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Welcome to Van Derveer Elementary School!

Van Derveer School is known for its community spirit and tradition of excellence. We take pride in our remarkable students and dedicated staff. As a parent, you are an essential part of the team striving to provide the best educational experience for our children. The support and cooperation from each part of the team is crucial as we work together for every child to learn, to discover, to grow and to develop. Jointly we support the Somerville Public School district’s mission; “Our mission as a school community is to provide quality education through an environment which promotes individual excellence and that all pupils achieve the Common Core State Standards and the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards at all grade levels.”

This parent manual is designed to supplement the district activity calendar and to give specific information related to Van Derveer Elementary School. Please keep this manual for your reference throughout the school year.

If you have any questions as you and your children progress through Van Derveer Elementary School, please do not hesitate to contact me or a member of our school team. We will be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,

Susan C. Haynes
Principal

Van Derveer School: a community of learners, a community with character, a community within a community
Van Derveer Elementary School’s site was purchased on January 12, 1955 for $34,500 from Miss May Van Derveer for the purpose of building a school. Miss Van Derveer and her ancestors once owned many acres of land throughout Somerset County. The school is named in honor of Miss Van Derveer.

The ground-breaking ceremony for Van Derveer Elementary School took place on October 19, 1955. The students occupied the school April 24, 1957 and the dedication ceremony was held on June 9, 1957. The original school building had two wings and began as a K-6 school and then became a K-5 school. In 1987, Van Derveer became a primary school housing preschool through grade 2 students. In September 2001, Van Derveer Elementary School once again became a K-5 school.

In 1987, to celebrate the 30th birthday of Van Derveer Elementary School, gold and black were selected as the school colors and a bear called Van Der Bear was named as the school mascot. A school flag was designed by a fourth grade student, Laura Colodner, and made by Mrs. Frances Dombrowski, a parent. Also, a school song was written by Mrs. Terri Schurter, an art teacher, to commemorate Van Derveer’s 30th birthday. The flag is on display in the All-Purpose Room and the song is still sung by the school community. In addition, a time capsule was created.

On May 10, 1994, the library was named the Ruth B. Mayers Media Center in honor of the first principal of Van Derveer School (1955-1966), Mrs. Mayers. She was an educator for 46 years.

A referendum for $17.9 million dollars was approved by voters on December 8, 1998 to build three additions to the original Van Derveer Elementary School. A gymnasium, a media center, a computer lab, a science center, eighteen classrooms, and small group instructional classes were added.

In the year 2000, a grant from the State of New Jersey secured through the efforts of Senator Walter Kavanaugh provided funding for a roadway and parking lot in front of the school.

In December 2004, the citizens of Somerville once again approved a referendum to benefit Van Derveer Elementary School. New windows and exterior doors were installed, the Nurse’s Office was expanded, and an instrumental music room and more classrooms were added.

On April 24, 2007, the Van Derveer community celebrated the 50th birthday of this special school. Guest speakers included Mrs. Betty Cleary, the first school nurse. A PowerPoint presentation, music, and the opening of the 1987 time capsule were a few of the highlights of the celebration. The entire school paraded around the perimeter of the school grounds and later “Danced Through the Decades.” At the conclusion of the school year, a new time capsule was created.
**IMPORTANT NUMBERS**

**Principal**  
Mrs. Susan C. Haynes  
(908) 218-4105

**Interim Assistant Principal**  
Mr. Nicholas Diaz  
(908) 243-1512

**Nurse**  
Mrs. Vanessa Sciorra  
(908) 243-1514

**Assistant to the Nurse**  
Ms. Amy Meyers (Please report absences before 9:00 a.m.)  
(908) 243-1506

**Social Worker**  
Mrs. Karen Tovi-Jones  
(908) 243-1507

**School Psychologist**  
Dr. Ellyn Stein  
(908) 243-1517

**Child Study Team LDTC**  
Mrs. Joanna Ambrosio  
(908) 243-1508

**Reading Specialists**  
Mrs. Francesca Bardes  
(908) 218-4105  
Mrs. Jessica Warner  
(908) 218-4105

**Cafeteria**  
Maschio’s Food Service Mgr.  
Somerville High School  
(908) 243-1565

**PTO President**  
Tara Cichetti  
(908) 575-8759
VAN DERVEER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CALENDAR
2011 – 2012

September – Hispanic Heritage and Library Card Sign-up Month

6  All Staff Report
6  Classroom Visits, 2:00 p.m.
7  First Day of School, Full Day, 3:00 p.m. Dismissal
13 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
14 School Spirit Day – School Colors (black and gold)
16 Summer Reading Friday
21 PTO Fall Plant Sale
22 Open House, 6:30 p.m.
27 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
28 Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office, 12:00-1:00 pm.
29 School Closed – Rosh Hashanah

October – School Violence Awareness Month

6  PTO Meeting, Somerville Middle School, 6:30 p.m.
7  Progress Reports Grades K-5
10  School Closed
10-14 Fire Prevention Week
11 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
11  Picture Day
12  School Spirit Day – Wear Red
17-21 Cognitive Abilities Testing, Grade 3
21  PTO Ice Cream Social, Van Derveer School, 6:00 p.m.
23-29 Red Ribbon Week
24-28 Cognitive Abilities Testing, Make-up Grade 3
25 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
27 Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office 12:00-1:00 p.m.

November – National Child Safety Month

2  End of 1st Marking Period
2  Report Cards Distributed at Conferences
3  PTO Meeting, Van Derveer School, 6:30 p.m.
8  Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
9  School Spirit Day – School Colors (black and gold)
10-11 School Closed – NJEA Convention
14  Report Cards Distributed
14-18 One-Session Days, 1:00 p.m. Dismissal – Parent/Teacher Conferences
22 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
23 One-Session Day, 1:00 p.m. Dismissal
23 Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office, 12:00-1:00 p.m.
24-25 School Closed – Thanksgiving Recess
29 Picture Retake Day
December – Human Rights Month
7  Winter Concert, 7:00 p.m.
8  PTO Meeting, Somerville Middle School, 6:30 p.m.
8  Winter Concert Snow Date
10 PTO Holiday Shopping, Van Derveer School
13 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
16 Progress Reports Grades K - 5
14 School Spirit Day – Sports Jerseys
22 Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office, 12:00-1:00 p.m.
23 One-Session Day, 1:00 p.m. Dismissal
26-Jan. 2 School Closed – Winter Recess

January – National Hobby Month
3  School Reopens
10 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
11 School Spirit Day – School Colors (black and gold)
12 PTO Meeting, Van Derveer School, 6:30 p.m.
16 School Closed – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
20 End of 2nd Marking Period
24 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
26 Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office, 12:00-1:00 p.m.
27 PTO Movie Night, Somerville Middle School, 6:30 p.m.

February – African American History Month
3  Report Cards Distributed
4  PTO Movie Night, Somerville Middle School. 6:30 p.m.
7  Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
8  School Spirit Day – Mismatch Day
9  PTO Meeting, Somerville Middle School, 6:30 p.m.
17-20 School Closed – Presidents’ Day
21 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
23 Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

March – National Women’s History & Music In Our Schools Month
2  Read Across America Day
2  Progress Reports Grades K – 5
6  Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
8  PTO Meeting, Van Derveer School, 6:30 p.m.
12 Schools Closed – Staff Development
14 School Spirit Day – School Colors (black and gold)
13-16 Music In Our Schools Celebration
20 Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.
29 Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office, 12:00-1:00 p.m.
### April – Math Education Month & School Library Month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>End of 3rd Marking Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-13</td>
<td>School Closed - Spring Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>School Reopens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>PTO Meeting, Somerville Middle School, 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Helen Doherty Science Fair, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>School Budget Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Report Cards Distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>School Spirit Day – Western Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-25</td>
<td>Kindergarten Registration, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Board of Ed. Meeting, District Office, 7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>NJASK Testing, Grade 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### May – Better Hearing & Speech Month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>NJASK Testing, Grade 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>NJASK Testing, Grade 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-11</td>
<td>NJASK Testing, Grade 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-11</td>
<td>NJASK Make-up Testing Grade 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-11</td>
<td>Teacher Appreciation Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>School Spirit Day – School Colors (black and gold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>PTO Meeting, Van Derveer School, 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>One-Session Day, 1:00 p.m. Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Parent/Teacher Conferences, Progress Reports Distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>PTO Spring Plant Sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>NJASK Make-up Testing Grades 3 &amp; 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-31</td>
<td>Young Authors’ Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Family Literacy Night, 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-28</td>
<td>School Closed – Memorial Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-31</td>
<td>Terra Nova Testing, Grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Spring Concert, 7:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### June – National Arts & Crafts Month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Terra Nova Testing Grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kindergarten Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>One-Session Day, <strong>Kindergarten Only</strong>, 1:00 p.m. Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strawberry Festival, Van Derveer, 5:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>School Spirit Day – Crazy Hats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>End of 4th Marking Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>PTO Meeting, Somerville Middle School, 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>One-Session Day, 1:00 p.m. Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Fifth Grade Farewell Assembly, 9:15 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>One-Session Day, 1:00 p.m. Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Superintendent Brown Bag Lunch, District Office, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Last Day of School, One-Session Day, 1:00 p.m. Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Report Cards Distributed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PARENT'S PLEDGE

1. I will participate in my child’s education, realizing that a strong home/school partnership is essential.
2. I will provide a home environment that will encourage my child to learn.
3. I will read to my child daily.
4. I will help my child build a meaningful home library. I will visit the Somerville Public Library with my child and I will include stimulating books among the presents I give my child.
5. I will ensure that all homework assignments are completed each night. I will give my child a specific location in our home to complete homework.
6. I will discuss what my child has learned at school each day.
7. I will review newspaper stories and television newscasts with my child and discuss how the news may affect our lives.
8. I will meet regularly with my child’s teacher and will communicate with the school staff.
9. I will remind my child of the necessity of respect at Van Derveer Elementary School and the importance of self-discipline.
10. I will help my child appreciate and enjoy the excitement of learning.
11. I will limit television watching time and select the programs my child views.
12. I will foster healthy eating habits by providing my child with nutritious snacks/lunches.

YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD HAVE A GREAT DAY AT SCHOOL BY...

1. Setting an early and regular bedtime so that your child feels rested and alert in the morning.
2. Ensuring your child arrives at school by 8:45 a.m. to start the day.
3. Sending your child to school with the reassurance that your child is loved and providing a relaxed, cheerful, happy “send off” from home.
4. Preparing a healthy breakfast of wholesome food that is low in sugar and high in fiber and protein, including fresh fruits and milk.
5. Providing a backpack or bag to carry books and folders to and from school.
6. Ensuring homework is completed nightly, and put away in folders and backpacks, and providing crayons, scissors, glue, and pencils at home for your child to be able to complete homework.
7. Preparing a nutritious lunch and/or providing the exact change for lunch in a sealed, labeled envelope with your child’s name on it.
8. Setting out clothes and school books the night before in a set place to encourage organization.
9. Encouraging a “you are at school to learn” attitude.
10. Discussing your child’s school day: asking questions, emptying the backpack nightly, looking at your child’s work and school notices, and showing an interest in school activities and events.
11. Having your child take a bath or shower daily.
12. Providing your child with clean clothing daily. (Clothing and shoes should be appropriate for school, fit properly, and be appropriate for the weather.)
**ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Parents/Guardians may purchase accident insurance for their child. Accident insurance provides coverage while going to and from school, during school hours, and while participating in school-sponsored and supervised activities. Information will be sent home at the beginning of the school year.

**ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Students should be arriving at school between 8:20 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. **Students should not be on the school grounds before 8:20 a.m. unless they will be eating breakfast in school.**

Monitors to supervise children are on duty beginning at 8:20 a.m.

**Entering the Building:**

**Kindergarten and Grade 1**

All students enter the kindergarten lobby doors and line up by class in the A-wing corridor. At 8:45 a.m. students will proceed to their homerooms.

**Grade 2**

All students are to enter the building through the Main Lobby entrance. Second grade students will line up in the B-wing corridor until 8:45 a.m. At that time students will dismiss to their homerooms.

**Grade 3**

All students are to enter the building through the Main Lobby entrance. Third grade students will line up in the C-wing corridor until 8:45 a.m. At that time students will dismiss to their homerooms.

**Grades 4 & 5**

Students are to enter the building through the Main Lobby entrance and line up in the D-wing corridor until 8:45 a.m. At that time students will dismiss to their homerooms.

**Arrival Times:**

- 8:20 a.m. - 8:45 a.m. – Students may arrive and walk to grade-level designated areas.
- 8:45 a.m. - 8:55 a.m. – Students will walk to their classrooms.
- 8:55 a.m. - Students arriving after this time are considered tardy.

**Exiting the Building:**

All kindergarten and first grade students will dismiss from the gymnasium. Students will wait with their teachers and parent/guardians must pick up the student from the teacher. Kindergarten and first grade children walking home with older siblings, as indicated on the Student Dismissal Procedure form, will be released at 3:00 p.m. Exceptions to this procedure will be made only through the principal.
Second grade students will exit the building at the end of the day through the Main Lobby doors.

Third grade students will exit the building at the end of the day through the C-wing exit doors by Schoolhouse Lane.

Fourth and Fifth grade students will exit the building through the Media Center Lobby doors, toward Schoolhouse Lane.

All students attending after school programs will be escorted to the waiting area for those programs. Students who meet younger siblings will dismiss through the exit doors of the younger siblings. Older siblings will no longer dismiss from the classroom of the younger sibling.

Dismissal Times:

2:50 p.m. - Dismissal begins. All students will be escorted by their teacher to their exit location.
3:00 p.m. - Dismissal concludes.
Any student whose ride has not arrived will wait on the Late Line in the front of the building.

One-Session Day dismissal time is 1:00 p.m. Only Kindergarten students eat lunch on One-Session Days.
Please refer to this handbook and Somerville Public School district’s website for One-Session Days.

**AFTER-SCHOOL DISMISSAL SUPERVISION POLICY**

Parents have the right to request that their child be released only to the parent or a designated escort. Parents must indicate this on the Student Dismissal Procedure Form distributed at the beginning of the year. The form is also available through the Main Office if a change in procedure is requested by a parent. If parents have made such a request, students must be signed out daily from the Nurse’s Office at 3:00 p.m. by the parent or designated escort. Refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy. Parents who decide to stay on school property after dismissal are responsible for supervising their child/children.

**ASSEMBLIES**

Throughout the school year, there are assembly programs for students. These programs are held for the educational value of the students and supplement the curriculum and learning at Van Derveer Elementary School. Students are given designated seating areas by teachers and must display proper courtesy to participants and others present at the assembly. Special guests, programs, and class performances are among the programs scheduled. Assemblies are provided to Van Derveer from many different sources such as the PTO, grants, local and county police departments, corporations, and the local fire department.

**ASSESSMENTS - DISTRICT AND STATE**

Test scores represent achievement in particular areas. It is important to understand that the information produced by standardized testing is only one of the many variables that contribute to improved learning. A positive and supportive atmosphere will help reduce anxiety concerning the test and will increase each student’s desire to work toward educational goals. It is important that children are present for the testing; however, there are make-up dates for students who are absent. **Please do not schedule trips or other appointments on the testing dates.**
GRADED GRADE 2
The *TerraNova* tests are standardized achievement tests administered in Grade 2 in the spring. The components of the *TerraNova* test are designed to measure concepts, processes, and skills. These components reflect the educational goals defined in national and state standards, district curriculum, and instructional programs. The content areas measured are integrated reading and language arts (with reading and language scores reported separately) and mathematics.

GRADE 3
The Cognitive Abilities Tests are administered to students in Grade 3 in the fall. This standardized test assesses the student’s general, inductive, and deductive reasoning abilities.

GRADES 3, 4, & 5
In Grades 3, 4, and 5, the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) tests are administered according to the New Jersey State Department of Education regulations and mandates. These tests are designed to provide information about how well each child is achieving in the areas required by the *New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards*. The standards determine what students should know and be able to do at the end of certain grades.

Achievement test results (*TerraNova* and NJ ASK 3, 4, & 5) will be mailed to parents/guardians subsequent to the receipt by Van Derveer Elementary School.

TESTING DATES
GRADED GRADE 2:  *TerraNova* – May 29 – June 1, 2012
GRADE 3:  Cognitive Abilities Test – October 18 - 20, 2011
GRADE 4:  New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK 4) – May 7 – 11, 2012
GRADE 5:  New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK 5) – April 30 – May 3, 2012
GRADES 3, 4:  Make-up dates – May 14 - 18, 2012
GRADE 5:  Make-up dates – May 7 - 11, 2012

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

In keeping with the prevailing laws of the State of New Jersey, the Somerville Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide a thorough and efficient education for every student within the district. In order for administrators and teachers to successfully fulfill their responsibilities to students, it is essential that each student and parent/guardian accept the student’s responsibility to attend school as scheduled. Children should only be absent from school due to an illness. Please refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy.

Continual tardiness interrupts a child’s learning, as well as instruction for all the other children in the class. Children must be in their classrooms by 8:55 a.m. If a child is late for school, a note explaining the reason for the tardiness should be presented upon arrival and considered tardy to school. Children who arrive to their classroom after 8:55 a.m. must report to the nurse’s office for a late pass. Letters will be sent to alert parents/guardians of children with excessive absences and tardiness. A Five-Day Notice will be followed with a court appearance and fine for continual absences and tardiness.
Parents/Guardians must contact the nurse’s office on the day of absence to indicate the reason for the absence. This can be done by calling (908) 243-1506 prior to 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. The attendance officer will contact the home of any absent child for whom a parental contact has not been received by the school. This policy has been established to ensure the safety of all students.

- Upon the child’s return to school, a written note to the nurse regarding the date of absence and the reason for the absence is required from the parent/guardian.

- If your child has an extended illness, a daily call is not necessary if you have notified the nurse of the reason and length of anticipated absence on your child’s first day of absence.

- Necessary make-up work will be provided after the second day of absence if requested by the parent/guardian by noon that day. Make-up work may be picked up in the office after 3:00 p.m. Adequate make-up time will be provided for any work needing completion as a result of absence.

Trips/medical appointments should be planned so that children do not miss school. Trips during the school year are unexcused absences as per New Jersey Statutes Annotated (NJSA) 8A: 36-16 and New Jersey Administrative Code (NJAC) 6:20-1.3. **Students who are taking a family vacation when school is in session will be provided with make-up work upon return to school.**

**BEFORE – AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

Unless enrolled in the before-care or after-care program, students should not be at school before 8:15 a.m. or after 3:00 p.m.

**Catholic Charities: Van Derveer Elementary School**

This program is provided before and after school and is held at Van Derveer School. For further information, call the Director of the Program at (908) 725-1912.

Programs offered in the community:

**YMCA: N. Bridge Street, Somerville**

Transportation to the after-school program is provided by the YMCA. For further information, contact the YMCA at (908) 722-4567.

**Martin Luther King Center: Prince Rodgers Avenue, Bridgewater**

Transportation to the after-school program is provided by the Martin Luther King Center. For further information, contact the center at (908) 526-3688.

Please contact each program for the policy for inclement weather and One-Session Days.

**BEHAVIOR PHILOSOPHY AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The staff of Van Derveer and the parents/guardians are partners in educating the children of Somerville. It is the responsibility of both the school and family to set examples of and display appropriate behavior. The Board believes that standards for pupil behavior must be set cooperatively through interactions among the pupils, parents, staff, and community members, producing an atmosphere that encourages pupils to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school district and community property on the part of pupils, staff, and community members.
Respect and self-responsibility are the cornerstones of the Van Derveer philosophy. Therefore, students are expected to:

- Follow the rules and procedures within the school.
- Show respect through their actions and words.
- Be smoke and drug free.
- Exhibit appropriate behavior.
- Be responsible for their own actions.
- Resolve disagreements and differences.
- Respect the property and rights of others.

Students who fail to demonstrate responsible behavior can expect any of the following courses of action to occur:

- Verbal warning.
- Elimination of school privileges.
- Assignment of a written statement of apology signed by guardian.
- Recess detention.
- Parent conferences.
- Before-school or after-school detention.
- Referral to the assistant principal.
- Referral to the principal.
- In-school suspension.
- Out-of-school suspension.

The following actions will not be tolerated under any circumstances and will result in an immediate and serious consequence:

1) Fighting or acting in a dangerous manner.
2) Continued and willful disobedience.
3) Open defiance, disrespect, or insubordination to any adult or person having authority.
4) Possessing a weapon (as defined by Board policy).
5) Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
6) Harassment, intimidation, or bullying.
7) Physical assault upon another pupil, a teacher, or any school employee.
8) Use of profanity or inappropriate language.

The nature of the offense will dictate the course of disciplinary action taken in accordance and compliance with Board Policy #5512.01. Refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy. Please note that amendments to district policies are subject to changes required by the State of New Jersey.

**Children’s Code of Behavior**

1. We LISTEN to each other.
2. Hands are for HELPING, not hurting.
3. We use I CARE language.
4. We care about each other’s FEELINGS.
5. We are RESPONSIBLE for what we SAY and DO.
**Fifth Grade Point System**

A fifth grade point system for infractions, will be in effect for the 2011-2012 school year. The fifth grade teachers will discuss the point system with the students and a copy of the points and infractions will be provided to parents/guardians as well.

**BICYCLES**

Bicycles may be ridden to school and locked to the bike rack. In compliance with New Jersey State Law, helmets must be worn by all children under the age of 16. A student without a helmet will not be permitted to ride the bicycle home. The bicycle will be released to the student once he/she returns to the school with a bicycle helmet.

**BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM**

In accordance with federal mandates, breakfast is served daily from **8:15 – 8:35 a.m.** The cost of breakfast is $1.05 and is open to all students.

Students may purchase a hot lunch (includes milk) daily for $2.25. Milk, water, or juice may also be purchased separately. It is strongly suggested to pre-pay meals, which may be done every morning from 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. in the kitchen. Checks should be made out to Somerville Board of Education. Breakfast or lunch tickets may be purchased for any number of breakfasts or lunches requested. **Please send your child with the exact change for daily purchases in a Ziploc bag or an envelope labeled with your child’s name.** Students in grades K-5 may purchase one snack during their lunch period, as time permits. The prices for these healthy snacks range from $0.35 - $1.50.

If your child forgets his or her lunch or lunch money, a lunch will be provided and the money needs to be paid the following school day. Maschio’s will provide your child with an IOU to remind him/her that payment must be made the next school day. You will be notified if your child accumulates three charges. **If your child accumulates two IOU’s, he/she will be provided with a modified meal. Continual charging of meals cannot be permitted.**

Breakfast and lunch menus, covering a monthly period, will be sent home with your child for your information. The menu has expanded to include additional daily specials and alternate food choices including Grab-n-Go salads. They are also made available for viewing on the Van Derveer School website. These menus are subject to change.

If your child has any food allergies, please contact the school nurse with specific information. A doctor’s note must be provided to the school if your child is lactose intolerant and will need to receive juice instead of milk with the daily lunch.

If your child brings a lunch to school, it should be a nutritious one. **Do not send your child with glass containers, soda, sharp utensils, or candy.** Lunch containers should be labeled with your child’s full name.

A free and/or reduced lunch program is available. Forms must be accurately completed as approval is granted following mandated federal guidelines. Until you receive a notice that states you qualify for this aid, a lunch or lunch money should be provided from home. To comply with federal regulations, children who receive a free or reduced lunch must receive the entire lunch. Juice is not part of the basic lunch or considered a milk substitute and must be purchased separately. Questions regarding the free and/or reduced lunch program should be directed to the Health Office, (908) 243-1506, and/or Director of Special Services, (908) 218-4104.
CARE OF PROPERTY

It is the responsibility of all students to do their share in caring for school property. This includes both building and grounds. Students can help by following these rules:

- All hard covered textbooks should be covered during the year; please do not use tape or adhesive on the book itself.
- Parents/Guardians are requested to supervise and reinforce positive habits regarding the care of school books and materials in the home. Replacement fees will be issued for any material damaged beyond repair or lost; this includes unreturned library books. **Students not fulfilling their financial responsibilities will not be issued report cards or transfer cards until payment is completed.**
- Chewing gum is prohibited at all times.

CLASSROOM PARENTS

Each classroom has volunteer class parents who assist the teacher with various programs during the year. They coordinate with other parents/guardians to plan for class celebrations and special activities. Class parents are encouraged to attend PTO meetings as a liaison to all the parents/guardians. Information on how to become a class parent will be sent to parents/guardians from the PTO at the beginning of the school year.

CLOSING OF SCHOOL/DELAYED OPENING

If school has a delayed opening or is closed due to inclement weather or unexpected emergency, you will be notified via the district’s Honeywell Alert System. It is extremely important that all change of phone numbers are updated with Honeywell Alert. Children will only be released to persons who have been authorized by the parent/guardian to do so. If you are sending a person to retrieve your child who is not listed on the emergency form, please send a letter of authorization or call the office to identify such persons. The district website, [www.somervillenjk12.org](http://www.somervillenjk12.org), and the following television and radio stations: VILLEtv (channel 22), WCTC (1450 AM), WMSGQ (98.3 FM), New Jersey Radio (101.5 FM), WPST (94.5 FM), WHWH (1350 AM), and WTTM (1680 AM) will also announce school closings and delays.

Please refrain from calling the school to inquire about closings as telephones will be busy with various emergency arrangements and procedures.

REMINDERS – DELAYED OPENING

- School begins at 10:45 a.m.
- Breakfast is not served on these days.
- Dismissal for delayed openings will be at the regular time of 3:00 p.m.

COMMUNICATION AND PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Our school community promotes open communication. In the interest of fostering this partnership, contact your child’s teachers to discuss progress, classroom programs, and pertinent information that may be affecting your child. Please feel free to contact the Main Office during school hours to leave a message for a teacher if you have any questions regarding your child. You may also email your child’s teacher. Please do not escort your child to the classroom to talk to the teacher, as this interruption impacts the instructional day. Instead, stop in the Main Office if you feel as though you need to speak to someone regarding an urgent concern.
We provide frequent opportunities for parent/guardian conferences and contacts throughout the year. All parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to attend Open House in September and the parent/teacher conferences during November. Prior arrangements with the teacher and/or principal should be made for additional parent/teacher conferences during the school year. School starts at 8:45 a.m.; teachers cannot have unscheduled conferences at this time.

If you cannot attend a scheduled conference, please notify your child’s teacher by note or phone at least 24 hours in advance.

**OPEN HOUSE**

Thursday, September 22, 2011

**PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

- November 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18, 2011
- Friday, May 11, 2012

**COUNSELING**

Would you like to know where to get counseling help for you and/or your child? Do you have some questions about how to handle a situation as a parent/guardian? A social worker, school psychologist, and learning consultant are available to assist parents/guardians and children in many different ways.

The social worker and school psychologist conduct student groups, implement classroom programs, and work with individual students, staff, and parents/guardians. A Parent Resource Center is available; you are welcome to borrow materials.

The Board of Education encourages all school personnel to be alert to the warning signs of childhood and adolescent depression or potential suicide and the procedures to follow in the event he or she becomes aware or suspects the existence of such a condition. School personnel shall respond to those signs in accordance with procedures established by the Superintendent of Schools.

**DRESS CODE POLICY**

The Somerville Board of Education has adopted the following district-wide dress code in accordance and compliance with Board Policy #5511:

The dress of all students must answer affirmatively to the concepts of decency, neatness, and suitability for classroom and learning situations, and the proper clothing to be worn for safety and hazard precaution. Under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools, the building principals of each school shall determine appropriate dress for each building. There shall be as much uniformity as possible throughout the district.

The student dress code below applies to all students at all school functions. The basic responsibility for the appearance of students rests with the parents/guardians. Parents/Guardians have the obligation and, within certain prescribed bounds, the right to determine their children’s dress; however, a student’s appearance must not disrupt the teaching-learning process; the following guidelines, therefore, must be followed:
1. Decency

Wearing the following indecent and inappropriate apparel is prohibited in Van Derveer Elementary School.

a. Apparel deemed embarrassing to others because it promotes indecent exposure. Clothing that is revealing, sexually suggestive, and consequently a distraction to the teaching and learning process, will not be permitted.

b. Garments, such as see-through clothing, **tank tops with spaghetti straps less than two finger width**, halter tops, low-cut blouses or tops, tight-fitting tops or pants not at the waist, or upper garments not meeting the top of one’s pants.

c. Biking shorts or other tight-fitting clothing. Students may wear leggings, but the shorts or top over them must conform to the fingertip length stipulation.

d. Apparel infringing upon the rights of others advertising drugs, alcohol, sexually obscene, derogatory language, or references and slogans.

2. Neatness

a. Because of possible obstruction of vision and the negative effect on learning, hats, other headdress including scarves and bandanas, and sunglasses will not be worn in the building. This applies to both male and female students.

b. Grooming prohibiting students from doing their best because of blocked vision or restricted movement is discouraged.

c. Outerwear – All coats, jackets, vests, and outerwear garments, as well as hats are not permitted to be worn in the classroom during the regular school day.

3. Suitability

Attire must not be destructive to school property. The following articles are prohibited because of maintenance problems:

a. Cleats or boots.

b. Shoes, trousers, and jewelry with metal rivets that damage furniture.

c. Clogs, flip-flops, high heeled shoes, platform shoes, backless shoes, and strapless shoes are not appropriate for school activities. Sneakers or lace up shoes are best for children.

Dress must comply with the health and safety codes of the State of New Jersey. Shoes must be worn at all times.

4. Apparel or accessories that interfere with or pose a safety hazard to the student or other individuals (e.g., chains from wallets, key rings worn around the neck, spiked bracelets or other inappropriate accessories as determined by the building administrator) are prohibited.

Children should be sent to school appropriately dressed for the weather. Labeling your child’s gloves, mittens, hats, and outer clothing is suggested.
ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may not use any electronic device during the school day or at other school-sponsored activities. Any electronic device seen or heard in school will be taken from the student. Appropriate discipline action will result and the electronic device will only be returned to the student’s parent/guardian. If necessary, the Somerville Police Department will be notified and the device will be turned over to the law enforcement officials. Electronic devices consist of cell phones, pagers, mp3 players, iPods, hand held video game playing devices, walkie-talkies, and any other electronic device deemed inappropriate by the Somerville Board of Education.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Each month at least one fire drill and one safety drill will be conducted. Specific directions for exiting the building are listed in each room. Additionally, specific directions are provided for other drills, including lockdowns and evacuations.

ENTERING AND EXITING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS

All children are encouraged to walk to school along the designated safe routes to reduce the cars that travel in and out of our school grounds each day. To ensure the safety of the students and to maintain the traffic flow, please adhere to the following procedures.

Students may be dropped off or picked up along the curb in the front of the building. **Please do not drop your child off or pick your child up anywhere other than the front of the building.** This creates unsafe crossing in the parking lot. The curb is a fire lane, and cars must not be left unattended. You must park your car in a parking spot if you are going to meet your child at dismissal. If everyone follows this procedure, traffic will flow in and out as efficiently and safely as possible.

Drive slowly and cautiously around the school area at all times. Please drive less than 5 mph! Obey the STOP signs on school property for everyone’s safety. In accordance with the New Jersey State Law, hand-held cell phones should not be used while driving. Additionally, New Jersey State Law requires vehicles to stop for pedestrians at all crosswalks.

At dismissal, park your car in the parking area and meet your child at their designated exit door. **If you must use the curbside pick-up, please do not leave your car, your child will find you. There should be no double or triple parking,** this causes a serious hazard as it prevents any vehicle, including emergency, from entering or exiting the area. Be considerate of your child – be on time when picking him or her up. Persistent tardiness will result in contact by the administration. If you arrive after 3:10 p.m., you will be required to enter the building and sign out your child.

Set a good example for our students by following the rules and being courteous. Escort your child across the street in the crosswalks to and from your car. Stress safety and appropriate behavior with your children as they are walking to school, on school grounds, and leaving from school.

**Remember to observe the following:**

- Do not double or triple park your car or leave your car in the roadway in front of the school.
- Do not park in *No Parking* areas directly in front of the Main Lobby, kindergarten lobby, and along the front curb of the school, these are fire zones.
• You must have a state-issued handicap parking permit in order to park in a handicap spot.
• Park your car in the parking lot and meet your child in the office in the event of an early dismissal.
• Do not park in the reserved parking area, park in designated Visitor’s Parking.
• Vehicles are to be parked in the marked parking spaces and children are to be met on the sidewalk.

“We have many children, but none to spare, please drive with care.”

Remind your child to walk directly to school and directly home. The necessity to walk on the sidewalks and to take a regular route should be emphasized to ensure your child’s safety. Crossing only at crosswalks is absolutely necessary for everyone’s safety. Please use the sidewalks at all times; we would like our school lawns to be “path free.”

If you arrive to school prior to dismissal, please remember that school is still in session until 3:00 p.m. and instruction is interrupted by distractions outdoors, such as siblings playing games and looking into the classroom. Please do not bring animals to school. Even friendly animals get excited and pose a potential danger. Please wait for your child outside the building to avoid congestion in the halls and lobbies.

If a child has a change in plans regarding transportation home, a note of explanation is required. This is for your child’s safety so we must have confirmation from you. Unless the teacher is notified in writing of a change of plans, your child will be sent home via the directions on the transportation form you submitted in the beginning of the year.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

State and federal statutes and regulations prohibit school districts from discriminatory practices in employment or educational opportunity against any person by reason of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, age, English proficiency, sexual preference, marital status, or veteran status. Further, state and federal protection is extended on account of disabilities, social or economic status, pregnancy, childbirth, pregnancy-related disabilities, actual or potential parenthood, or family status and other applicable laws. Somerville Public Schools will continue to support its affirmative action resolution and to implement the district’s equal educational opportunity policy in accordance with law and regulation.

EXCUSING STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

A student may NOT leave school grounds early without being signed out in the Main Office. Board of Education policy #5230 states, “No student shall leave the school premises during school hours without permission of the supervisor or designee, granted upon written request of the parent or guardian, or for good cause known to the supervisor or designee. No student who has a medical disability which may be incapacitating may be released from school without a person to accompany him/her.” Parents/Guardians are asked to abide by the following:

• The parent/guardian must provide a written note to the office specifying the reason for an early dismissal time.
• The secretary will contact the classroom teacher to have a child dismissed to the office once the parent/guardian has arrived in the Main Office.
• Students will not be excused during school hours unless a parent or designee signs the child out of school in the Main Office. A student is not permitted to leave the building unaccompanied.
• Please do not send anyone without written permission to pick up your child. If someone other than the parent/guardian is to pick up your child you must provide your telephone contact number on the written note to enable verification and that person will also be required to show proper identification.

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**FLAG SALUTE**

New Jersey State Law requires students to show respect for the flag of the United States of America. If a student is conscientiously opposed to the pledge or salute, the student may abstain from these ceremonies; however, all students are required to stand and be respectful. A student leads the entire school in the daily pledge of allegiance. Two fifth grade students raise the flag on the flag pole each morning.

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**GRADING, PROGRESS REPORTS, AND REPORT CARDS**

Grades are determined by a variety of criteria: a student’s academic performance, including quizzes and tests both oral and written, alternative assessments (e.g. projects, reports), homework, and participation in class activities. Every effort is made to ensure consistency within a grade level. Report cards in grades 1-5 are issued four times a year. Progress reports are issued to all students during the 1st Marking Period and only for students whose academic and social progress is of concern during Marking Periods 2-4.

Parents/Guardians receive a copy of the report card to keep for their records. Returning the envelope with the parent’s signature to school is an acknowledgment that the report card has been received. The envelope is to be returned to the teacher each marking period and then kept in June.

Work missed during absences needs to be completed within an appropriate amount of time, equal to the number of days the student was absent. Failure to complete work within the required time will result in a failing grade for that work unless there are mitigating circumstances. All incomplete grades must be completed within two weeks after the end of the marking period.

**GRADES K - 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Progress Reports</th>
<th>Date Sent Home</th>
<th>Report Cards</th>
<th>Date Sent Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marking Period 1</td>
<td>October 7, 2011</td>
<td>Marking Period 1</td>
<td>Conference Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marking Period 2</td>
<td>December 16, 2011</td>
<td>Marking Period 2</td>
<td>February 3, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marking Period 3</td>
<td>March 2, 2012</td>
<td>Marking Period 3</td>
<td>April 20, 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**DISTRICT POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT, HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING**

The Somerville Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying against pupils.

Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying Defined:

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means any gesture, any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication whether it be by a single incident or series of incidents that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing
characteristic, that takes place on school grounds or off campus and that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students and that:

a) a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the students’ property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his person or damage to his property; or
b) has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students; or

c) creates a hostile educational environment for the student by interfering with a student’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

1. Everyone in the Somerville School District has a right to feel respected and safe. Consequently, we want you to know about our policy to prevent sexual harassment, and harassment because of race, national origin, and disability.

2. A harasser may be a student or an adult. Harassment, intimidation or bullying may include the following when related to sex, race, national origin, religion, gender identity or expression, disability or anything else that makes a person unique:

a. name calling
b. pulling on clothing
c. graffiti
d. notes or cartoons
e. unwelcome touching of a person or clothing
f. offensive or graphic posters or book covers;
g. gestures; or
h. violent acts

3. If any words or actions make you feel uncomfortable or fearful, you need to tell a teacher, counselor, the anti-bullying specialist, anti-bullying coordinator or the Principal.

4. You may also make a written report. It should be given to a teacher, counselor, the anti-bullying specialist or the Principal.

5. Your right to privacy will be respected as much as possible.

6. We take seriously all reports of harassment, intimidation and bullying and will take all appropriate action to investigate such claims, to eliminate that conduct and to discipline any persons found to have engaged in such conduct. The School District will also take action if anyone tries to intimidate you or take action to harm you because you made such a report. A complete copy of the District’s policy on harassment, intimidation and bullying is available on the District’s website.

7. The Anti-Bullying Specialist in your school is Mr. Nicholas Diaz.

8. The District Anti-Bullying coordinator is Mr. Thomas Conroy.

Some forms of bullying can be the following:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching.
- Verbal: name-calling, spreading rumors, persistent teasing, threats.
- Emotional: torment, threat, ridicule, humiliation, exclusion from groups or activities.
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, comments.
- Cyber: sending inappropriate messages using technology.

Signs a child may be experiencing bullying might include:

- Withdrawing, isolation behavior.
- Unwilling to attend school.
- Refusing to discuss the problem.
- Being easily distressed.
- Having personal belongings or work taken or damaged.
What can you do if your child is being bullied?

Reinforce the following with your child in dealing with conflict resolution as it relates to bullying.

Encourage your child to:

- Talk to someone in school who your child feels comfortable with including their teacher or other trusted adult.
- Tell a friend what is happening. Ask him or her to help, but remind your child to ask an adult to help too.
- Keep calm. Take deep breaths. Try not to show the bully you are upset or angry. Bullies thrive on getting other people upset.
- Walk away. (Your child will get in trouble, too, for fighting). Don’t become a bully yourself. Walking away is more grown up behavior than bullying.

Reinforce with your child that:

- Telling someone about a bully is not tattling.
- When you report a bully, include all of the facts.
- If you feel uncomfortable talking about being bullied, write about it and give the letter to your teacher or an adult in your school that can help you.
- Walk home and play with other children. Often, a bully will try to pick on children when they see someone alone.

HAZING

Hazing is defined as a “willful act occurring on or off school property, that is directed against a prospective member of a school sponsored team or organization that endangers their mental or physical health or safety for the purpose of initiation, admission into, or continued membership on any such team or activity.”

Hazing is a form of harassment and will not be tolerated. It is the right of every student in the district to be free from the humiliation and danger of school-affiliated hazing. Students who participate in the district’s activities must not plan, encourage, or engage in hazing. This policy applies to the behavior of students at any school-sanctioned activity, whether on or off school property, and during or after school hours.

Consequences for hazing violations may range from individual suspension from the activity or program to the cancellation of an activity, depending on the magnitude of the incident and number of students involved. Apparent permission or consent by a student being hazed doesn’t lessen these prohibitions or sanctions. Copies of applicable Board policies and administrative regulations regarding hazing are available in the district and school offices (Policy #5512). Refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy. Please note that amendments to district’s policies are subject to changes required by the State of New Jersey.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE NOTIFICATION

The Somerville Board of Education is required to make an annual notification regarding the use or storage of hazardous substances in the construction or non-routine maintenance activities in accordance with state law. The Somerville Board of Education will make every attempt to ensure that hazardous substances are not utilized in construction or non-routine maintenance activity in or on the Board of Educations’ buildings or its grounds while children are expected to be present, unless it is deemed an emergency condition. If the Board of Education initiates construction or a
A certified school nurse serves the students of Van Derveer Elementary School. The nurse sees students who become ill or receive an injury during school hours. The following services are also provided by the school nurse:

- **Annual vision testing** – Vision screenings are administered to all students in Kindergarten, Grade 2, and Grade 4. Vision screening will be completed for all new students and students referred by a teacher or parent/guardian.

- **Auditory screening** – Auditory screenings are administered to students in Kindergarten through Grade 4. Students entering the district without a recent record of audiometric screening will have a screening. Students may be referred by a teacher or parent/guardian for audiometric screening.

- **Weight and height** – All students are weighed and have their height measured once a year.

- **Scoliosis screening** – Students who are ten years of age or older will be screened for scoliosis as mandated by State Law.

The New Jersey Department of Education guidelines provide first aid for school children to “protect life and comfort” until authorized treatment is secured. If a student becomes ill during school hours, the school nurse will contact the parent/guardian to arrange to have the parent/guardian come for the student. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the persons listed as emergency contacts will be called. These persons should be aware that they may be asked to transport your child in emergency situations. **It is most important for the safety of your child that the school nurse and Main Office have your current telephone number and phone numbers of at least three other persons who may be contacted in case of an emergency.** Be sure to advise the Main Office of any changes in telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, addresses, places of work, and emergency contacts for you and your emergency contacts. In the event that no one can be reached the Somerville Police Department will be contacted.

All questions of health should be referred to the school nurse at (908) 243-1514. All first aid procedures are reviewed and signed by the school physician each year and are posted in the nurse’s office. Parents/Guardians should contact the nurse’s office to alert the nurse of any special health problem or conditions regarding their child.

A physical checkup by the family physician is required of students entering kindergarten. This examination must be completed no more than 365 days prior to entry. It is very important for children to have at least one physical examination during each of the child’s developmental stages; Early Childhood (2nd grade) and Pre-adolescence (5th grade).

All new students to the school district must have a physical by their own physician within 10 days of admission to school. **Immunizations must be completed as mandated by state and district policies or admission to school will be denied.** Any student transferring from another country is required by the New Jersey State Department of Education to have a Mantoux tuberculin test. This can be given by the school nurse with parent/guardian permission.
MEDICATION POLICY

School personnel may not provide medical or dental treatment and may not give any medication, including over the counter medication, unless medication is prescribed by a physician and written approval is obtained from the prescribing physician. If a student requires medication during the school day, New Jersey State Law and district policy require the following:

1. Pupils requiring any medication at school, including over-the-counter, cough drops, and prescriptions, must have:
   a. A written statement from the family physician, which identifies the type, dosage, and purpose of medication.
   b. A written statement from the parent/guardian giving permission for the nurse to administer medication prescribed by the physician.
   c. Medication in the original container.

2. Any medication to be administered during school hours must be kept in the health office. This medication will be kept in a special locked cabinet. This includes cough drops or lozenges, or any over-the-counter medications.

3. Changes in times or dosage of medication must be confirmed by the physician in writing.

REMINDERS

1. Students may not self-medicate, including cough drops.

2. Students may not be in possession of any prescription or over-the-counter medication.

PLEASE NOTE: If your child is on medication during school hours, please make arrangements to have an ample supply, refilled regularly, to avoid interruptions in the medication program. The school nurse may contact the home when prescriptions are low. Medication must not be sent to school with children but delivered personally by the parent/guardian or a designated adult. Medication that is not picked up by the last day of school will be discarded.

HOMEWORK – HOME RESPONSIBILITIES

Homework requirements will vary with students, teachers, and grade levels. However, all assignments given are meaningful and significant to your child's educational program and are expected to be completed timely. Van Derveer Elementary School staff follow the following time frames for daily homework:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>10 to 20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 3, 4, &amp; 5</td>
<td>30 to 50 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each child will receive a Homework Folder to carry notices and homework assignments between school and home. It is important to remove papers daily to keep your child organized and for you to receive school notices on time.

To establish consistent and effective homework study habits, students in grades 3-5 are provided with a Homework Agenda Book to record daily assignments. Parents/Guardians should follow through by checking and reviewing daily homework assignments. The Homework Agenda Book
is to be brought home daily and returned the next day. Parents/Guardians may be requested to sign the Homework Agenda Book.

To help develop excellent work and study skills, it is important to have your child follow through at home by keeping school papers and books organized and in a safe place. Damaged and lost school materials must be replaced and fines will be assessed accordingly. Having books and homework when expected is absolutely vital. A routine, a place for study time, and a set bedtime should be followed consistently. **Students will not be permitted to return to their classrooms after 3:20 p.m. for forgotten work. This is to foster organization and responsibility.**

Here is “homework” for parents:

- Limit television and video viewing time on school nights. Select the types of programs your child is watching. Discuss the programs with your child to make them more meaningful. These discussions can relate to the choices made by the characters.

- Contact the teacher to clarify any homework procedures, policies, or concerns.

- Expect your child to complete homework on a timely basis for the continuity of learning and for the development of effective work habits. Do not accept or provide any excuses for incomplete homework.

- Provide a quiet place for completing homework away from distractions, such as television and music.

- Provide materials including crayons, pencils, scissors, and glue so that your child can complete homework assignments.

- Provide a positive interest in your child’s homework while encouraging him or her to put forth the best effort.

- Guide your child with questions to figure out the answer rather than just supplying answers or doing the homework yourself. In guiding your child to solve the problem, you are developing thinking and independence, which are necessary for learning.

- Establish a routine and a specific place to have all materials and books “ready to go to school” before bedtime. This saves time in the morning, as well as developing good work and organization habits.

- Encourage your child to practice writing skills by providing opportunities for practice, such as writing letters to friends and families, making lists, and writing thank you notes.

Spend time, daily, with your child to discuss the school day, to take time to look at your child’s school papers and homework folder, to visit the local library, to read a story or a newspaper, to review number facts or spelling words, to write a letter to a friend together, and to, most importantly, “talk together.”

**HOURS OF SCHOOL SESSIONS**

- **Office Staff** .......................... 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- **Teachers** ............................... 8:35 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.
- **Students: Kindergarten – Grade 5** .......................... 8:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

A student arriving to the classroom after 8:55 a.m. is considered tardy.
One-Session Day

Kindergarten – Grade 5…………………………… 8:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

On One-Session Days, lunch will be available for kindergarten students only.

**IF YOU MOVE**

If you move during the school year, even within Somerville, notify the school office immediately. A Change of Address Form must be completed. Verification of your new residence, by submitting a deed, or tax bill or a lease, must be completed. Contact the school office at least two weeks prior to moving out of town to allow for transfer papers to be completed. All library books, textbooks, and school materials must be returned and any outstanding fines paid before transfer cards will be issued.

It is extremely important to notify the school office of your new address and changes in telephone contacts in order for you to be contacted. This is especially important in case of a medical emergency.

If we do not have the necessary verification of your new address, and you have moved, your child will be transferred from our school.

### INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE (I&RS)  
#### INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

The Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS) Team provides intervention for students who are experiencing academic, social, and emotional difficulties which impact their classroom performance. The development and progress of students are reviewed by the I&RS Team comprised of the student’s teacher, reading specialist, social worker, psychologist, an administrator, and other staff members. Parents/Guardians will also be involved to discuss recommendations and interventions. The team approach to problem solving assists the student, parents/guardians, and staff by providing the most appropriate school program within the school setting.

### ITEMS FROM HOME/MONEY

Students may not bring any items of personal value to school, such as toys, trading cards, electronic toys, distracting jewelry, animals, balls, CD’s, etc. from home unless a note granting permission for the specific item from the teacher is received by the parent/guardian. Any items should be labeled with the student’s name. Any items brought to school without permission will be immediately confiscated and held in the office until a parent/guardian picks it up in person. The Somerville Public School district is not responsible for any personal items that are lost or stolen.

Except for the exact amount of money for lunch, money should not be brought to school unless specified by the teacher for book clubs. Please stress to your child that lunch money should be kept in a safe place, such as a sealed envelope, with your child’s name. It is not to be shared with other students. **Purchasing prepaid weekly or monthly lunch tickets is strongly recommended.**
The K.I.D. (Kindness, Intelligence, and Decision Making) Power Project is a program designed to foster the social and emotional development of all Van Derveer students. The program focuses on the development of social decision-making and problem-solving readiness skills.

Two of the foundation pieces which can be emphasized at home are “Keep Calm” and “Be Your B.E.S.T.”

**KEEP CALM**
1. Tell yourself to “STOP.”
2. Tell yourself to “KEEP CALM.”
3. Slow down your breathing with two long, deep breaths.
4. Praise yourself for a job well done.

**BE YOUR BEST**
- B – Body Posture
- E – Eye Contact
- S – Say Nice Words
- T – Tone of Voice

In order to achieve the best results, it is necessary that children’s families also take “ownership” of these concepts and use them during their daily interactions.

“Keep Calm” and “Be Your B.E.S.T.” can be emphasized during sibling altercations. When less desirable behaviors (e.g. yelling, pushing) are being used, parents/guardians can re-direct their children to take responsibility for their own behavior and make a better choice. Children can be made to feel very powerful, in a positive way, if they can remain in control of their body and emotions.

Conducting discussions with your children related to characters in books and on TV or even people around them can help them become more reflective as to other people’s ability to use appropriate social behaviors to solve problems.

The most powerful tool we have to teach our children is the example that is set. By modeling “Keep Calm” and “Be Your B.E.S.T.” as a means of displaying appropriate anger management and assertive communication skills for our children, we can help them understand that the benefits of risk-taking can far outweigh the negatives that go along with continually making mistakes.

School-wide programs and classroom-based programs support our efforts through recognizing and acknowledging the student’s behaviors and choices. We invite parents/guardians to become partners in the K.I.D. Power Project so that the goal of fostering responsible, confident individuals becomes more attainable for all children.

**KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION/SCREENING**

If you have a child who will be 5 years of age by October 1, 2012 and you plan to enroll your child in our kindergarten program, please contact the school secretary to make arrangements to register your child. Registration will be conducted on April 24 and 25, 2012.

During the screening, parents/guardians will meet with the school nurse to discuss the child’s developmental and health history. The child will be assessed for the development of language abilities, academic readiness, and fine and gross motor skills. This information will be helpful in planning the child’s school program. Kindergarten is a full-day program.
**LOST AND FOUND**

The lost and found cabinet is located in the lobby outside of the gymnasium. Parents/Guardians are urged to check for lost items on a regular basis. Please make it a practice to label all clothing, lunchboxes, and any belongings with your child’s complete name. All items unclaimed will be donated to charity.

**LUNCHROOM AND PLAYGROUND**

Recess and lunchtime are opportunities for children to relax and socialize. During recess, students may select to participate in a variety of organized games and to use the playground equipment.

Students are expected to follow all directions provided by lunch supervisors.

- Students may not share food with others due to allergies.
- Students may not share money with other students.
- Students may talk quietly with neighbors while eating.
- Students must remain seated while in the cafeteria.
- Students will participate in safe and fun games/activities; safety is the priority.
- Students will go outside for recess daily unless the temperature is below 32 degrees or if it is precipitating. Please provide appropriate outerwear.
- Students will use equipment, such as jump ropes and balls during recess.
- Student games involving physical contact are not allowed.
- Students are to stop playing when directed and walk to their designated line-up areas.
- Students will settle differences peacefully.
- Students will not leave recess to enter the building without permission.
- Students are responsible for collecting their belongings.

**Recess is a privilege. If students have been involved in an incident demonstrating inappropriate school behavior, they may lose the opportunity to go outside for recess and the incident could result in an immediate consequence.**

**Lunch/Recess Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten:</td>
<td>11:10 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1:</td>
<td>11:10 a.m. – 11:55 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2:</td>
<td>12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3:</td>
<td>12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4:</td>
<td>12:50 p.m. – 1:35 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5:</td>
<td>12:50 p.m. – 1:35 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MEDIA CENTER**

All students will visit the Media Center within the six-day rotation with their classroom teacher. Books may be borrowed for a six-day period and may be renewed, if there is no waiting list.

Students will be assessed the cost of the book replacement for any book lost or damaged that has been checked out in their name. Stress with your child not to loan library books to friends since whoever checked out the book is responsible for the book. Students will not be allowed to borrow books until all fines are paid.

You may donate a book to the school library or your child’s homeroom class library to celebrate your child’s birthday. A special seal listing your child’s name, birthday, and some of their
interests will be placed on the inside cover of the book. This is a wonderful way to honor your child. If you would like suggestions for book purchases, please contact a reading specialist or Mrs. Haynes.

We encourage you to volunteer in the Media Center and assist with checking in/out books for the students, shelving books, etc. Interested volunteers should contact Mrs. Haynes at 908-218-4105.

**MUSIC PROGRAMS**

Instrumental music instruction is offered to students during the school day in grades four and five. Group music lessons are scheduled on a rotating schedule for forty minutes a week. Students are responsible for completing any missed class work. Students involved in the program are organized into a school band that performs several times a year. Chorus is offered to students **before school** on Tuesdays at 7:45 a.m. for fourth graders and on Thursdays at 7:45 a.m. for fifth graders. Supporting your child to participate in these musical activities is greatly encouraged. Evening concerts for parents/guardians and friends are scheduled for band and choral groups in the winter and spring seasons. Consistent attendance is mandatory and students must attend lessons/practices to remain in the program.

**PARKING**

Please observe the following:

- **Do not double or triple park your car or leave your car in the roadway in front of the school.**
- Do not park in *No Parking* areas directly in front of the Main Lobby, kindergarten lobby, and along the front curb of the school, these are fire zones.
- You must have a state-issued handicap parking permit in order to park in a handicap spot.
- Park your car in the parking lot and meet your child in the office in the event of an early dismissal.
- Do not park in the reserved parking area, park in designated Visitor’s Parking.
- Vehicles are to be parked in the marked parking spaces and children are to be met on the sidewalk.

**PARTIES AND CELEBRATIONS**

If you would like to send a simple treat for your child’s birthday, please contact the teacher to make arrangements. However, there cannot be elaborate birthday parties during school hours and parents/guardians should not plan to stay for a simple celebration. Since some children have allergies to certain foods, please check with your child’s teacher to be sure the treat would be appropriate for all the classroom children. Sending treats, such as a sugar free cookie, fruit, or donating a book to the school or class library is recommended.

Please consider the feelings of the children by not having your child distribute party invitations in school unless they are inviting every student. Children’s feelings are often hurt when they are not invited. Therefore, invitations should be mailed and/or distributed at another time or place rather than school.
PEDICULOSIS (Head Lice)

Head lice is a condition that can occur at any time to anyone. It has nothing to do with a child’s hygiene. It is most important to treat the problem of head lice quickly because delays will only spread the infestation throughout your family and to others.

If anyone in your family has head lice or comes in contact with someone who does, notify the school nurse immediately. **Your child will be excluded from school until all the live lice and nits (eggs) are removed from the head.** The school nurse will inspect excluded students prior to their re-entry into school. If your child has had head lice, check their hair every day for at least two weeks. A periodic check of all family members is also recommended. Encourage your child not to share combs, brushes, or hats with others.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Physical Education program is an integral part of each student’s educational plan. **Regular sneakers (not platform sneakers) with rubber soles and socks are to be worn for class.** Each child attends class every other day. Please avoid black-soled sneakers or sneakers with blades since they mark the floor. Labeling sneakers with your child’s first and last name is recommended.

All students are required to participate in the Physical Education program unless a written note is received indicating a medical reason for non-participation. If a child does not participate in Physical Education class, the child may not participate in recess. If a child has been excused from Physical Education class for three days or more, a physician’s note is required for the student to be re-admitted for participation.

PRIVATE SALES

Students are not permitted to sell any items, such as cookies, raffle tickets, candy, etc. in school unless authorized to do so as part of a school-sponsored activity program or with advance authorization from the district office.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION – DISTRICT POLICY

The Somerville Board of Education recognizes that each child develops and grows in a unique manner and that pupils should be placed in the educational setting most appropriate to their social, physical, and educational needs. Each pupil enrolled in this district shall move forward in a continuous program of learning in harmony with his or her own development.

Standards for pupil promotion shall be related to Somerville’s goals and objectives and to the accomplishments of the pupils. A pupil in the elementary grades (K-5) will be promoted to the next succeeding grade level when he or she has demonstrated the proficiencies required for movement into the educational program of the next grade and has demonstrated the degree of social, emotional, and physical maturation necessary for a successful learning experience in the next grade.

Parents/Guardians and pupils shall be regularly informed during the school year of the pupil’s progress toward meeting promotion standards. A teacher who determines that a pupil’s progress may not be sufficient to meet promotion standards shall notify the parent/guardian and offer consultation. Every effort shall be made to remediate a pupil’s deficiencies before retention is
recommended. In grades K-5, the parent/guardian, and where appropriate, the pupil, shall be notified of the possibility of the pupil’s retention at grade level in advance and whenever feasible, no later than three (3) weeks prior to the end of the school year. Classroom teachers shall provide input to the building principal to make the decision collaboratively concerning the promotion or retention of each pupil. Refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy.

PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is organized for parents/guardians and staff to support and enrich the school programs. Meeting dates and information for joining will be distributed during the school year. It is important for every parent/guardian to be an active member by joining and attending meetings and events. Please see the school calendar for a listing of events and meetings.

Each year the PTO donates items to each of the schools as a result of the fundraisers. These purchases include audio-visual equipment, air conditioning units, library books, as well as funding assemblies, authors to speak to children, and other enrichment programs. In addition to fundraising, the PTO assists at Open House Programs, provides volunteers for school activities, and participates in many projects and programs.

Each grade level has a PTO liaison member who coordinates PTO activities for the grade and school. Each classroom has class parents who assist the teacher with the various school and class projects and activities. Class parents are requested to attend PTO meetings. Volunteers are greatly appreciated and needed for all PTO events.

PTO Fall Plant Sale – September 21, 2011
PTO Ice Cream Social – October 21, 2011, 6:00 p.m.
PTO Holiday Shopping – December 10, 2011, 9:00 am. – 12:00 p.m.
PTO Movie Night – January 27, 2012, 6:30 p.m. and February 4, 2012, 6:30 p.m.
PTO Spring Plant Sale – May 11, 2012

Van Derveer PTO 2011-2012 Executive Board

President – Tara Cichetti
Vice-President – Open Position
Secretary – Open Position
Treasurer – Open Position
Membership Director – Michelle Reno
Communication Director – Jennifer McKenna

PUPIL RECORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

School records and standardized test scores on each child are available for review by parents/guardians. Please contact the principal for an appointment to review these materials. Refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy.
Under New Jersey State Law and Board of Education Policy, parents/guardians have the right to inspect their child’s records at the school office during school hours. Parents/Guardians may not remove any records from the pupil’s file, although photocopies may be made at a reasonable charge.

Parents/Guardians have the right to prohibit the release of pupil directory information (pupil’s name, address, telephone number, grade level, date and place of birth, dates of enrollment, participation in officially-recognized activities and sports, awards received, previous school districts attended, the height and weight of members of district athletic teams, and other similarly non-intrusive specific information), and the use of student photographs for school and local newspapers. To do so, you must complete and return the necessary forms in the packet received on the first day of school. You also have rights concerning the maintenance, access to, destruction, review, transfer, and preservation of pupil records. Copies of applicable federal and state laws, board policies, and administrative regulations will be made available upon request.

**SAFETY PATROL**

Students from fifth grade are selected to serve as Van Derveer’s Safety Patrol Officers and are inducted by a member of the Somerville Police Department Community. The safety patrol officers are located inside the school and assist the students entering and exiting the building.

**SCHOOL CALENDAR**

A district-wide school calendar is distributed to each family and lists school closing dates, grading periods, and activities in all of the schools in the Somerville School District. A calendar for Van Derveer Elementary School events is included in this manual. Please remember to review all flyers sent home as some dates and times of activities may change due to unforeseen circumstances. The calendar is also posted on the website and is updated on a monthly basis.

**SCHOOL EVENTS**

There are a number of special school activities which are held throughout the year in the various schools. These are some of the activities at Van Derveer:

**Walking Wednesday and Foot it Friday** – Join the Walking School Bus on these days. Walk to school with your family and neighbors and join other friends along the route! On designated days, the “bus” will be lead by volunteer adult “drivers” and “riders” will receive a raffle ticket, with ten students receiving prizes each day.

**Van Derveer Elementary School Book Fair** – In an effort to provide quality literature at reasonable prices, Book Fairs are conducted for families to add to their home collections. PTO volunteers assist our school media and reading specialists with this project. The Book Fair is held twice a year.

**Helen Doherty Science Fair** – This is an opportunity for all students to work on a science project either individually or with a small group of friends to be displayed during the Fair. Scientists from various corporations meet with the students to discuss their entries. Projects are completed at home. The Science Fair will be held on April 17, 2012.

**Van Derveer Young Authors’ Week** – Parents/Guardians are invited to see the display of student books that children have authored and illustrated, both as a class project and as individuals, throughout the year. These are displayed in our school media center for children to share their writings. A special program featuring an author, storyteller, or illustrator is held during the week. The Young Authors’ Week will be held the last two weeks in May.
Family Literacy Night – Family Literacy Night is an evening activity for families to celebrate reading. It will be held on May 22, 2012.

Van Derveer Strawberry Festival – All are invited to eat strawberries, cake, and ice cream outside, weather permitting. Various school musical groups perform and arts and crafts projects are offered for your entertainment. The Strawberry Festival will be held on June 7, 2012.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Sexual harassment of pupils is prohibited by the Board of Education. This policy must be read and acknowledged by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s). By signing this agreement the pupil and his/her parents/guardians state that they have discussed the rights and responsibilities contained herein and agree to abide by the restrictions contained in this agreement.

The following is a portion of the Sexual Harassment Policy (#5751) adopted by the Board of Education:

The Board of Education will not tolerate sexual harassment of pupils by school employees, other pupils, or third parties. Sexual harassment of pupils is a form of prohibited sex discrimination. School district staff will investigate and resolve allegations of sexual harassment of pupils engaged in by school employees, other pupils (peers), or third parties.

The Board shall establish a grievance procedure through which school district staff and/or pupils can report alleged sexual discrimination, including sexual harassment which may include quid pro quo harassment and hostile environment.

Definitions:

1. Quid pro quo harassment occurs when a school employee explicitly or implicitly conditions a pupil’s participation in an educational program or activity or bases an educational decision on the pupil’s submission to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other favors, or other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Quid pro quo harassment is equally unlawful whether the pupil resists and suffers the threatened harm or submits and thus avoids the threatened harm.

2. Hostile environment sexual harassment is sexually harassing conduct (which can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other favors, or other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature) by an employee, by another pupil, or by a third party that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a pupil’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or to create a hostile or abusive educational environment.

3. Gender-based harassment that includes acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on gender, but not involving conduct of a sexual nature, may be a form of sex discrimination, if it is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive and directed at an individual because of his/her gender.

This policy protects any “person” from sex discrimination; accordingly both male and female pupils are protected from sexual harassment engaged in by school district employees, other pupils, or third parties. Sexual harassment, regardless of the gender of the harasser, even if the harasser and the pupil being harassed are members of the same gender is prohibited.
Harassing conduct of a sexual nature directed toward any pupil, regardless of the pupil's sexual orientation, may create a sexually hostile environment and, therefore, constitute sexual harassment. Nonsexual touching or other nonsexual conduct does not constitute sexual harassment.

The regulation and grievance procedure shall provide a mechanism for discovering sexual harassment as early as possible and for effectively correcting problems. The Superintendent, or designee, will take steps to avoid any further sexual harassment and to prevent any retaliation against the pupil, who made the complaint, was the subject of the harassment, or against those who provided the information or were witnesses. The school district staff can learn of sexual harassment through notice and any other means such as from a witness to an incident, an anonymous letter or telephone call.

This policy and regulation on sexual harassment of pupils shall be published and distributed to parents/guardians and employees to ensure all parents/guardians and employees understand the nature of sexual harassment and that the Board will not tolerate it. Parents/guardians are expected to discuss the policy with their children. The Board shall provide training for all staff and age-appropriate classroom information for pupils to ensure the staff and the pupils understand what type of conduct can cause sexual harassment and that the staff know the school district policy and regulation on how to respond.

Free speech rights apply in the classroom and in all other programs in the public schools. In cases of alleged harassment, the protections of the First Amendment must be considered if issues of speech or expression are involved. The Superintendent, or designee, will formulate, interpret, and apply the policy in order to protect free speech rights of staff, pupils, and third parties.

In addition, if the Board accepts federal funds, the Board shall be bound by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1992 prohibiting sexual harassment of pupils. Title IX applies to all public school districts that receive federal funds and protects pupils in connection with all the academic, educational, extra-curricular, athletic, and other programs of the school district, whether they take place in the school facilities, on the school bus, at a class or training program sponsored by the school in a school building or at another location. (United States Department of Education – Office of Civil Rights Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, 1997.) Refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy. Please note that amendments to district’s policies are subject to changes required by the State of New Jersey.

Procedure and Penalties

2. Investigation by school administration and appropriate staff members.
3. Notification to be made to the school district’s Affirmative Action Officer.
4. Notification to be made to the parents/legal guardian of any harasser(s) and victim(s) by the Affirmative Action Officer or the school administration.
5. Interviews and investigation to be conducted by the Affirmative Action Officer.
6. The Affirmative Action Officer shall make a determination whether sexual harassment conduct was present. If the Affirmative Action Officer determines that sexual harassment has occurred, the administration shall take reasonable, age-appropriate, and effective corrective action, including steps tailored to the specific situation. Appropriate steps will be taken to end the harassment such as, but not limited to: suspension from school (OSS) for a period of five to ten days, counseling, police and prosecutor’s office notification.
Somerville Public Schools Contact:
Title: Affirmative Action Officer
Name: Mr. Thomas Conroy
Telephone number: 908-218-4118
E-mail: tconroy@somervillennjk12.org

SMOKING

Smoking anywhere in the school district buildings, in the parking lots, and on school grounds at any time is prohibited by federal and state laws. Refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy.

SOMERVILLE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Somerville Educational Foundation (SEF) was founded in 1999 as an independent, nonprofit organization that supports innovative education experiences and programs in the Somerville Public Schools. The SEF is a volunteer organization that funds initiatives to enhance and expand the current curriculum.

SPECIAL SERVICES

The Child Study Team (CST) is part of the Department of Special Services. The CST is comprised of a learning disabilities teacher consultant, a school psychologist, a speech therapist, and a school social worker. The CST is available to provide services for students in preschool through grade 12. Parents/Guardians will be notified if a referral to the Child Study Team is recommended to assist the student. For further information, contact Mr. Luke McGrath, Director of Special Services, at (908) 218-4104.

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Somerville Public School district has the duty to provide Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability and to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in its programs and activities. Further, the Somerville Public School district provides you, as the parent or guardian, with the following procedural safeguards in relation to your child.

1. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice upon the district’s identification, evaluation, refusal to provide an evaluation, educational placement, denial of educational placement, and any significant change in said placement of your child.

2. You have the right to an evaluation of your child if the district has reason to believe that your child has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits learning or some other major life activity.
   a) Before the initial placement.
   b) Before any subsequent significant change in placement.

3. You have the right to an opportunity to examine all relevant records for your child.

4. You have the right to an impartial hearing, with participation by you and representation by counsel, concerning the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of your child.

5. You have the right to appeal the final decision of the impartial hearing officer to a court of competent jurisdiction.
Speech and language screenings are given to all kindergarteners. Any student may be referred to the speech therapist by a teacher and/or parent/guardian at any time during the school year. A screening procedure is used to identify students who may be eligible for a complete speech/language evaluation. If such an evaluation is necessary, the approval of the parent/guardian will be obtained before the evaluation is conducted. The results of the complete evaluation will determine the student’s eligibility to receive speech/language services. These services will be provided during the school day.

Students from each of the fifth grade classrooms are elected to serve on the Van Derveer Student Council. These senators serve in a variety of capacities including welcoming new students, serving as liaisons between students and staff, and greeting visitors to the school.

Students will not be kept after school without parental notification. If there is a necessity to have a student remain after 3:00 p.m., a staff member will notify the parent/guardian. Students are expected to leave the school grounds once dismissed unless supervised by a parent/guardian.

The Board of Education recognizes that a pupil’s abuse of harmful substances seriously impedes that pupil’s education and threatens the welfare of the entire community. The Board is committed to the prevention of substance abuse and the rehabilitation of substance abusers by educational means, but will take necessary and appropriate steps to protect the school community from harm and from exposure to harmful substances. The Somerville Police Department Community Police Officer delivers lessons to the students including the D.A.R.E. and G.R.E.A.T. programs. Additionally, classroom teachers, physical education teachers, and the school counselors deliver grade appropriate programs and district approved curriculum. Refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy.

In-school suspension is assigned to address severe or continuous misconduct, unacceptable behavior, and/or blatant disrespect or defiance to the school’s code of conduct. From time to time, it is necessary to suspend a student out of school for serious or continued disregard of regulations. The suspension procedure is designed to provide due process for students. The student who is suspended out of school may not participate in any school activities while the suspension is in effect.

Parents/Guardians will be notified by telephone contact, followed up with a written letter, indicating the necessity for a suspension. A parent/guardian must accompany his or her child on the return date to school.
Refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy. Please note that amendments to district’s policies are subject to changes required by the State of New Jersey.

**VAN “DERGEAR”**

Tee shirts, sweatshirts, shorts, and sweatpants are available in youth and adult sizes. Contact the school office for purchasing and/or ordering throughout the year. Show your school spirit by wearing any black and gold.

**VAN DERVEER OUTDOOR CLASSROOM**

Students, teachers, staff, and community members and organizations joined together to create an environmental center that promotes learning through nature on the west side of the building between the A and C wings. A butterfly garden, not only attracts butterflies, but provides a beautiful garden. The varieties of plants represent each letter of the alphabet. Seven raised vegetable gardens are planted and cultivated by our kindergarten students. Each season, the students use the vegetables harvested for healthy eating lessons. Three varieties of grape plants are growing up an arbor which will eventually grow fruit for harvesting.

Two rain gardens provide an area of learning about the water cycle including the natural runoff, groundwater supply and erosion. Additionally, the gardens protect the Peters Brook Waterway. The plants used are specific to New Jersey. Six picnic tables are utilized for reading, writing, art and science lessons, as well as lunchtime enjoyment.

Volunteers are welcome and needed to help in all areas. Parents/Guardians who are willing to spend a few hours at school planting and completing garden projects are welcome! Contact the school office at (908) 218-4105 to inform us of your interest. Please feel free to enjoy our garden, but remember not to interfere with the development of our classroom by picking anything.

**VISITORS**

All visitors, including parents and guardians, must report to the Main Office upon entering the building and must have permission from the Main Office to visit any part of the school building. Visitors are required to sign in, to wear a visitor badge, and to sign out in the Main Office when leaving.

**VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers may serve in many capacities at Van Derveer Elementary School. We encourage volunteers to share their special talents and abilities in the classroom, assist with special programs, and assist in the Media Center. Interested volunteers should contact your child’s teacher or Mrs. Haynes at (908) 218-4105.

**WEAPONS AWARENESS AGREEMENT**

The Board of Education, administration, and the entire certificated and support staff of the Somerville Public School district stand united in their expression of intolerance for the presence of weapons in our schools. We believe that our schools must be safe and free from the danger that the presence of weapons creates.
In accordance with the Board of Education Policy #8467 (Weapons), students who are found guilty of possessing a weapon in school, on school grounds, on school busses, or at school-sponsored activities will be subject to expulsion from the school. To expel means to be removed permanently. In addition, criminal charges will be filed with the Somerville Police Department. A WEAPON IS DEFINED AS ANY INSTRUMENT OF OFFENSE OR DEFENSE, WHICH IS CAPABLE OF INFlicting INJURY, HARM, OR DEATH TO SOMEONE. Please refer to the Somerville Public School district’s website for a complete text of this policy.

Examples of items which would be considered weapons include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **GUNS** (Loaded or unloaded): revolvers, BB guns, pellet guns, stun guns, air guns, dart guns, shotguns, rifles.
  *Also defined as any device or instrument in the nature of a weapon from which may be fired or ejected any solid projectile ball, slug, pellet, missile or bullet, or any gas, vapor, or other noxious gas, by means of a cartridge or shell or by the action of any explosive or the lighting of flammable or explosive substances. This includes mace, pepper spray, or like substance and any object brought to school with the intent to commit harm.

- **KNIVES**: pocket knives, hunting knives, switch blades, gravity knives, daggers, stilettos, dirks.

- **OTHER**: pipes, tire irons, bullies, blackjacks, brass knuckles, sand clubs, slingshots, leather bands studded with metal, lighters, or other flame producing devices.

Please note the above list is **not** all inclusive.

**WEAPONS**

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe school environment to all students attending the public schools. To provide this safe environment, the Board of Education has implemented the Safe Schools Initiative – Chapter 127 and 128, The Zero Tolerance for Guns Act. The Act provides for immediate removal of a student found to be in possession of a firearm, committing a crime with a firearm, or assaulting a member of the school community with a weapon other than a firearm.
THE VAN DERVEER SONG

Van Derveer we all salute you
You’re a grand old school.
We will always wear your colors
Black and gold will rule.

Fun and learning, keep us turning
Always to your side.
Van Derveer our favorite school
Will always be our pride.

As you walk the road of life
Remember Van Derveer.
Honor it within your heart
And always keep it near.

So remember in September
It’s the place to be.
Van Derveer I know that you’re the
Only school for me.
SCHOOL SPIRIT DAYS

Wednesday, September 14, 2011
School Colors: Buy your Van Dergear through the Main Office

Wednesday, October 12, 2011
Red Ribbon Week – Wear Red

Wednesday, November 9, 2011
School Colors (black & gold)

Wednesday, December 14, 2011
Sports Jersey Day

Wednesday, January 11, 2012
School Colors (black & gold)

Wednesday, February 8, 2012
Mismatch Day

Wednesday, March 14, 2012
School Colors (black & gold)

Wednesday, April 18, 2012
Western Day

Wednesday, May 9, 2012
School Colors (black & gold)

Wednesday, June 13, 2012
Crazy Hats Day