.	Describes the location of things in the environment.	Expresses beginning geographical thinking. Shows beginning awareness of



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	Shows beginning awareness of their environment.	Shows awareness of the environment.	the relationship between people and where they live.
Arts Expression and representation	Participates in group music experiences.	Participates in group music experiences.	Participates in group music experiences.
	Participates in creative movement, dance, and drama.	Participates in creative movement, dance, and drama.	Participates in creative movement, dance, and drama.
	Uses a variety of art materials for tactile experience and exploration.	Uses a variety of art materials for tactile experience and exploration.	Uses a variety of art materials to explore and express ideas and emotions.
Understanding and appreciation	Responds to artistic creations or events.	Responds to artistic creations or events.	Responds to artistic creations or events.
Physical Development Gross motor development	Moves with some balance and control.	Moves with balance and control.	Moves with balance and control.
	Coordinates movements to perform simple tasks.	Coordinates movements to perform simple tasks.	Coordinates movements to perform tasks.
Fine motor development	Uses strength and control to perform simple tasks.	Uses strength and control to perform simple tasks.	Uses strength and control to accomplish tasks.
	Uses eye-hand coordination to perform simple tasks.	Uses eye-hand coordination to perform tasks.	Uses eye-hand coordination to perform tasks effectively.
	Explores the use of various drawing and art tools.	Shows beginning control of writing, drawing, and art tools.	Uses writing and drawing tools with some control.
Personal health and safety	Begins to perform self-care tasks independently.	Performs some self-care tasks independently.	Performs self-care tasks competently.
	Follows basic health and safety rules with reminders.	Follows basic health and safety rules.	Shows beginning understanding of and follows health and safety rules.



SAXON HILL SCHOOL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Reducing the Potential Threat of Emergencies:

In order to reduce the potential for emergencies, review the following checklist annually.

- o Check smoke detectors monthly and replace batteries twice a year.
- o Ensure that the landlord regularly cleans and checks heating, cooling, gas and electrical systems.
- o Test Carbon Monoxide detector
- o Check fire extinguishers, ensure they are properly charged, mounted and easy to reach. Train staff in use.
- o Review school for any obstructions that prevent safe exit.

Emergency Response Plan:

The Emergency Response Plan provides basic preparedness and planning information in event of an emergency such as floods, ice storms, toxic spills, etc. It is the responsibility of Saxon Hill School to communicate changes in the ERP to all Saxon Hill School Staff and Families.

Authority:

The Head Teacher of each program is responsible for taking action in an emergency.

Communication:

Saxon Hill School follows the Chittenden East district for town emergencies and cancellations. The school phone tree will be used for town emergencies, school closures, and any emergencies affecting Saxon Hill School.

Keep child emergency information accessible to staff. Child information includes primary and alternate telephone numbers, e-mail.

SHS primary phone does not require batteries for operation. A phone not requiring batteries is a requirement of this plan and must be kept on site. A cell phone is recommended but not required.

Shelter-in-Place

Shelter in place is a situation where all students, faculty and individuals on site, remain within the school during an emergency. This may be a situation where a toxic spill or fumes make exiting the building dangerous. The school will be notified of this situation via local emergency officials. If a shelter in place is ordered, the following should be done:

1. Do not leave the building.
2. Close and lock all doors and windows.
3. Seal any gaps around windows or doors.
4. Turn off any exhaust fans.



5. If vapors begin to bother staff and children, hold wet cloths or handkerchiefs over the nose and mouth.

Emergency Supplies

The following emergency items should be on hand at SHS at all times:

- 1st Aid Kit
- Portable Radio and Batteries
- Multiple Flashlights and sets of Batteries
- Toilet Paper, Paper Towels, Disposable Diapers, etc
- Blankets – stored upstairs in emergency tote
- Telephone not requiring batteries or electricity

Water

At least 4 gallons of water must be stored within the school (stored upstairs in emergency tote). Date bottled water and replenish it once a year to keep it fresh. If additional non- potable water is required for flushing toilets, etc, the river water may be used. Note: Water from a potentially contaminated source can be purified for storage by adding 8 drops of chlorine bleach to every one gallon of water.

Food

Maintain a dated 24-hour emergency supply of non-perishable food (stored upstairs in emergency tote). Ensure all food meets Saxon Hill School regulations for snacks. Replace food annually to maintain freshness. Keep disposable bowls, utensils and a manually operated can opener on hand.

Evacuation and Off Site Sheltering:

In the case of emergency evacuation, the primary meeting location is the tree next to the play yard. In case the students and staff need to relocate to another site, the following sites will be used in order of preference:

1. Jericho Elementary School. Contact the Principal if relocation to the Jericho Elementary School is necessary (telephone 899-2272).
2. The Village Cup (telephone 899-1730).

Emergency Backpacks:

The Saxon Hill Field Trip backpack will be used as the emergency backpack. All necessary items must be maintained in the backpack.

Evacuation:

The evacuation plan of the school is posted on the wall near the phone. The school has 2 primary exits and a third secondary exit. Each of the primary exits must be kept clear of obstructions.



Transportation:

Transportation permission slips are required from each family at the beginning of each school year. These slips allow Saxon Hill School staff to decide appropriate transportation in the case of an emergency.

Security Threats

Procedures for handling a bomb threat are posted by the phone at the school. Any other security threats will be reported to the police and/or 911. Evacuation procedures will be followed if needed.

Natural Disasters

In the event of a natural disaster, staff will follow evacuation procedures as needed.

Utility Failure

For brief outages where child safety is not a concern, staff will contact appropriate utilities to determine whether an early dismissal is needed. If safety is an issue, evacuation procedures will be followed and families notified as appropriate.

Missing Children

In the case of a missing child, the Head Teacher will call 911, then notify the child's parents/guardians, and the Director of Education. Staff will maintain appropriate adult-child ratios for the other children in the class, and will call other parents if additional adult supervision is needed. If needed, families will be asked to pick up their children early from school.

Emergency Drills and Procedures:

Emergency evacuation drills are performed monthly by teachers and staff. Other emergency procedures are practiced yearly. Educate the staff on the emergency response plan. This includes, locations of all emergency phone numbers, and contacts for students. All faculty are CPR and First Aid certified.

The Jericho Fire Department, Jericho Elementary School, and Town Offices are aware and keep a copy of the Saxon Hill School Emergency Response Plan. Fletcher Allen Health Care is the closest hospital to SHSI. Saxon Hill School will provide any changes to the Fire Department as needed.



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

SHS expects all staff and volunteers to maintain confidentiality for students and families. Staff should refrain from sharing information about individual children and their development with persons other than their parents or caregivers. Parent helpers are expected to keep confidential what they may see or hear about families, children or a child's development.

Medical records for each child will be reviewed by the Head Teacher, SHS Health Officer and Health Consultant, and kept confidential in a locked file. A child's emergency contact information will only be viewed in the event of an emergency.

Parents/guardians may access to their children's records, including screening and assessment results, upon request. All non-medical child records and portfolios will be kept in the office upstairs. Non-medical records and portfolios may be shared among SHS Staff in order to identify strategies for supporting a child's learning and development, identify needs for outside support, and as a teaching tool. A parent/guardian must sign a records release authorization prior to SHS sharing records with an outside agency, school district or consultant.

Personnel files are confidential and will be kept in a locked file by the Director of Educational Programs.



BEHAVIORAL WELLNESS POLICY

Our school philosophy is that when a child's needs are being met and his or her interests attended to, there will be very little need for adult intervention in the usual course of the day. There may be times when a child's behavior or actions cause distress or safety concerns for the staff and other children in the program. Behaviors, which would call for intervention, are biting, aggressive physical acts, inappropriate language, physical or verbal harassing, or other harmful acts toward the staff or other children.

Staff will utilize an on-going observation system that will assist them in meeting the needs of the group and individuals. A part of the system will, naturally, include documenting behaviors of concern in order to provide a clear and helpful, written record, should one be necessary.

Teachers will keep parents informed on a regular basis about a child's day that will include areas of behavioral concern. Clear and open communication often resolves such situations when home and program can work together. In the event that this is not possible, the staff will enlist the aid of the director to further explore what can be done.

We will respond to behavioral concerns with one or more of the following:

1. Comfort recipient of the behavior first. Remove the "aggressor" from the immediate area.
2. Discuss the situation with the "aggressor". Redirect the children to a new situation.
3. Provide other activities for releasing or calming energy. Acknowledge appropriate, safe behaviors.
4. Look for patterns that might provide information regarding the source of the behavior of concern. Encourage the use of words between children and others, especially through modeling and or providing words to match feelings and actions.
5. Provide temporary one-on-one until a resolution is found.
6. Discussion of the situation with parents or guardians and other supports when parental/guardian permission is received.
7. Other steps may be taken when determined by staff and other important adults in the child's life.

Please remember that we highly value confidentiality as a protection for families, staff, and children. We will maintain this to the greatest degree possible in any situation. All notes, forms and other documentation in a child's or other school file are to be held in the same confidential manner.



We look to these situations as opportunities for children to gain skills of communicating, collaborating, compromising, negotiating, and problem solving. We see these same values available to the adults involved in the situation. We strongly seek a resolution that serves all parties in the best way given the circumstances..



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HEALTH POLICY

Saxon Hill School attempts to assure a healthy environment for all. **SHSI is a smoke free environment. Smoking is prohibited from school buildings and grounds.** This is best accomplished through prevention of the spread of germs. We practice extensive hand washing and sanitary toileting procedures. Parents are encouraged to help children continue these habits at home. The school and equipment is cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis.

Children in group settings invariably become ill. Maintaining a healthy environment may mean excluding a sick child from school. The attached table outlines expectations of the staff and parents in the case of many childhood illnesses. These expectations are based on State of Vermont Day Care Licensing Regulations as well as information provided by the State Health Department, area physicians, and the Centers for Disease Control. General expectations not outlined on the attached table are that children, parent helpers and staff will be kept from school:

- ▲ until they have been on any antibiotic treatment for 24 hours and fever free for 24 hours
- ▲ until they are fever free for 24 hours
- ▲ if they exhibit excessive cough
- ▲ if they exhibit continuous nasal discharge
- ▲ if they exhibit vomiting or diarrhea at all

Parents are expected to keep sick children home based on the attached information. Staff may ask that you consult with a medical professional before making a decision about including or excluding a child from school. In addition to physical conditions, we must consider the needs of the child. No matter what the diagnosis, if a child feels miserable, clingy, or demands extensive one-on-one attention, s/he will be better off at home or alone with another caregiver. This alone may be basis for staff requesting that parents remove or keep a child from school. **Parents are expected to respect the staff members' opinion regarding whether the child's condition warrants exclusion from the program.**

Saxon Hill School maintains health and safety information for each child and these files are kept current by updating as needed. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records, the child's parents or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities, on request.

If a child becomes ill while at school, s/he will be isolated on a comfortable isolation mat, in an appropriate environment where the teachers/parent helpers can be in contact. The



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isolation mat will be cleaned by the staff/parent helper once the child has left. The parents or the emergency contact listed on their admission forms will be called. When called to pick up a sick child, parents are expected to do so immediately.

When an ill child's condition requires authorization of a medical professional to return to school (as defined in the attached chart), the attached form or a medical professional's note may be used. Additional forms are available at the school.

SHSI will not administer medication (prescription or other) to any child without a written order from the child's physician. All medication to be administered must be supplied in the labeled container in which it was purchased, and accompanied by written instructions and signed parental and physician authorization. (Authorization form is attached. Additional copies are available at the school.) SHSI will assume no responsibility for complications which may arise due to the administration of such medication.

If your child has been exposed to a contagious disease, please let the staff know as soon as possible so that other families can be alerted.

In the event of an emergency, staff will call 911.

The purpose of this health policy is to provide guidance when confronted by illness. All parents in a program must work as partners with each other and the staff to assure the healthiest possible environment for all. Remember, it serves no purpose to knowingly expose children and staff to illness when such exposure is avoidable.

Health Consultant Policy

Our health consultant is a licensed Family Practitioner with experience in health consultation. Our health consultant visits at least twice a year and as needed. The health consultant observes and reviews program practices, and makes recommendations to ensure health promotion and prevention of infection and injury. The health consultant addresses physical, social-emotional, nutritional, and oral health, including the care and exclusion of ill children. Our program documents compliance and implements corrections per recommendations from the health consultant.

Saxon Hill School participates in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, therefore, not requiring an evaluation from a registered dietitian.



Table: Diseases/Actions

Symptom/Illness	Parent Action	School Action
Bacterial Meningitis*	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return	Notify health dept., notify other families of exposure
Campylobacter*	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return	Notify health dept., notify other families of exposure
Chicken Pox*	Remove child from school until all pox are scabbed over (usually one week) and a medical professional indicates it is safe from the child to return	Notify other families of exposure
Colds and Flu	Remove child from school if disposition warrants or if symptoms are too severe to reasonably control. Watch for development of new or more severe symptoms	
Diarrhea (3 loose stools beyond what the child normally has in 24 hours or loose stools persisting for more than 48 hours)	Remove child from school until symptom disappears for 24 hours or otherwise indicated by medical professional	Notify health dept. and other families if cause is found to be Shigella, Campylobacter, Salmonella, or Giardia
Difficulty with Breathing	Remove child from school until symptom disappears for 24 hours or otherwise indicated by a medical professional	
Diphtheria*	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return	Notify health dept., notify other families of exposure
Fever (temperature over 101 degrees rectally or 100 degrees axillary or orally)	Remove child from school until symptom disappears for 24 hours or otherwise indicated by medical professional	
Giardia*	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return	Notify health dept., notify other families of exposure
Hepatitis A*	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return	Notify health dept., notify other families of exposure
Impetigo*	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return	Notify other families of exposure
Runny Nose	Remove child from school if disposition warrants or if discharge is too severe to reasonably manage	Consider chronic conditions in determining inclusion/exclusion
Salmonella*	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return	Notify health dept., notify other families of exposure
Scabies	Remove child from school until 24 hours after treatment initiated. Remove and	Treat school environment and equipment, notify other families of exposure,



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	wash all personal belongings brought to school in very hot water and dry in hot dryer	possibly check other children for infestation
Severe coughing (The child gets red or blue in the face or produces whooping or croup noises during or after cough)	Remove child from school until symptom disappears for 24 hours or otherwise indicated by medical professional	
Shigella*	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return	Notify health dept., notify other families of exposure
Streptococcal infection (Any such infection including strep throat and scarlet fever)	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return or on antibiotics and free of fever for 24 hours	Notify health dept., notify other families of exposure
Tuberculosis (active)*	Remove child from school until medical professional indicates safe to return	Notify health dept., notify other families of exposure
Unusual irritability	Remove child from school until symptom disappears for 24 hours or otherwise indicated by medical professional	
Unusual lethargy	Remove child from school until symptom disappears for 24 hours or otherwise indicated by medical professional	
Vomiting (2 or more episodes in the previous 24 hours)	Remove child from school until symptom disappears for 24 hours or otherwise indicated by medical professional	
* Symptoms and illnesses marked with an asterisk require the approval of a medical professional for the child to return to school. When your child has been diagnosed with one of these illnesses, you must complete and return the attached authorization form BEFORE your child may return to school.		



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Authorization to Return to School

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

Diagnosis: _____

My child's medical professional indicates that it is safe for my child to return to school on the date below or when the conditions specified have been met.

Date to return to school: _____

Conditions: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Medical Professional's Printed Name: _____



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Medication Authorization

Child's Name: _____

Physician Authorization Start Date: _____

Physician Authorization End Date: _____

Medication: _____

Dose and Directions:

Physician Name (please print): _____

Physician Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Administration record:

Date	Time	Comments	Staff initials
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____



REGISTRATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This policy outlines the procedure for registration as indicated by the SHSI by-laws, Article III, Section 2. It is the policy of SHSI not to discriminate in its acceptance of enrollees as required and provided for in federal and state law (SHSI by-laws, Article III, Section 9).

Enrollment prioritization is as follows. Enrollment in classes which have more applicants than spaces will be determined by a lottery at each priority level.

1. Students who are children of SHSI staff.
2. Currently enrolled students repeating the same class.
3. Currently enrolled students moving up one class level (e.g. 2-day to 3-day program).
4. Currently enrolled students moving up two class levels (e.g. 2-day to 4-day program).
5. Students with currently enrolled siblings or sibling alumni.
6. Children of a parent who attended SHS.
7. Students who are new to the school with no staff, sibling, or alumni relationship.

Classes will be filled in the following order: 4 day, 3 day, and 2 day. In a situation where a lottery is needed for new families and more than one application is submitted from the same family, if one applicant's registration form is drawn, then that family will then be considered a Saxon Hill School member family. As such, the sibling(s) is (are) given priority over other new applicants.

Registration is conducted over a three-week period in January. Dates are voted on at the August full membership meeting. Families will indicate a first and second choice preference on their registration form. Forms may be mailed or delivered in person to either the designated site in the school building or to the Registrar and must be received by specified date. SHS will not be responsible for registration forms lost or delayed in the mail. Lotteries, if necessary, shall be witnessed by at least two other board members. Registration fees are non-refundable (Article III, Section 3) once enrolled in the class. The wait list will be started when the program is full. A family must contact the Registrar when the class is full and ask to be put on the wait list. If a family is offered a spot, then they have one of the following options:

- a) to take a spot in the class
- b) to decline the spot and be removed from the wait list
- c) to decline the spot and be placed at the bottom of the wait list

Families have 48 hours to make a decision regarding a spot in a class unless otherwise determined by the registrar. Families may place their enrolled or wait-listed child on one



additional program waiting list with no additional registration fee.

Registration chronology will be as follows. Prior to registration of currently enrolled students, all staff children who have submitted a registration form will be placed on class lists. This is a staff benefit.

Week 1: Currently Enrolled Students

Not later than 4pm Friday:	Registration forms submitted
Friday eve- Sunday eve:	Class assignments made/lottery conducted, if necessary
Monday following:	Notification of enrollment or waiting list status.

Week 2: Siblings and Alumni

Not Later Than 4pm Friday:	Registration forms submitted
Friday eve- Sunday eve:	Class assignments made/lottery conducted, if necessary
Monday following:	Notification of enrollment or waiting list status.

Week 3: New Families

Not Later Than 4pm Friday:	All registration forms must be submitted, they may be delivered to the school building or the Registrar or mailed to SHS earlier in the week. SHS will not be responsible for registration lost or delayed in the mail.
Saturday eve - Sunday eve:	Class assignments made/lottery conducted, if necessary
Monday following:	Notification of enrollment or waiting list status.

Age Waiver: If an opening occurs during the school year (September - May) in one program, staff members may initiate a recommendation (with family agreement) to waive the age required if there is evidence that a currently enrolled child's needs would be better met in a different program.

Wait list Waiver: If an opening occurs during the school year (September-May) in one program, staff members may initiate a recommendation (with family agreement) if there is evidence that a currently enrolled child's needs would be better met in a different program.

A student who withdraws from a class, after the first day of their class begins is eligible for alumni/sibling status registration in the future.



CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT POLICY

Definitions

State statute requires that professionals in the fields of teaching, day care, mental health, social services, medicine, and law enforcement report all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. There are four types of child abuse and neglect defined in the statute:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. Abuse | Physical injury
Mental injury
Sexual abuse |
| 2. Neglect | Inadequate food
Inadequate clothing
Inadequate shelter
Inadequate health care |
| 3. Threatened Harm | Substantial risk of serious physical or mental injury |
| 4. Abandonment | |

By Statute, sexual abuse may be committed by anyone. All other types of abuse and neglect must be committed by “the person responsible for the child’s welfare.”

Policy

In accordance with state law and regulation, as well as early care and education best practices, it is the policy of Saxon Hill School, Inc. to report all instances of suspected child abuse and/or neglect within 24 hours, when there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse and/or neglect may have occurred. To protect children participating in Saxon Hill School programs, criminal background checks are required of all SHSI paid and volunteer staff.

Once a paid or volunteer staff person believes that abuse and/or neglect may have occurred, they are to convey this belief to the director and president of the board. Once the director and president of the board have been notified, the staff person must contact the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) at the number posted by the school’s phone and make a report of the suspected abuse and/or



neglect. (The SRS caseworkers at this number may also be contacted anonymously to determine whether a situation actually constitutes reason to suspect abuse and/or neglect.)

When possible, the parent of the child shall be notified that such a report is to be made prior to the actual report. Parents shall be helped to make the report themselves if that is a choice.

All phone reports must be followed by a written report using SHSI's Abuse and/or Neglect Reporting Form. Copies of the form should be kept by the staff member who made the report, the president of the board, and the parent of the child.

It is also the policy of SHSI to:

- I. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect at SHSI are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is malicious.
- II. Insure that all staff are informed of this policy and of their duty to report abuse and/or neglect, as well as the fact that failure to report can result in a fine of up to \$500.00
- III. Conduct background checks on all staff and volunteers at the time of initial employment or volunteer service.
 - a. Require fingerprint-supported record check for teachers, substitute teachers, enrichment/summer program staff, and/or students working toward a degree in teaching (ie student teachers) who may have unsupervised contact with SHSI students.
 - b. Require a non-fingerprint record check for parent helpers through the Vermont Criminal Information Center (VCIC).
- IV. Insure that all information gathered through record checks remains confidential in accordance with the VCIC confidentiality requirements:
 - a. SHSI agrees to use criminal record information for the purpose intended by law. SHSI will not disclose the contents of criminal record information without the applicant's permission to any person other than the applicant and SHSI staff who have a need to know the contents of the record.



- V. Parents with a history of child abuse or criminal activity may be present to drop off and pick up their children and may participate in program activities provided they are under continual supervision by staff. They may not be left alone with children nor counted in the staff/child ratio.
- VI. Require parent helpers to provide three references that attest to the parent helper's competence to perform the parent helping duties assigned.
- VII. Provide staff and interested volunteers with training as to the prevention and identification of abuse and/or neglect.
- VIII. Annually review, with staff, methods and practices which SHSI can implement to reduce the potential for abuse and/or neglect within the program.
- IX. Cooperate with SRS in any investigation involving SHSI, its staff, and/or its volunteers.
- X. Take immediate action to safeguard children, up to and including suspension from duty, should an allegation of abuse and/or neglect be made against a staff person or volunteer. The specific action will be determined by the board based on the details of the case.
- XI. Take immediate action to safeguard children, up to and including dismissal from duty, should a staff person or volunteer be found to have perpetrated abuse and/or neglect.



CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

It is the policy of SHS to comply with the provisions of state law requiring criminal record checks of prospective school employees and contractors, and to select for employment only persons who are of good character and who have the skill and other qualifications necessary to fulfill job requirements.

In accordance with Act 163 of 1998, SHS will conduct background checks on any person having *unsupervised contact* with the children. The law defines "unsupervised" as "...not in the presence of a responsible adult in the employ of or under the direction of the ... independent school." Student teachers, independent contractors, substitute teachers and volunteers at SHS are in the presence of an employed adult and therefore are not subject to criminal checks. However, if the board and staff feel the subjected person would be in unsupervised situations, a criminal background check will be completed.

SHS will consider information provided through background checks when weighing veracity, character and general suitability of candidates for employment. Unless otherwise exempt from such checks by statutes, all prospective employees and those employees of contractors who will have unsupervised contact with children shall be screened as required by Act 163 of 1998 (16 V.S.A. 251-260).

The board of SHS shall require all applicants, as a condition of consideration for employment, cooperate fully with background investigations. All offers of employment will be conditioned upon completion of the background investigation and a finding that the information provided by the applicant was accurate, complete and truthful.

Providing a safe learning environment for students is a primary consideration in SHS's employment decisions. The school will base such decisions on all relevant information, qualifications and circumstances. Unfavorable background check information is not an automatic bar to employment, and a background check with no unfavorable information is not a guarantee of employment.

Criminal records and criminal record information obtained through background investigations will be treated as confidential. They will be disclosed only to those people specifically designated by state or federal or regulation as entitled to receive such information.

The following protocol will apply to the maintenance of criminal record check information.

- 1 The Director of Education of SHS will maintain criminal history files.
- 2 Criminal history logs, processed release forms and criminal record information will be



maintained for three calendar years in accordance with SHS's agreement with the Vermont Criminal Information Center.

3 After the three year retention period, the record information and logs will be maintained or destroyed as follows:

- a. If the person who is the subject of the background check authorizes in writing maintenance of the information, and the information is a notice of no criminal record, the information will be securely maintained by the school indefinitely;
- b. If the person who is subject of the background check authorizes maintenance, and the information is a criminal record or notice of the existence of a criminal record, the information will be sent by the president to the Commissioner of Education for secure maintenance in the central records repository;
- c. If the person who is the subject of the background check does not authorize maintenance of the information, the Director of Education shall destroy the information in accordance with the user agreement.

Upon completion of a criminal record check, the Director of Education shall (1) notify the person subject to the check about the school's policy for maintenance of criminal history files and (2) ask the person subject to the check to indicate in writing if his/her record should be maintained or destroyed after three years retention period.



WEAPONS POLICY

It is the policy of Saxon Hill School, Inc. (SHSI) to prohibit all weapons from the SHSI buildings and grounds.

The SHSI board shall act to investigate and take appropriate action with regard to any incident or complaint involving a weapon at school. If it is determined, after opportunity for a hearing with the board, that a student violated this policy, that student shall be referred to a law enforcement agency and may be expelled from school for one calendar year.

SMOKING POLICY

To promote wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults, it is the policy of Saxon Hill School, Inc (SHSI) to prohibit smoking from the SHSI buildings and grounds.

PHOTO/VIDEO POLICY

Photographs and/or videos that are taken at SHS or at an SHS-sponsored activity, and that include any person (or part of a person), other than your own child, are expressly not allowed to be copied, distributed, printed, published, or electronically published (including on a personal web site or any other web site), for or by any other person or entity without the written permission of the person (adult) or the child's legal guardian. In the event SHS intends to use a photo or video of your child for school-related purposes, such as school publicity or teacher training, a written release shall be obtained from you (the parent or guardian) first. Families may opt to exclude their children from any such school-initiated photo or video. This policy is to protect the privacy and safety of our children and our families.



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HARASSMENT AND HAZING POLICY

(In accordance with Vermont Title 16 V.S.A. § 565)

It is the policy of Saxon Hill School Inc. (herein after SHSI) that it provides safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environments. Harassment, hazing and bullying have no place and will not be tolerated in SHSI. No SHSI student should feel threatened or be discriminated against while enrolled in SHSI. Accordingly, SHSI adopts the following policy and procedures to prohibit harassment and hazing and will ensure the enforcement thereof.

A. DEFINITIONS (from VT Title 16 subdivisions 11(a)(26) and 11(a)(30))

I Harassment

“Harassment” means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student’s or a student’s family member’s actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student’s educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Examples of behaviors which, if sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent to interfere with a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from school programs, would be unlawful harassment including but not limited to physical aggression or force, the threat of physical aggression or force, demeaning comments or behavior, slurs, mimicking, jokes, gestures, name-calling, graffiti, stalking, sexual advances, use of nicknames emphasizing stereotypes, comments on manner of speaking, negative references to customs, and derogatory comments regarding surnames.

II Hazing

“Hazing” means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with SHSI; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student. “Hazing” also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off school grounds.

B. REPORTING

1. Voluntary report

A student’s parent or guardian may report an allegation of unlawful harassment or hazing he or she has experienced or witnessed at school or during school sponsored activities to the PAL or a staff member of his/her choice. Any staff member may report an allegation of



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unlawful harassment or hazing he or she has experienced at school or during school sponsored activities to the Director of Education or the SHSI President.

2. Mandatory report

If a staff member or a PAL witnesses or receives a report, formal or informal, written or oral, of unlawful harassment or hazing at school or during school sponsored activities, he or she shall report it to the Director of Education or the President of SHSI.

3. Privacy

The Director of Education and the President shall respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the report is directed, and the witnesses to the extent consistent with the Director of Education's and President's obligations to investigate, take appropriate action, and conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

C. INVESTIGATION:

The Director of Education or the President shall inform the Board of any complaint. The Director of Education or the President shall conduct an investigation, which shall be timely and thorough, and the findings and the conclusions of the investigation shall be reduced to writing. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the investigation shall be concluded within ten school days following receipt of a report or complaint, formal or informal, written or oral, alleging unlawful harassment or hazing.

D. ACTION

1. Duty to act: The Director of Education or the President shall inform the SHSI Board at the next Board meeting of the complaint and of the result of the investigation. The Board shall take appropriate action in all cases where this policy has been violated.

2. Consequences: Any staff member found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate consequences and/or remedial action including, but not limited to, warning, exclusion, suspension, termination of employment, or remedial action such as training, education, or counseling. The Board shall not take any action, which is inconsistent with applicable collective bargaining agreements, state and federal laws, and other SHSI policies. If the investigation concludes that a student violated this policy, that student shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to, warning, suspension or expulsion from co- or extra-curricular activities or from school. Any disciplinary action against a student shall be subject to the procedures set forth in the Parent Handbook Article IV-Section 3 (Termination of Enrollment).

If the investigation concludes that two or more students from the same program or co- or extra-curricular activity directed, engaged in or otherwise participated in actively or passively an incident of hazing, disciplinary action may be imposed against the program or activity, including cancellation of the activity.

Nothing in this policy shall limit or preclude SHSI from disciplining a student or other person affiliated with SHSI under any SHSI policy as well as under terms of this policy.

3. False report: The Board shall take appropriate action against any student, teacher,

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administrator or other school personnel who makes a false report of unlawful harassment or hazing knowing it to be false.

4. Retaliation: Retaliation for reporting harassment or cooperating in an investigation of harassment is unlawful under 9 V.S.A. §4502(a)(5). The Board shall take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel who retaliate against any person for making a good faith report of unlawful harassment or hazing or for participating in an investigation or other part of the process established by this policy. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

E. APPEAL

A person determined to have violated this policy and subjected to action under it may appeal the determination and/or the action taken in accordance with procedures adopted under this policy.

F. MANDATORY REPORTING OF ABUSE

Under certain circumstances, alleged harassment may also be possible abuse under Vermont law. The statutory obligation to report suspected abuse, therefore, may be applicable.

Example: Verbal Harassment to perform sexual acts or physical conduct of a sexual nature by another student or adult toward a student under the age of sixteen would be reportable as child abuse. If a mandatory reporter is uncertain as to whether an action is "reportable", he/she should check with an administrator or with the State SRS Officer.

G. DISSEMINATION AND TRAINING

1. Dissemination and training

This policy shall be included in the parent handbook, which is distributed to all member families prior to their child's first class at SHSI. Annually, staff members shall be provided with a copy of this hazing policy prior to the opening of school. The Director of Education shall ensure that the policy is reviewed annually with each staff member. Staff of co- or extra-curricular activities shall be provided a copy of this hazing policy upon employment by SHSI.



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SAXON HILL SCHOOL ANIMAL POLICY

No fur bearing animals except domestic animals with proof of rabies vaccination will be allowed at Saxon Hill School. Children and adults will be required to wash their hands after handling an animal. We ask that people do not bring their pets inside or outside of the school, including the grass area near the play yard, without advanced approval from the teacher. The pet must be under the strict supervision of the adult at all times. Visiting domestic animals must be fully immunized and be suitable for contact with children, documented from a veterinarian. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of the risk for salmonella infection.



SAXON HILL SCHOOL FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

Parents of a student at SHSI with a food allergy, teachers, and the Health Officer will create a partnership to prevent food reactions at school. Teachers need to be informed about a food allergy in order to:

- 1) Avoid or prevent food allergic reactions
- 2) Recognize a reaction should one occur
- 3) Respond quickly.

By working together and communicating clearly and frequently, staff and the student's parents will create an environment that allows the student to grow and learn and, most of all, be safe while at school.

LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES

It is extremely difficult to avoid accidental ingestion when the offending foods are present. When there are children with life threatening food allergies enrolled at SHSI, the offending foods will not be allowed at school. It should be recognized that this will reduce but not eliminate the risk of accidental exposure.

LIFE THREATENING AND NON-LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES

Parents will provide SHSI with an allergy medication form that has been filled out by their physician. All allergy response medications will be brought to school whenever the child is present. Medications must travel wherever the child goes at all times (i.e. field trips).

An allergy card will be filled out by staff and placed by the phone and a second card will be placed in the field trip first aid pack.

Parents, staff and the Health Officer will work together, prior to the August full membership meeting, to outline a plan of action for the school year that will include:

- a) Notifying all staff and parents at SHSI of the allergy and offending food on a need to know basis
- b) How to recognize the symptoms of an allergic reaction
- c) What past reactions have been
- d) Medications that are administered if child is exposed to offending food
- e) How to administer the medications

Parents may refer to the Parent Health manual (on the library shelf) for more information on food allergies, or consult the Health Officer.



EXECUTIVE SESSION POLICY

Subjects discussed during executive session meetings are highly confidential. Even spouses are not privy to the information, and topics cannot be discussed outside of executive session. The minutes of an executive session, if they are taken, are private and must be read and acted upon only in executive session.

OUTLINE OF PROCEDURES FOR SHSI EXECUTIVE SESSION:

1. Executive session is open only to board members and invited consultants.
2. The only business, which may be considered in executive session, includes employee contracts; mediation or grievances; the appointment, employment, evaluation, disciplinary action or dismissal of a board member or employee; tuition assistance, and other issues deemed confidential.
3. A motion to enter into executive session must indicate the nature of business and must be approved by a majority of board members being in attendance.
4. This motion must be made in the course of a regular board meeting and the results must be recorded in the minutes.

EXAMPLE OF MINUTES December 7, 2005 Monday An Emergency Board Meeting

Attendees: Joe Smith, Mary Smith, Bob Smith, Sally Smith, and John Doe and Sue Doe.

Mary Smith made a motion to go into executive session for the purpose of a grievance.

As a result of executive session the board:

- Approved a tuition assistance application.
- Denied a tuition assistance application.
- No action was taken. Mary Smith Secretary



TUITION POLICY

Saxon Hill School remains committed to quality education. It is a non-profit institution, and like any other school, has expenses and financial responsibilities that must be met on time. Therefore, the following tuition payment guidelines must be met:

Saxon Hill School has a partial tuition payment due in mid April. This payment is a nonrefundable payment that will hold your child's position in class for the following school year.

Tuition payment plans:

- ⤴ 4 payments / year
- ⤴ 1 payment / year - Pay the full tuition amount for the year and receive a \$10 discount for the 2 day program and a \$25 discount for the 3 and 4 day programs
- ⤴ Monthly payments (10) - by application only, to be reviewed and approved by the Treasurer

Saxon Hill School realizes that families can experience unforeseen financial difficulties. Alternate arrangements should be made as soon as possible, in advance of any affected tuition payments by contacting the Treasurer or Treasurer's Assistant immediately to discuss payment options.

Tuition Assistance funds are available through SHS. Applications can be obtained by contacting the Treasurer and must be submitted by April 1st for the subsequent school year.

Any financial arrangements are kept confidential between the member family and the Treasurer and/or Treasurer's Assistant. Any alternate financial arrangements must be in writing and signed by the Treasurer and member family. In addition, any new financial arrangements will be subject to all due dates and late tuition policies.

Any check returned for insufficient funds will be treated as a non-payment and the member family will be subject to the late tuition policies listed below.

Withdrawal:

A family who withdraws after payment of the April tuition deposit but prior to the June installment payment will forfeit its non-refundable deposit payment.



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After the June installment payment due date but prior to the commencement of school, and as per the By-laws, Article IV, Section 2, a “member family withdrawing shall be held responsible for two month’s tuition from the date of notification.” After the June installment and after the commencement of school, and as per the By-laws, Article IV, Section 2, a “member family withdrawing shall be held responsible for two month’s tuition (2/9 of annual tuition). The board may waive or reduce this requirement if it can refill the vacancy created by the withdrawal with no loss of tuition revenue to the school; in such an event, the withdrawing family will be responsible for a pro-rated portion of the two months’ tuition, subject to a minimum of its non-refundable deposit.

Collection of Tuition:

The partial tuition payment is due in mid April. This payment is a nonrefundable payment that will hold your child’s position in class for the following school year. If the partial tuition payment is not received within 10 days of the original due date, the child will be withdrawn from SHS and the opening will be filled.

- Please note: The first tuition payment for all 3 plans is due on the same date.

Four (4) payments / year plan

Payments are due by the established due dates.

If payment is not received by the due dates, the member family will be notified that a \$25 late fee has been assessed to their account and that the new balance must be received within 10 days of the original due date. If the balance is not received by the tenth day, the child will be withdrawn from SHS and the opening will be filled. *

One (1) payment / year plan

Receive a \$10 discount for the 2 day program and a \$25 discount for the 3 and 4 day programs if the total annual tuition is paid by the first due date. If tuition is not received by the due date, the discount does not apply.

If no payment is received by the due date, the member family will automatically be placed on the 3 payments / year plan. The member family will be notified that a \$25 late fee has been assessed to their account and that the new balance must be received within 10 days of the original due date. If the balance is not received by the tenth day, the child will be withdrawn from SHS and the opening will be filled. *

Monthly payments (10) plan - by application and approval only

Applications must be received at least two weeks prior to the first tuition due date.

Applications can be obtained by contacting the Treasurer.

Full tuition for the year is divided into 10 equal payments. First payment is due at the same time as the other payment plans. (amount equals 1 Year tuition /10)

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All other payments (9) are due by the 15th of each month (July - March).

If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, the member family will be notified that a \$25 late fee has been assessed to their account and that the new balance must be received within 10 days of the original due date. If the balance is not received by the tenth day, the child will be withdrawn from SHS and the opening will be filled. *

Member families who have more than two late tuition payments will be subject to board review.

* A member family whose child has been withdrawn from school as a result of the late tuition policy may not register their child for the following school year. If registration has already occurred, the child will be withdrawn from the program for the following school year and the registration fee will not be refunded.



TUITION ASSISTANCE POLICY

Saxon Hill School is proud to offer tuition assistance for our programs. The board provides tuition assistance based on a) financial need or b) emergency financial situations. Two-thirds of available tuition assistance funds are allocated to families in financial need; one third of the funds are allocated to families facing financial emergencies.

Given Saxon Hill School's limited financial resources, the tuition assistance fund is seen as a means to help ease tuition burden, not underwrite it.

The two types of tuition assistance:

1.) Tuition assistance based on financial need

a.) As a general rule, Saxon Hill School will provide up to 1/3 of the program tuition for families eligible for Dr. Dynasaur/Medicaid benefits. Under special circumstances, the board may also approve additional tuition assistance based on the number of applications received and the availability of funds.

b.) The deadline for tuition assistance requests is April 1, for all families registered by this date. Those families who accept registration at a later date will be given a deadline by the treasurer. Requests for summer camps will be considered on a rolling basis. Applications will be submitted in confidence to the Saxon Hill School treasurer. Any tuition assistance money awarded will reduce the remaining tuition balance and be applied equally to all installment payments, whether quarterly or monthly. The Treasurer will send out a letter outlining the amount of the award and the payment schedule options. All families applying for Tuition Assistance are still responsible for the April NRD.

2) Tuition assistance based on emergency financial situations

The board will consider tuition assistance requests based on emergency financial situations, such as job loss. Applications will be submitted in confidence to the Saxon Hill School treasurer. Requests for assistance are accepted anytime throughout the year but will apply only to tuition not already paid (in other words, they cannot be applied retroactively).

The application process for tuition assistance:

The SHS treasurer will require applicants to submit a financial background information form, a short need statement, and the applicant's most recent tax return. Families applying for assistance

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based on financial need will also be required to include a copy of their Dr. Dynasaur/Medicaid insurance card or to demonstrate their eligibility for it.

The SHS board will evaluate applicants equitably. Family names and details will not be known by the board. The treasurer will provide the board with family incomes on a “dollars-per-family-member” basis. The board will then evaluate all applicants in light of the funding available. The treasurer will notify applicants of tuition assistance decisions.

At the end of each fiscal year, the treasurer will destroy all tuition assistance files and distribution receipts.

The source of SHS tuition assistance funds:

The Board will determine the tuition assistance fund amount during the budget process for each fiscal year and upon approval by the general membership. The tuition assistance fund will be found in the operating budget as an exclusive line item. The amount of tuition assistance will be determined based upon an analysis of several years funding and allocation, as well as the balance of current scholarship funds. If scholarship funds are deemed adequate to cover the anticipated tuition assistance expense, the general membership may determine funding for this line item is unnecessary as part of the operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year. This decision must be evaluated as appropriate for each school year’s operating budget.

The philosophy at Saxon Hill School is to put the needs of the child first. In keeping, the board will decide tuition assistance cases in a manner consistent with our school’s overall philosophy.

Tuition Assistance Policy Revised 02/11



COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

Serving on and/or participating in the activities of the following committees is an important part of the SHS parent cooperative. The activities of each committee contribute to the efficient operation of the school. Committees are assigned by the board as school needs and the number of participating families allow (SHS by-laws, Article XIII, Section 2). Committee chairpersons are responsible for maintaining communication with the staff and the board via the parent-at-large and for making recommendations to the board and/or membership as necessary. All chairpersons complete a yearly report of the committee activities and future needs or suggestions. This report is used for planning by the board and distributed to the incoming chairpersons of each committee to help provide continuity from year to year.

Building and Grounds

(6-8) families— Responsible for coordinating with staff before beginning of school year to determine special needs/repairs for the building and/or playground (i.e. interior painting, fence repair etc.) Responsible for ongoing repair and maintenance of all SHS indoor and outdoor equipment and structures, including play yard, fences, outdoor lighting, outdoor play structures etc. Also responsible for overseeing the construction or installation of exterior equipment (i.e. new sand box, gate, etc.), and interior equipment, as school needs dictate. Interior components include walls, ceilings, floors, appliances, furniture, electrical, plumbing, and other school property. Duties also include seasonal tasks such as raking, shoveling snow, weeding and mowing. In the event of a major snowstorm, families will participate in a full committee shoveling/snowplowing effort. Each committee family serves approximately four 2-week shifts where they are responsible for the seasonal tasks and participating in any repairs/maintenance that come up during that time. Time commitment begins in June and ends in May .

Barn Sale

(6-7 families) –This is a major fundraiser for SHS. This committee manages the Barn Sale at Underhill's Harvest Market held in late September. Families and community members donate items for sale. The committee coordinates SHS member involvement for set-up, pricing, selling, and clean-up. Co-chairs for this committee have worked well in the past. Other responsibilities include storage of Barn Sale equipment (tents, signs, racks etc.) and managing a voluntary Bake Sale. The commitment runs from July to October, with a substantial but manageable time commitment during the weekend of the Barn Sale and the 2 weeks prior to it.

Artisans' Auction

(7-9 families) –Responsibilities for this major fundraiser include arranging the time and place



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for the Auction, hiring the auctioneer, hiring the caterer, soliciting donations from the SHS community, local artists and businesses, coordinating pick-up of items, selling tickets, day-of-event logistics including set-up, decorating, clean-up, and writing thank you letters to donors. The time commitment runs approximately from November to April, with the bulk of the activity in the winter months close to the event date.

Fundraising Committee

(2-3 families) – Committee families are responsible for managing all aspects of small SHS fundraisers throughout the year. These include: wreath sale, Original Artworks, valentine letter, holiday shopping week (Learning Express), turkey raffle and Lake Monsters raffle. Duties include presenting fundraiser details at FMMs and advertising to school and larger community (as applicable), carrying out all aspects of the fundraising event, completing a final report for each event with recommendations for changes, and exploring and presenting to the board opportunities for new fundraisers. The fundraisers listed are a sampling of what has been done in the past, not a mandate on what must be done in the future. Fundraising is continually changing as the needs/desires of the SHS community change. One family will be assigned to distribute book/software order forms to member families on a monthly basis, collect orders and payments, place orders with the clubs, sort and distribute books/software to member families. Collect and track accumulated club bonus points. Consult with the staff to determine what bonus products to obtain for the school.

Assistant to the Director of Education (2 families)

Two families will split the work of this position, with one person working with Michele primarily from July-December and one person working primarily January-June. One person will work on implementing the fall Chapin Orchard partnership including scheduling of field trips and tours. One person will focus on scheduling and coordinating registration for Summer Camp programs. Families will determine the best way to share responsibility for coordinating occasional special program projects (e.g yoga, Spanish or younger sibling playgroups)

Cleaning

(3-4 families) – Responsible for communicating with staff to determine special cleaning needs, coordinating an in-depth cleaning in August prior to the school opening, generating a schedule of weekend/vacation cleaning assignments to distribute to the SHS families, and scheduling to have the floors stripped and waxed twice a year. Each committee family is responsible for participating in summer/weekend/vacation cleaning throughout the year (average 2-3 times), assisting with small cleaning tasks at staff's request, and monitoring and shopping for cleaning and other disposable supplies (SHS covers expenses).

Treasurer's Assistant

(1 family) – Work under of the guidance of the Treasurer to: (1) Oversee the general purchases for the school by working with the Director of Education and the staff to keep

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supplies current. Research best pricing and delivery options for the school and make vendor recommendations and make purchases when necessary. (2) Maintain accounts and keep sales-tax-exemption status current with local and online vendors. Assist staff and committee chairs in making single purchases and setting up multiple purchase accounts with vendors. (3) Assist the Treasurer with deposits and cash-box during Barn Sale and Auction. (4) Collect mail from Post Office in Jericho and distribute to appropriate mailboxes.

Publicity

(3-4 families) – Publicity committee families are responsible for all the publicity needs of the school, including SHS advertising for registration/openings, open houses, Vacation and Summer camps, and for special events (i.e. Barn Sale, Art Auction). Committee families are responsible for artwork/poster creation, distributing/posting fliers in and around the community, ad placement in local publications and in local elementary school parent newsletters, publication of the Saxon Hill Alumni Newsletter, maintaining the school web site, and coordinating supply and sale of SHS t-shirts, hats, tote bags, etc.

Staff Technology Advisor

(1 family) – The STA's duties will include: providing staff training, guidance and oversight in the use of SHS's technology and management of computerized school data and photos; making recommendations for software and hardware changes/additions; creating/maintaining a staff technology handbook; and completing a year-end status report with a 2-year technology recommendation plan. The STA will work closely with Publicity Committee and be responsible for updating the SHS website as needed.

Health Officer

(1 family) – Responsible for reviewing the immunization certificates to determine if each child has received the required immunizations and for providing the data to the Vermont Department of Health. Assist staff in ensuring the SHS health policy is enforced by consulting with families and explaining our policy relating to any issue of medical concern. Consult with staff to determine the way in which the membership and/or class will be notified of any contagious conditions that occur while striving to maintain individual confidentiality (i.e. sign posted by staff, notices in cubbies, mail). Provide information on health issues, which arise during the year (i.e. contagious disease fact sheets, preventative measures, food and other allergy information, state health pamphlets). Be available to respond to questions/concerns of staff or families relating to health issues. Update the SHS Emergency Response Plan and supplies as needed. Full year, with emphasis on paperwork and family meetings (as needed) prior to start of school, and presentation of information at the August FMM.



BY-LAWS OF SAXON HILL SCHOOL
(Revised February, 2006)

DEFINITIONS

STAFF BOARD

Includes teaching staff and Director of Educational Programs. The group of members elected to oversee the administration of the school, address concerns and maintain the philosophy of the school.

BOARD MEMBER

One of the officers of the school as described in Article V. A board position may be shared by two persons from a member family, but one of the parties must be designated as the signatory for the office. A board position may not be shared by persons from separate member families.

MEMBER FAMILY

A family unit that has at any time paid the membership fee.

CURRENTLY ENROLLED CHILD

A child who is enrolled in a program for either the current or upcoming school year.

ARTICLE I - OBJECT

- SECTION 1. The purpose of Saxon Hill School, Inc. (SHSI) is to act as a guide helping each child discover himself /herself and the world about him/her.
- SECTION 2. The philosophy of SHSI is stated in the parent handbook.
- SECTION 3. SHSI is based upon a spirit of cooperation which requires every member family to become involved in the activities of the school.

ARTICLE II. - MEMBERSHIP

- SECTION 1. Each member family pays a membership fee at the time of their first enrollment in SHSI. The amount of the fee is determined by the full membership in conjunction with budget approval.
- SECTION 2. Member families with a currently enrolled child are required to attend all full membership meetings to assist in conducting the business of the school (see Article VII). Member families are encouraged to attend monthly board meetings.
- SECTION 3. Member families share in the administration of the school by serving as board members or on committees as appointed by the board.
- SECTION 4. Member families are responsible for the up keep of the equipment and facilities used or owned by SHSI. Each member family shall be required to clean the



school during one weekend or vacation each year. Board members are exempt from this cleaning requirement. If the number of school weeks to clean and the number of member families is not equal, the cleaning committee shall be responsible for determining a system that assures the school is cleaned each weekend and vacation.

SECTION 5. Member families shall abide by the health policies described in the parent handbook as well as those required by State of Vermont Licensing Regulations.

SECTION 6. Member families shall sign and agree to abide by the parent contract at the time of enrollment.

ARTICLE III - ENROLLMENT

SECTION 1. Students shall be required to meet the age criteria outlined in the parent handbook (Article VIII, Section 3) in order to be enrolled.

SECTION 2. Applications shall be accepted as described in the Registration Policies and Procedures document. Applications shall be accepted according to the following priorities.

- A. Children of Staff
- B. Currently enrolled students of SHSI.
- C. Siblings of currently enrolled or alumni of SHSI.
- D. New Families not previously members of SHSI.

SECTION 3. At the time of registration a registration fee must be paid for each applicant. The amount of the fee shall be established for the following year by the full membership in conjunction with budget approval. The fee is not refundable.

SECTION 4. If a child is absent from school for an extended period of time due to illness, the member family may apply to the board for an abatement in tuition.

SECTION 5. If a child is absent from school for an extended period of time for any reason other than illness, tuition must be paid to maintain his/her enrollment.

SECTION 6. Tuition for each program shall be established by the full membership in conjunction with budget approval and shall be paid by the dates designated by the board.

SECTION 7. Students enrolled after the due date of the first tuition payment shall pay tuition according to the procedure set by the board.

SECTION 8. The number of students enrolled in each program shall not exceed 17 and must comply with all provisions of current state licensing regulations. Teacher recommendations, with board agreement, shall determine actual class size.

SECTION 9. SHSI will not discriminate in its acceptance of enrollees as required and



provided for in federal (ADA) and state law.

ARTICLE IV - TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

- SECTION 1. If a member family fails to meet tuition payments, the board may require that they withdraw their child(ren) from SHSI.
- SECTION 2. Enrollment in SHSI may be terminated by giving thirty days written notice to the president of SHSI. Termination of enrollment does not relieve a member family of its tuition obligation. The member family who withdraws after payment of the April tuition deposit but prior to the June installment payment will forfeit its non-refundable deposit payment. After the June installment payment due date but prior to the commencement of school the member family withdrawing shall be held responsible for two month's tuition from the date of notification. After the June installment and after the commencement of school the member family withdrawing shall be held responsible for two month's tuition (2/9 of annual tuition). The board may waive or reduce this requirement if it can refill the vacancy created by the withdrawal with no loss of tuition revenue to the school; in such an event, the withdrawing family will be responsible for a pro-rated portion of the two months' tuition, subject to a minimum of its non-refundable deposit. All other considerations may be brought to the Board.
- SECTION 3. The teaching staff at SHSI attempts to meet the needs of every student. If a child is experiencing difficulty in his/her program, the teacher shall discuss the situation with his/her parents or guardians and may seek professional consultation pertinent to the individual situation. If the situation does not improve, is detrimental to the class as a whole, and if the teacher requests, the board may require that the parents withdraw the child from SHSI. Any prepaid tuition may be considered for refund by the board. Termination of enrollment in this situation does relieve a member family of its tuition obligation.

ARTICLE V - BOARD MEMBERS

- SECTION 1. The board of SHSI shall consist of a president, vice president, registrar, secretary, treasurer, Jericho Historical Society liaison, Director of Educational Programs, and three parents-at-large, i.e. one parent or parenting couple from each class. Each board member shall hold office for one year from July 1st through June 30th. A co-founder of the school, Willadine G. Cochran shall be a permanent voting member of the board for as long as she wishes to serve.
- SECTION 2. SHSI board members, with the exception of the director of educational programs, are self nominated and then elected by a majority vote of the full membership. Board members shall serve as unpaid volunteers, with the exception of the director of educational programs.
- SECTION 3. Board members shall have voting privileges at board meetings during their term(s) of office.
- SECTION 4. Administration of the SHSI by-laws shall rest in the hands of the board.



SECTION 5. Duties of the board members:

A. PRESIDENT

The President is responsible for overseeing the general operation of the school and shall work closely with the DOE throughout the year.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Attend and preside at all board and full membership meetings
- Encourage deliberation and participation of all board members
- Sign checks and all other contracts and obligations of the school authorized by the board
- Engage contracts with the staff
- Oversee staff performance appraisals
- Obtain any necessary legal consultation
- Oversee purchase and maintenance of necessary insurance pursuant to Article XII of the By-Laws of Saxon Hill School
- Maintain copies of all documents pertinent to the administration of the school
- Communicate periodically with full membership via President's newsletter
- Assist DOE and Treasurer in long range fiscal planning, and in preparation and review of operating budget
- Make an effort to be aware of any concerns that may arise. Guide families toward the cooperative spirit of SHS by modeling appropriate behavior and attempt to dispel any negative gossip by providing accurate information and maintaining open positive communication

B. VICE PRESIDENT

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Assist the President and DOE when issues arise
- Organize committee assignments for membership
- Assist committee chairs when needed
- Write thank you notes for general donations and when requested by President or DOE
- Attend all board and full membership meetings
- Maintain accurate key distribution list
- Make an effort to be aware of any concerns that may arise. Guide families toward the cooperative spirit of SHS by modeling appropriate behavior and attempt to dispel any negative gossip by providing accurate information and maintaining open positive communication

GENERAL CHRONOLOGY OF ACTIVITIES:

JULY

- Continue updating committee assignments
- Assist with summer projects as needed

AUGUST

- Meet with President to assist with planning FMM
- Contact barn sale chair to check on progress of committee
- Contact B&G chair to check on progress of committee

SEPTEMBER



- Post final draft of committee assignments on bulletin boards at school

- Distribute barn sale committee chair report immediately after sale is over

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

- Assist President with budget planning process

JANUARY

- Distribute committee chair reports and set date for collecting them (usually March is fine; after Artisan's Auction)

FEBRUARY

- Talk with staff and DOE to get input on committees (expectations for next year)

MARCH

- Announce dates when committee assignment forms will be distributed (usually 2-week period) and when assignments will be issued
- Begin talking with families about assignments for next year
- Collect committee chair reports

APRIL

- Review committee selection process at board meeting; get board input on committee numbers, adding eliminating committees and other committee issues
- Distribute committee selection forms 1-2 weeks prior to April vacation and collect them before vacation
- Begin organizing committee assignments; collect missing selection forms; make phone calls

MAY

- Issue committee assignments first week of May, by cubby and email to existing families; by email and US mail to new families
- Present committee assignments to board; discuss committee issues
- Send reminder notice to all committee chairs that committee responsibilities begin on June 1st; remind new chairs to contact last year's chair to exchange info and get key(s)
- Review job responsibilities with new VP

C. REGISTRAR

The Registrar works closely with the DOE throughout the registration process.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Attend all board and full membership meetings
- Take phone calls and answer general questions about SHS
- Be sure answering machine is functioning at SHS at all times, with current message
- Register all students and maintain up-to-date membership file
- Have general information packets available at school for visitors (general letter, brochure, registration form, parent contract, tuition rates and other program info)
- Plan and oversee open houses prior to annual registration
- Make an effort to be aware of any concerns that may arise. Guide families toward the cooperative spirit of SHS by modeling appropriate behavior and attempt to dispel any negative gossip by providing accurate information and maintaining open positive communication

GENERAL CHRONOLOGY OF ACTIVITIES:

JULY

- Continue updating class lists
- Continue registering students



- Provide staff and board members with class lists
- AUGUST**
 - Set registration dates for following school year at FMM
 - Distribute final draft of class lists to staff, board members, cleaning chair, treasurer's assistant
- SEPTEMBER**
 - Make copies of registration form and parent contract for interested parties who call
- Prepare mailing info for interested families
- OCTOBER**
 - Work with DOE and staff to organize new family info meetings
 - Plan open houses
- NOVEMBER**
- Begin advertising registration dates in the community (coordinate with publicity chair/committee)
- DECEMBER**
 - Make 75 copies of registration form and parent contract for registration
 - Post registration dates, times, policy and procedure
 - Continue with advertising of registration dates and times
- JANUARY**
 - Be sure all forms are ready for registration (registration form, parent contract, tuition assistance forms, parent handbook, brochures, health forms, etc.)
 - Continue advertising in community
- FEBRUARY**
 - Distribute first draft of class lists to board members and DOE
 - Continue registering children
- MAY**
 - Provide Secretary with updated class list for all member mailing after May board meeting
- JUNE**
 - Review job responsibilities with new Registrar

D. SECRETARY

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Attend all board and full membership meetings
- Take minutes at all meetings
- Pass around attendance sheet at all meetings
- Type up and distribute minutes to all current and new families, staff and director
- File master copy of minutes upstairs and post one copy on the bulletin board
- Maintain current address and/or email list of families for mailing purposes
- Make by-laws available to the members. All updates must be filed, given or mailed to current and new families, staff and director. Update all parent handbooks in upstairs file.
- Send out written notices of upcoming board and full membership meetings (this can be noted on previous month's minutes)
- Update SHS master documents as needed.
- Post the current by-laws on bulletin board
- Maintain alumni list
- Make an effort to be aware of any concerns that may arise. Guide families toward the cooperative spirit of SHS by modeling appropriate behavior and attempt to dispel any negative gossip by providing accurate information and maintaining open positive communication.



GENERAL CHRONOLOGY OF ACTIVITIES:

JULY

- Make sure copy machine is working well for the start of the year
- Send out minutes

AUGUST

- FMM: be sure that the registration dates for next year’s registration in January (established by the Registrar and voted on by members at the FMM) are included (in bold) in the minutes
- Get all details on the Barn Sale from committee chairs in to the minutes
- Send out minutes and include: Parent Helper Information Sheet
- Get registration and class list information from Registrar and update Alumni list

SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER

- Distribute minutes

DECEMBER

- Remind families of the registration procedure and dates in the minutes
- Initiate discussion of any necessary changes to Parent Handbook prior to registration

JANUARY – MARCH

- Distribute minutes
- Get Parent Handbook printed (if necessary). Ensure master copy is accurate with all updates and correct page order. Obtain folders (big tab 8 dividers) and ensure SHS stickers for front of handbook. Put handbooks together.
- February—begin distributing minutes of board meetings to new families who have registered for the following year
- Distribute Parent Handbook at full membership meeting in March to returning families and new families. Mail handbooks to new families who did not attend the full membership meeting.

MAY

- Distribute minutes
- Send out May mailing. This includes cover letter, field trip permission form, school calendar, tuition payment schedule, admission form, immunization certificate, release authorization, parent helper references, abuse/neglect form, May minutes.

JUNE

- Distribute minutes.
- Review job responsibilities with new Secretary.

E. TREASURER

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Treasurer, assisted by the Assistant Treasurer, shall:

- Attend all board and full membership meetings
- Make an effort to be aware of any concerns that may arise. Guide families toward the cooperative spirit of SHS by modeling appropriate behavior and attempt to dispel any negative gossip by providing accurate information and maintaining open positive communication
 - Serve as Benefits Plan Administrator for staff retirement and health insurance plans. Includes website password authorization and bi-monthly data input as well as annual plan review and changes if necessary.
 - Serve as Payroll Administrator: Call in payroll to ADP twice monthly during the regular school year and summer camp staff and counselor payroll as needed. Maintain staff absence records Coordinate payment of



teacher substitutes. Review and distribute staff tax documents

- Assist the DOE with teacher/staff contracts
 - Serve as primary signatory on all checks* and accounts, with President as joint signatory. (*Treasurer will need home computer with Internet access)
 - Fulfill all obligations for timely payments of rents, utilities, insurance, and expense reimbursements incurred by staff and families on behalf of SHS.
 - Review and maintain SHS insurance coverage policies
 - Manage cash to maintain adequate funds for upcoming expenses while maximizing interest earnings.
 - Maintain website password authorization for bank accounts.
 - Maintain accurate and complete accounting records, and make those records available to member families and the board at all times
 - Provide appropriate financial reports at all monthly board and full membership meetings
 - Assist DOE and President in preparation and review of operating budget and present a budget to the full membership for approval.
 - Assist DOE and President with long range fiscal planning and make detailed proposals in support of policy decisions.
 - At the end of fiscal year (end of June): Arrange for prior fiscal year to be audited. Ensure that the authorization for incoming board members is in place at financial institutions and other organizations, including website password authorization. File all necessary tax documents yearly for the previous year and assist the incoming Treasurer with the current year when needed
 - Receive and evaluate scholarship applications and present to the board for consideration in accordance with the SHS Scholarship Policy
 - Receive all monies paid to the school
 - Manage tuition deposits, keeping track of monthly payments, and making calls or emails regarding late payment of tuition
 - Make alternative off-schedule tuition payment arrangements for those member families requesting them and issue tuition receipts for those member families specifically requesting them
 - Assist the President and DOE with all regulatory compliance and reporting requirements, including monthly input of attendance records for the State of Vermont Child Care Resources when applicable.
 - Inform Board monthly of all SHS expenses incurred to maintain accountability.

F. PARENT AT LARGE (PAL) DUTIES

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Attend all monthly board meetings and any special board meetings that may arise during the school year
- Act as a liaison between families in the class, the teachers and the board. Maintain open communication with the teachers at all times. Encourage and guide parents to discuss any class concerns directly with the teachers.
- Act as a liaison between the board and two or more committees. Gather information pertaining to committee activities prior to monthly board meetings and report those to the board. Maintain communication, offer support and provide direction as needed to all assigned committees.
- Initiate the SHS telephone tree with pertinent messages for families such as Full Membership Meeting or upcoming special event reminders, notification of special board meetings, or any other topic deemed appropriate for the class.
- Activate SHS telephone tree as requested by teachers, board or committee chairperson. PAL's will initiate the phone tree in the event of a school closing or delay and contact the teachers.
- Make an effort to be aware of any concerns that may arise. Guide families toward the cooperative spirit of SHS by modeling appropriate behavior and attempt to dispel any negative gossip by providing accurate information and



maintaining open positive communication.

- For all class field trips, it is the PAL's responsibility to check that all children 8 and under are in appropriate car/booster seats, according to Vermont State Law. If they are not, then they may not go on the field trip.
- Participate in staff evaluations as requested by the President.

GENERAL CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS:

JULY/AUGUST

- Contact the teacher prior to the start of school to discuss any staff/class needs.
- Upon receipt of a current class list from the Registrar, create a parent helper schedule and a telephone tree.
- Distribute the class list, parent helper schedule, and telephone tree to families and staff at the August Full Membership Meeting. Update these forms as needed (see Helpful Hints).
- Call each family in the class prior to the August FMM. Introduce yourself; inform them that they will receive the class list, parent helper schedule, and telephone tree at the meeting, and respond to any questions/concerns they may have.
- It can be helpful for families to have a social gathering before school begins. Determine if there is interest, and, if so, organize an event.

SEPTEMBER

- At the start of school, obtain a list of parents interested in substituting for the teacher. Obtain a substitute from the list when requested to do so by a staff member. Inform substitutes that in order to be paid they must complete a Staff Substitute Form and put it in the Treasurer's box (see Helpful Hints).
- At the start of school, distribute the Insurance Verification for Field Trip Drivers Form to all families in the class. Collect all forms by mid-September. Generate a list of qualified field trip drivers and provide the list to the teacher. Return the original forms to the President for filing. Parents must have a signed form on file in order to drive SHS children, other than their own, on field trips.

JANUARY – MARCH

- Elicit input and select an appropriate class project to be donated to the Artisan Auction; make a plan with the teacher for completing the project during class time (see Helpful Hints).

MAY

- Towards the end of the school year, gather ideas from member families in the class and purchase an appropriate token of appreciation for the teacher and assistant (see Helpful Hints).

JUNE

- Orient incoming PAL to the position by providing relevant PAL materials such as copies of class schedules and phone trees, corresponding committee report forms and any additional committee information. Also, provide a copy of these duties and facilitate understanding by reviewing them together.

HELPFUL HINTS

Parent Helper Schedule/Telephone Tree

- Review copies of previous PAL's parent helper schedule and telephone tree for ideas.
- Consider beginning the parent helper schedule with yourself or another family with previous SHS experience
- Consider scheduling families in alphabetical or another consistent pattern of order. This will benefit the children as they await their parent's turn to help.
- Avoid a long tree of families on the telephone tree, as messages tend to become less accurate (i.e. use 3 or 4 branches instead of 2), and end each branch with your name (to be sure the phone tree worked).
- Instruct families to leave a message and call the next person on the tree if they get an answering machine.
- If possible, avoid any toll calls on the telephone tree.

Substitutes

- Teachers and Assistants will seek a substitute from fellow staff members. If staff is unavailable, the teacher or



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assistant will then ask the PAL to find a substitute. Keep the substitute list up-to-date and handy as often times short notice is given when a substitute is required. Consider recruiting additional substitutes from the class if the list consists of less than three or four names.

Artisan Auction

- For the last few years, each class has made an item for donation to the Artisan Auction. Past projects have included painting and decorating a “mitten box”, painting and decorating a child’s table and chairs set, creating an original piece of art on canvas. The items have all been a joint effort by all members of the class and have included some method of identifying each individual child’s contribution.

Teacher Gifts

- Elicit parent input/ideas
- Keep costs appropriate
- Coordinate the collection of money and purchase of items
- Include some form of child involvement (can range from items created by the children, items with the children’s signatures, drawing, or photos, having kids present the gifts, etc.).
- To avoid duplication of gifts, discuss your gift choice with the other PAL assigned to the same teachers (if applicable), and consult the list of items received by teachers in previous years. Be sure to update this list before giving it to the new incoming PAL.

Miscellaneous

- PALs need a key to the school in order to have access during the non-school hours for planned class social events and to perform various board duties. Also, a family may request school access to retrieve forgotten items.
- Be sure to print family names in the upper right hand corner on all correspondence placed in cubbies.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Over the years, some classes have been very active in coffee hours, playgroups, and/or summer outings at local parks. Other classes have not. It usually depends on the individual families’ schedules and interests. PALs could determine if interest exists and host or organize one of these events accordingly.
- Consider informal recruitment of a different family member each month to attend the monthly board meeting as a representative of the class for the purpose of improving family involvement and enhancing communication between staff, board and families.

G. HISTORICAL LIAISON DUTIES

The Historical Liaison (together with the President) is the primary contact person between Saxon Hill School and the Jericho Historical Society (SHS’ landlord). Being a consistent, familiar contact facilitates communication with the JHS and creates a solid connection.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Attend all monthly board meetings of the JHS to present questions, concerns or information on behalf of SHS
- Attend all SHS board and full membership meetings and relay questions, concerns or information from the JHS
- Be available by phone or email to both parties to answer questions that come up between meetings
- Secure locations and schedule all SHS full membership meetings (usually at SHS with the exception of the August meeting which is usually at the Jericho Community Center)
- Assist with FMM set up and clean up



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- Transfer key and review responsibilities with the incoming Historical Liaison at the June SHS board meeting
- Attend the June JHS meeting with the incoming Historical Liaison to make introductions
- Make an effort to be aware of any concerns that may arise. Guide families toward the cooperative spirit of SHS by modeling appropriate behavior and attempt to dispel any negative gossip by providing accurate information and maintaining open positive communication

H. DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION DUTIES

The DOE agrees to perform all duties as described in the Director of Educational Programs job description in the Staff Handbook to the best of her/his abilities.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Attend all board and full membership meetings
- Hire, supervise, evaluate and manage all staff
- Conduct orientation of new staff and board members
- Identify and provide training and professional development opportunities for staff
- Evaluate staff with President
- Schedule staff meetings to establish curriculum themes for the year
- Review/revise curriculum ensuring continuity between programs and discuss program issues as they arise
- Draw upon expertise of fellow staff or outside consultants to enrich staff's experience and knowledge
- Facilitate and support fundraising activities for SHS as appropriate
- Together with President, board and membership, as appropriate, complete all necessary paperwork for state licensing and NAEYC accreditation
- Be visible in all programs of SHS
- Communicate monthly, in writing, with full membership (via Director's Perspective newsletter)
- Assist President and Treasurer in long range fiscal planning, and in preparation and review of operating budget
- Make an effort to be aware of any concerns that may arise. Guide families toward the cooperative spirit of SHS by modeling appropriate behavior and attempt to dispel any negative gossip by providing accurate information and maintaining open positive communication

I. The board shall maintain close communication with the staff, appoint committee chairpersons, oversee committee effectiveness, and coordinate publicity for SHSI. The board shall be responsible for the administration of the school, assist members in fulfilling their responsibility to the school, and is empowered to act in response to any issues which arise in the administration of the school. All board members shall attempt to assist each other in their duties and participate in projects which the board deems beneficial to SHSI.

J. Every board member shall act in a fiduciary manner, that is, he/she must act in the best interests of SHSI.

SECTION 6. In the event of a permanent vacancy in one of the offices a special election will be held within sixty days. The election may be held at a special meeting called for this purpose (Article VI, Section 2) or a regularly scheduled full membership meeting whichever shall first occur within the sixty day period. Until the election

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is held the board will make a temporary appointment to fill the vacancy.

SECTION 7. In an emergency situation, 5 or more board members may take action in person or over the phone if the full board is unavailable or unable to address the situation. The full board must be notified as soon as possible. The aforesaid action includes the expenditure of up to \$300.

SECTION 8. A board member may be removed with or without cause. The procedure for removal from office of any board member shall be initiated by the presentation of a petition, signed by 15% of the member families with currently enrolled children, to the board. The petition shall be acted upon within two weeks at either a special meeting called for this purpose (Article VI, Section 2) or a regularly scheduled full membership meeting. At this meeting a vote of the member families present shall be held to decide whether the board member is to be removed. A simple majority vote shall be sufficient to remove the board member in question. Following the vote, at the same meeting, nominations from the floor to fill the board vacancy shall be accepted and a simple majority vote taken to fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

SECTION 1. The President shall call at least three full membership meetings each year. All member families with currently enrolled children are required to attend. The meetings should be scheduled in August, January, and March. Included in the agenda will be:

- A. August full membership meeting
 1. Outline of responsibilities of member families
 2. Introduction of school programs
 3. Introduction of board members and teaching staff
 4. Registration dates for the following school year
- B. January full membership meeting
 1. Budget for upcoming school year
- C. March full membership meeting
 1. Election of board members for the upcoming school year
 2. Introduction to member-family responsibilities
 3. Start date and number of sessions for upcoming school year
 4. Make-up days for current school year

SECTION 2. A special meeting of the full membership may be called at the discretion of the president or by the presentation to the president of a petition signed by 15% of the member-families with currently enrolled children requesting such a meeting.

SECTION 3. A written warning of the regularly scheduled full membership meetings shall be given to each member family with a currently enrolled child at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. If a special membership meeting is called and warned less than two weeks in advance, member families must be notified by phone as

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well as in writing.

- SECTION 4. Each member family shall be entitled to one vote at full membership meetings.
- SECTION 5. A quorum consists of any number of member families present at a regular or special membership meeting.
- SECTION 6. No proxy shall be voted at any meeting of SHSI. A written poll is not a proxy and should be stated as such.
- SECTION 7. Each member of the staff shall be entitled to one vote. If any member of the teaching staff is part of a member family, that family shall be entitled to only one vote. They do not gain an extra vote.
- SECTION 8. The members shall use and refer to Robert's Rules of Order during full membership meetings. Any questions will be answered through reference to the edition of the book in the president's possession. In the event of any inconsistency between Robert's Rules of Order and these by-laws, these by-laws supersede.

ARTICLE VII - BOARD MEETINGS

- SECTION 1. The board shall meet at least once a month. All member families are encouraged to attend and participate in discussions, but only board members vote on matters which come before the board (Article V, Section 3).
- SECTION 2. The procedures for board meetings are governed by Robert's Rules of Order.
- SECTION 3. A majority of members of the board being in attendance constitutes a quorum for transaction of business.
- SECTION 4. The board, at its discretion, may meet in executive session open only to the board members and invited consultants. All such meetings shall comply with the State of Vermont's open meeting law. A motion to go into executive session shall indicate the business of the executive session, and no other matter may then be considered. A majority of board members must vote to go into executive session. Only employee contracts; mediation or grievances which the premature public disclosure of would place SHSI or a person at substantial disadvantage; the appointment, employment, evaluation, disciplinary action or dismissal of a board member or employee; scholarships; and other issues deemed confidential shall be discussed in executive session. Issues discussed during executive session are highly confidential and cannot be discussed outside the session.

ARTICLE VIII - PROGRAMS

- SECTION 1. The SHSI philosophy as stated in the parent handbook shall be incorporated into all programs and executed by the teaching staff.

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- SECTION 2. SHSI shall maintain the highest standards of early school development and teaching methods.
- SECTION 3. SHSI program descriptions are found in the parent handbook. Changes to hours in a program, meeting times, numbers of students per class, numbers of teaching staff per class, meeting days, and/or age requirements shall be approved by the full membership.
- SECTION 4. SHSI offers a state licensed kindergarten program.
- SECTION 5. The number of sessions and start date for each program for the upcoming year shall be determined pursuant to Article VI, Section 1C. The calendar shall be as similar to the Chittenden East School District calendar as possible.
- SECTION 6. Adult to child ratios in each program shall comply with State of Vermont licensing regulations.
- SECTION 7. Extension of school programs up to one week due to snow days and/or other unscheduled closings shall be voted on pursuant to Article VI, Section 1C. The school calendar shall note the possibility of such extension before the beginning of school.

ARTICLE IX - STAFF

- SECTION 1. Staff shall have a college degree and/or special experience acceptable to the board and in compliance with State of Vermont licensing regulations. Staff shall have verifiable resume and references.
- SECTION 2. Staff salaries and benefits shall be determined by the board. Staff shall be paid according to the contract agreed upon by the staff member, the Director of Educational Programs, and the board.
- SECTION 3. Teaching candidates and the Director of Educational Programs shall be interviewed and hired by the board in consultation with staff and/or SHSI member families as deemed appropriate. Staff shall be offered a one year written contract. Staff schedules and duties shall be outlined in the contract.
- SECTION 4. The staff shall be allowed absences for illness or personal reason without loss of pay as negotiated in the annual written contract.
- SECTION 5. Substitutes shall be obtained by the teaching staff or the appropriate parent-at-large.
- SECTION 6. Staff contracts shall be negotiated on or before March 15th. SHSI shall have no obligation to renew any contract. The decision to renew any contract shall be in the board's sole and exclusive discretion.



SECTION 7. Upon 30 days notice, a staff member or the board may terminate a contract for just cause.

ARTICLE X - HOUSING

SECTION 1. SHSI shall pay rent and other housing costs as determined by negotiation between the board and the owner of the property used for school purposes.

ARTICLE XI - FINANCE

SECTION 1. An outgoing treasurer shall surrender the account books to a new treasurer. An audit of the books shall be completed before the next full membership meeting by qualified SHSI members and/or a hired professional designated by the board.

SECTION 2. Responsibility for signing checks rests with the treasurer and the president. Other board members shall be authorized by the full board to do so as necessary. The outgoing treasurer shall be responsible for updating necessary signature cards for the bank account(s). Checks written by the Treasurer over the amount of \$500 shall require dual signatures.

SECTION 3. The board shall obtain the approval of the full membership for any unbudgeted expenses over \$1000.00.

SECTION 4. School funds may be expended for the following purposes:

- A. Rent, utilities, and other housing costs (Article XI);
- B. Teaching staff salaries and employment expenses;
- C. Expenses for teaching staff development;
- D. Purchase of supplies, equipment, and services including administrative expenses;
- E. Necessary insurance;
- F. Maintenance of present equipment, building, and grounds;
- G. Initial output for fundraising;
- H. Scholarships;
- I. Community Services.

SECTION 5. RESERVES

SHSI reserves have 2 purposes. The first purpose is to provide SHSI with a buffer in the event of a financial emergency. The second is to provide SHSI with a funding vehicle for investments that will be of ongoing value to the school. The reserves are intended neither to cover routine operating expenses nor to fund an anticipated deficit in the next year's budget. Insuring careful budgeting and spending remains primary among the board's fiduciary responsibilities.

SECTION 6. RESERVES

The Board shall maintain reserves of 15% of the current annual budgeted expense for

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an “emergency Fund”. The board may maintain additional reserves as an “opportunity fund”.

A. The “emergency fund” is intended to protect SHSI against financial difficulties resulting from variances in budgeted income or expenses that are vulnerable to change.

1. Examples of income sources considered vulnerable include special events (ie- Barn sale, Artisan’s Auction, etc.), grants/donations, summer camp and tuition.
2. Examples of expenses considered vulnerable include electricity, heat, substitute pay, publicity and buildings and grounds.

B. The “opportunity fund” is intended to finance investments that will be of ongoing value to the school. Examples of short-term “opportunity fund” expenses include equipment replacement (such as a copy machine or playground equipment) and program expansion (such as pilot summer or enrichment programs). Examples of long-term “opportunity fund” expenses include investing in property and/or a new classroom building.

SECTION 7. RESERVES

Once payment of expenses causes the “emergency fund” balance to fall beneath 15% of the current annual budget, it is the Board’s responsibility to replenish the fund as soon as possible. In the following order, it is the Board’s duty to:

- A. expand fundraising in the current fiscal year;
- B. reduce current fiscal year’s expenses;
- C. utilize the funds from the “commitment to reserve” line item included in the annual budget;
- D. use interest earned from the reserve fund; and
- E. as a last resort, reallocate money from the opportunity fund to replenish the emergency fund.

ARTICLE XII-INSURANCE AND INDEMNIFICATION

SECTION 1. SHSI shall indemnify any and all of its board members and/or committee chairpersons; former board members and/or former committee chairpersons against expenses actually and necessarily incurred by them in connection with the defense of any action, lawsuit, or proceeding in which they are made parties or a party by reason of having been a board member and/or committee chairperson, except in cases where the aforesaid member has been found to have breached his/her fiduciary duties.

SECTION 2. SHSI shall annually purchase directors and officers insurance in an attempt to ensure indemnification as stated in Section 1.

SECTION 3. SHSI shall annually purchase general liability insurance.

SECTION 4. SHSI shall annually purchase workman’s compensation insurance for all staff members.



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SECTION 5. SHSI shall require all vendors to provide a Certificate of Insurance prior to the commencement of services and receipt of payment. These Certificates of Insurance will be held by the Treasurer.

ARTICLE XIII - COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. The standing committees may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Exterior equipment and grounds
- B. Interior equipment and facilities
- c) Ways and means
- d) Scrounge
- e) Cleaning
- f) Treasurer's Assistant
- g) Book Orders
- h) Publicity / T-shirts
- i) Health Officer
- j) Future Planning

SECTION 2. Committees shall be assigned by the board as school needs and the number of participating families allow.

SECTION 3. Committee descriptions are found in the Parent Handbook.

ARTICLE XIV - ADVISORY COUNCIL

SECTION 1. The purpose of the SHSI Advisory Council is to provide guidance and support to SHSI, its board, members, and staff, through advice and counsel with specific emphasis on historical continuity and long range planning. The Advisory Council shall work in tandem with the SHSI board on specific projects relevant to the future of SHSI. The Advisory Council shall also serve in a mediation capacity when a grievance occurs with a board decision which has not been resolved through discussion with the board.

SECTION 2. Membership shall consist of five (5) persons. A majority of members shall be SHSI members prior to election to the Advisory Council. No members may have currently enrolled children. Members shall be recruited from the surrounding community and shall provide the following expertise when possible: one member shall have extensive early childhood education experience, one member shall have legal expertise willing to provide counsel to the SHSI board, one member shall have financial management and planning experience, and other areas of expertise as needs dictate. The current president and Director of Educational Programs of SHSI shall be a non-voting members of the Advisory Council and shall act as liaison between the Advisory Council and the SHSI board.

The Advisory Council members shall elect one member to act as chair for a

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renewable term of one year. One member shall also act as secretary to take and distribute minutes.

In the event that any Advisory Council member experiences a conflict of interest with any issue brought before the council, they will excuse themselves from all deliberations and abstain from voting on the issue.

SECTION 3. Members shall be elected at the SHSI Full Membership Meeting in conjunction with SHSI board members. Elections shall follow the same procedures as for SHSI board members, except that Advisory Council members shall be elected by a majority of SHSI members present. Advisory Council members shall become, if not already, honorary members of SHSI.

Each member shall serve a term of three (3) years on a rotating basis. Initial terms of one and two years shall establish the rotation.

Terms shall run from July 1 to June 30. In the event of an Advisory Council member resignation, a special election shall be held at the next SHSI Full Membership Meeting to fill the vacancy.

SECTION 4. The Advisory Council shall meet a minimum of two (2) times a year, in July and January. Additional meetings shall occur as necessary to fulfill the purpose of the Advisory Council. The agenda shall be established by the SHSI membership and directed toward issues pertinent to the future well-being of SHSI.

Any Advisory Council member, including the current SHSI President, shall be able to call a meeting. Except in emergency situations, notice of at least two weeks shall be given for all meetings. SHSI member families with currently enrolled children shall be notified in writing. Public notice shall also be given in a manner deemed appropriate for the agenda. Announcements on community bulletin boards shall constitute a minimum level of public notice.

A quorum shall consist of a majority of Advisory Council members. A majority, for voting purposes, shall consist of a majority of all members. All meetings shall be open to all interested parties. All attendees may participate in any discussions but only Advisory Council members may vote. Minutes of all meetings shall be posted in the school within one week of any meeting.

The Advisory Council, at its discretion, may meet in executive session open only to the Advisory Council members and invited consultants. All such meetings shall comply with the state of Vermont's open meeting law. A motion to go into executive session shall indicate the business of the executive session, and no other matter may then be considered. A majority of board members must vote to go into executive session. Only employee contracts; mediation or grievances which the premature public disclosure of would place SHSI or a person at substantial disadvantage; the appointment, employment, evaluation, disciplinary action or dismissal of a board member or employee; scholarships; and other issues deemed confidential shall be discussed in executive session. Issues discussed during executive session are highly confidential and cannot be



discussed outside the session.

ARTICLE XV - AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1. These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote at any full membership meeting. A two week written notice of proposed amendments shall be given to all member families with currently enrolled children. Within one month of any amendments, a revised copy of the by-laws incorporating all changes shall be made available to all member-families. Two copies shall be posted at the school. All board members, staff, and committee chairpersons shall have up-to-date copies.

ARTICLE XVI - CONFLICTS

SECTION 1. These by-laws take precedence over other policy statements.

ARTICLE XVII - DISSOLUTION

SECTION 1. In the event SHSI shall be dissolved, all its remaining monies and equipment after satisfaction of any outstanding debts or liabilities, shall be donated to the Jericho Elementary School for kindergarten use.