

September 2013

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to Sharon Springs Central School! I hope that this school year will be a successful and rewarding one for the entire family.

This K-5 Parent Handbook is updated each year in order to provide your family with the most current information regarding our primary grades. It contains information on staff, cafeteria, transportation, program, attendance, and student issues.

Please take a moment to review this handbook. Other forms of school to parent communication this year will include teacher-developed bulletins, the Weekly Bulletin, open houses, phone calls, conferences, district newsletters, and the district web page at [www.sharonsprings.org](http://www.sharonsprings.org). Parents may contact teachers via their e-mail account. Teacher e-mail addresses are as follows: first letter of first name, last name @sharonsprings.org. For example: Patterson Green will be [pgreen@sharonsprings.org](mailto:pgreen@sharonsprings.org). If you don't get a reply in a prompt manner, please follow up with a phone call. Unfortunately, quite often outside e-mails without an .edu or .org extension get caught in the filter.

Please let us know of any concerns and questions you have as we strive to provide you with the information you need the most.

Sincerely,

SHARON SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL

Patterson Green  
Superintendent/Building Principal

PG:lb

## School Year: 2013-14

To Parent or Guardian of an Elementary Student (Any student under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must read and sign the agreement.)

As a parent or guardian of this student, I have read the Policy Provision for Internet access as stated in the Elementary Student Handbook. I understand that individual access is intended for educational purposes and that the Sharon Springs Central School District has taken available precautions to eliminate controversial material. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the Sharon Springs Central School District to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the Sharon Springs Central School responsible for materials acquired on the network. Students should not have any expectations of privacy as their usage will be monitored and tracked. I understand that any "sharing" of individual passwords is a violation of this agreement. Further, I accept full responsibility if and when my child's use of the Internet is not appropriate in the school setting. I hereby give my permission to grant individual access for my child and certify that the information on this form is correct.

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Parent or Guardian (Please sign)

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Date

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Student's Name (Please print)

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Teacher's Name

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Grade



## SHARON SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL

### MISSION/VISION STATEMENT

- The mission of Sharon Springs Central School, a community oriented district, is to educate all students to become healthy, hard working, honest and respectable citizens, who will value lifelong learning and contribute to a global society.
- The vision of the Sharon Springs Central School is to provide a supportive and creative learning environment, which challenges our students to achieve excellence as a way of life.

#### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

##### 1. Visitation Policies

In keeping with the spirit of the district mission statement to provide a secure learning environment, our school has limited access during the school day. This simply means that only a few designated doors will be open for public access. Students and staff will be able to exit all doors at any time. The Main Entrance is located on the right side of the building.

**ALL VISITORS MUST SIGN THE VISITORS' LOG AT THE FRONT DESK UPON ARRIVAL** and should expect to be asked for identification. A visitor's pass will be issued for the visitor to wear. To visit a classroom, contact must be made with the teachers at least 24 hours in advance.

**TOBACCO FREE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT POLICY:** Effective August 1, 1994 smoking and use of other tobacco products is prohibited in all school district facilities. VISITORS who are observed using tobacco products in school district facilities shall be asked to refrain from doing so. If the individual fails to comply with the request, his or her violation of the policy shall be referred to the principal or other district personnel responsible for the area or program during which the violation occurred. The person responsible shall make a decision on further action that may include a directive to leave school property for the day. Repeated violations may result in a recommendation to the Superintendent to ban the individual from entering school district property. If deemed necessary by school administration, the local law enforcement agency may be called upon to assist with enforcement of this policy.

##### 2. Change of Student/Parent Information

It is extremely important that you notify the school of any changes including home address, work address or telephone numbers. Verification such as copies of court documents should be on file with the school to prevent any misunderstanding or confusion. If the school does not have the correct information, it will not be able to communicate effectively with you and your children. If you have any additional questions, please contact Mrs. Brown at 284-2267.

##### 3. Code of Conduct

This summary, based on the District's Code of Conduct, Board of Education Policies, and State laws on Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE), outlines the rules and procedures under which our school operates. A complete copy of the Code of Conduct is available by contacting the District Office.

##### 4. Field Trips

The District believes in exposing student to a variety of learning experiences. Often classes use a "field trip" to enhance learning and may take several a year. In order for your child to participate, you will need to complete a permission slip and return it to the teacher. A limited number of chaperones will be needed to accompany the students on these exciting adventures.

##### 5. Supply Lists

At the end of each school year, you will be provided a supply list – items students will need for the classroom they will be enrolled in for the next school year. Each teacher has specific lists based on the activities that are planned for his/her classroom. If you do not receive the supply list in June or misplace the list, please call the main office.

##### 6. Weekly Bulletin

Every week a bulletin is sent home with information about upcoming events and important issues concerning the school and community. This is a wonderful method of keeping up-to-date and informed.

##### 7. Report Cards

Report cards are issued approximately every 10 weeks. The report card gives your child's class marks as well as record of behavior. The first report card will be given at a parent conference in November. More information will be sent to you about scheduling an appointment. When the need arises, the teacher will call you to discuss student progress. Your interest in your child's performance makes a difference. Encourage your child to keep up with homework, be courteous and considerate to others, and to cooperate with the teacher. A good "attitude" makes a great learning environment.

##### 8. Elementary Academic Recognition

Quarterly throughout the school year, elementary students in grades 2-5 will be recognized for academic achievements presented below.

- Merit Roll for students with an average of 84.51 to 89.50
- Honor Roll for students with an academic average of 89.51 or above

**9. Book Program K-1**

A bag containing 10 books will be sent home with each student. When each book has been read, you will need to sign a form stating that each book has been read. Your child will take the bag into school and receive another bag of books. The goal for each student is to read 1000 books before leaving 1<sup>st</sup> grade and to develop a love of reading.

**10. Cafeteria**

School Breakfast – Breakfast is offered to all students who wish to take advantage of it. Breakfast is served from 7:45 – 8:20 a.m. (except on hour delays when no breakfast is served.)

School Lunches – A lunch menu for each month is sent out as part of the Weekly Bulletin. Please remember, any money sent to the school should be sealed in an envelope and labeled with the student’s name, amount of money, and what it is for.

Charging – If students forget or lose their lunch money, they will not go hungry. They will be allowed to charge their lunch, but the charge must be paid back the next day. Charging is a privilege and must not be abused.

Free and Reduced Breakfast or Lunch – Forms are available from the Cafeteria for children who are entitled to a free or reduced breakfast/lunch. The Cafeteria Manager will assist any family that qualifies and, of course, this information is kept in strict confidence. Believe it or not, due to state and federal laws, it benefits the district to have all qualified families enrolled. It also benefits the students.

Cafeteria Prices*:	Regular	Reduced
Student Breakfast	\$ 1.30	\$ .25
Student Lunch (K-5)	1.75	.25
Student Lunch (6-12)	2.00	.25
A la carte	1.25	
Milk	.50	
Adult Breakfast	2.05	
Adult Lunch	3.80	

**11. Snack Money**

Teachers follow their own routine with regard to snack time. Information is forwarded directly to parents at the beginning of the year.

**12. Health Services**

Physical Examinations: All Kindergartens must have a physical done by their own medical provider prior to starting school. A physical exam is acceptable if it is administered not more than 12 months prior to the start of the school year. New York State Law also mandates a physical exam for students in grade 2 and all new enterers into the district in grades K-3. The physical exam will be done at the school by the school physician unless a copy of the exam is furnished to the health office by October 1<sup>st</sup>. A physical is only acceptable if it is done by a provider licensed in the State of New York and administered not more than 12 months prior to the start of the school year.

Screenings: Vision screening will be done on all students in grades K-3 and all new enterers. Hearing screenings will be done on grades K, 1 and 3 and all new enterers. If you prefer to have these screenings done privately you **MUST** furnish a copy of the exam to the health office by October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Fluoride: A fluoride program is offered to all students in grades 1-3. Grades 1-3 receive fluoride rinse on a weekly basis. Please remember that children should not be given fluoride both at home and at school. Therefore, if your child is receiving fluoride in another program, he or she should not participate in the program at school. Consent forms for receiving fluoride at school will be sent home with your child the first week of school. Please return the completed form to the child’s teacher by September 15.

Health History: If there are any changes in your child’s health status from the previous year, please contact the health office. Please feel free to contact the health office with any questions, or concerns regarding your child’s health during the school year.

Immunizations: Proof of immunization is required for a child to be admitted or allowed to attend school. The following are required by the state of New York to attend school:

- 3 doses of diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis(DPT, DTaP)**
- 3 doses of polio (IPV or OPV)**
- 2 doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR)**
- 3 doses of hepatitis B**
- 1 dose of varicella (chicken pox vaccine)born on or after 1/1/98**

Medication in School: New York State Education Law prohibits the giving of internal medication in school unless a written doctor’s order for that medication and a written parental request to give that medication is brought to the school nurse. This law also includes over-the-counter medication such as aspirin, acetaminophen, cold preparations, cough drops, etc.

A **PARENT/ADULT MUST** personally bring to the nurse all medications in the bottle with the original prescription on the label. This also includes over the counter medication, which needs to be in the original manufacturer’s container/package with the students name affixed to the container.

If your child needs medication at school, please obtain the appropriate form from the nurse’s office for medication administration in school. The form must be filled out and signed by a parent/guardian and then taken to the physician’s office for completion. It then must be returned to the nurse’s office.

A pharmacy label on a prescription DOES NOT constitute as a written order and CANNOT be used instead of a written order from a licensed prescriber.

Medication CANNOT be administered at school unless all of these procedures are followed.

School Insurance: School insurance is ACCIDENT insurance only. If your child is injured during school hours, please notify the school health office for the necessary forms to be completed. Please remember that school insurance will only pay medical benefits AFTER the child's own insurance has paid their part of the claim.

**13. Academic Intervention Services K-3**

Academic Intervention Services (AIS) in kindergarten through third grade consists of additional support to children who are at risk of academic difficulty in the areas of math and reading. When students need additional individual attention for specific skills, a remedial teacher, content-area teacher or teacher assistant may pull them out of the classroom for short periods of time to focus on specific needs. Letters will notify parents if their child is an AIS identified student and will receive regular reporting from the remedial teacher at the time that report cards are distributed.

**14. Emergency School Closings**

If a decision is made to close or delay school opening because of bad weather or other emergency, AM radio station WGY (810) will make the announcements as well as WRGB, TV Channel 6. When school must be closed during the normal school day for emergency situations, WGY will also carry these announcements. Parent contact may be attempted as well. Forms are sent home at the beginning of the year to obtain instructions for early dismissal. If there are any special needs regarding how you should be contacted or where your child should be transported to should an emergency occur, please be sure to put this in writing and send it to school with your child to his/her teacher.

**B. PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM**

**Board of Education**

Parents and members of the community are encouraged to attend and participate at public Board of Education meetings, which are held on the second and fourth Monday of each month in the school library. Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m.

- Mr. James MacFadden, Jr., President
- Mrs. Helen Roberts, Vice President
- Mrs. Laura Jackson
- Mr. Paul Larkin
- Mrs. Dorothy Harding

**Administration**

- Mr. Patterson Green, Superintendent/Building Principal
- Mr. Anthony DiPace, Business Manager

**Pupil Personnel/Guidance**

- Mrs. Brenda Stetin, Guidance Counselor

Who do I contact about...?

Athletics	Mrs. Tammy Behr	284-2267
Bus Schedule	Mr. Joe Hiltz	284-9047
Cafeteria/Lunch Program	Mrs. Melissa Simpson	284-2266
Course Curriculum	Mrs. Brenda Stetin	284-2267
Discipline	Main Office	284-2267
Health Concerns	Nurse's Office	284.2267
Personal Issues	Guidance Office	284-2267
Use of Building	District Office	284-2266

Notes and flyers regarding school activities may be mailed or given to students to share with parents. Parents and community members wishing to obtain further information about the school district should inquire first through the main office and the district webpage.

**C. ESSENTIAL PARTNERS AT SHARON SPRINGS CENTRAL SCHOOL**

Parents

As a parent or guardian, the Sharon Springs Central School expects you to become an active participant in your child's education by:

1. Supporting your child in his or her efforts to fulfill academic and behavioral responsibilities.
2. Attending conferences scheduled by teachers, counselors, or administrators on matters relating to your child's attendance, conduct or academic performance.
3. Responding to school when you receive notification of excessive absences or poor academic performance.
4. Signing your child's report card envelope every quarter and returning that copy to school.
5. Keeping informed of school events and programs via the weekly bulletin, district newsletter,

- flyers and local media.
- 6. Paying for lost or damaged text or library books, fines or other indebtedness incurred by your child.
- 7. Making every effort to schedule dental, medical, and other appointments outside of school time to reduce loss of instructional time.
- 8. Familiarizing yourselves with school policies and procedures as outlined in the handbook.
- 9. Following the chain of command in contacting school officials. First, contact the teacher, then the Principal and lastly, the Superintendent.
- 10. Ensure your children attend school regularly and on time.
- 11. Ensure absences are excused.
- 12. Inform school officials of any changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.

#### Teachers

All district teachers are expected to:

1. Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity, which will strengthen students' self-concept and promote confidence to learn.
2. Be prepared to teach.
3. Demonstrate interest in teaching and concern for student achievement.
4. Know school policies and rules, and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
5. Communicate to students and parents:
  - a. Course objectives and requirements
  - b. Marking/grading procedures
  - c. Assignment deadlines
  - d. Expectations for students
  - e. Classroom discipline plan
6. Communicate regularly with students, parents and other teachers concerning growth and achievement.

#### Guidance Counselor

1. Assist students in coping with peer pressure and emerging personal, social and emotional problems.
2. Initiate teacher/student/counselor conferences, as necessary, as a way to resolve problems.
3. Regularly review with students their educational progress and career plans.
4. Provide information to assist students with career planning.
5. Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs.

#### Principal

1. Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
2. Ensure that students and staff have the opportunity to communicate regularly with the principal and approach the principal for redress of grievances.
3. Evaluate on a regular basis all instructional programs.
4. Support the development of and student participation in appropriate extracurricular activities.
5. Be responsible for enforcing the code of conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.

#### Superintendent

1. Promote a safe, orderly and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning.
2. Review with district administrators the policies of the board of education and state and federal laws relating to school operations and management.
3. Inform the board about educational trends relating to student discipline.
4. Work to create instructional programs that minimize problems of misconduct and are sensitive to student and teacher needs.
5. Work with district administrators in enforcing the code of conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.

#### Board of Education

1. Collaborate with student, teacher, administrator, and parent organizations, school safety personnel and other school personnel to develop a code of conduct that clearly defines expectations for the conduct of students, district personnel and visitors on school property and at school functions.
2. Adopt and review at least annually the district's code of conduct to evaluate the code's effectiveness and the fairness and consistency of its implementation.
3. Lead by example by conducting board meetings in a professional, respectful, courteous manner.

### **D. THE SCHOOL DAY**

#### Academic Expectations

The classroom is a setting for learning; therefore, it is the student's responsibility:

- To use class and study time for learning.
- To complete assigned work on time.
- To prepare thoroughly for each class.
- To respect the rights of other students.
- To participate in class discussions and activities.
- To respect the authority of the teacher or substitute.
- To follow classroom procedures as determined by the teacher.
- To use textbooks, school technologies, and other class materials appropriately and with care.

## **Citizenship**

School provides an opportunity to learn to communicate with others, to respect the rights of others and to operate within certain rules for the common good. In an effort for you to help to promote self-esteem among your peers, it is your responsibility:

- To treat other people as you would wish to be treated.
- To respect the rights, property and safety of every other person.
- To assist in keeping the school, clean and free from litter and vandalism.
- To understand that the school operates within established rules and regulations and these rules and regulations must be followed.
- To respect the property of the school.
- To follow the directions of people in authority.
- To avoid inappropriate physical contact.
- To behave appropriately at school.
- To avoid inappropriate public displays of affection. Inappropriate public displays of affection are those, which make others uncomfortable. For example, handholding may be an acceptable public display of affection in school. However, embracing and kissing are not acceptable public displays of affection in school.
- To avoid sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, sexually degrading works or gestures; verbal sexual abuse, obscene phone calls; offensive sexual graffiti, pictures or cartoons, subtle pressure for sexual activity; leering or staring; insulting remarks to a person about his or her gender or sexual orientation; demands for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats; and unwanted touching, petting, pinching or brushing. To show respect by your words and actions for racial and religious differences.
- You are expected to use appropriate language while at school and while on school property. Cursing and swearing are examples of inappropriate language.

## **Emergencies**

The following are general instructions for emergency situations.

- School officials and/or teachers will provide instructions for emergencies.
- Pupils are to proceed quietly, in single lines, keeping in order, and moving briskly without running. Pupils who are unable to follow the line or drill pattern should step aside and await assistance.
- Fire Emergency: Regardless of the time the alarm sounds, including after regular school hours, pupils must vacate the building. The signal to leave the building is a ringing bell.
- Students should be at least one hundred feet away from the building and fire hydrants.
- All driveways and parking lots must be kept clear to allow the passage of emergency vehicles.
- The signal for students and teachers to return to the building will be given by the Principal to designated personnel via radio. These personnel will signal others to re-enter the building.

## **Prohibited Student Conduct**

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment.

The best discipline is self-imposed, and student must learn to assume and accept responsibility for their own behavior, as well as the consequences of their misbehavior. District personnel who interact with students are expected to use disciplinary action only when necessary and to place emphasis on the students' ability to grow in self-discipline.

The Board recognizes the need to make its expectations for student conduct while on school property or engaged in a school function, specific and clear. The rules of conduct listed below are intended to do that and focus on safety and respect for the rights and property of others. Students who will not accept responsibility for their own behavior and who violate these school rules will be required to accept the penalties for their conduct.

Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they:

1. Engage in conduct that is disorderly. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Running in hallways.
  - b. Making unreasonable noise.
  - c. The use of cell phones, beepers or other electronic devices.
  - d. Using language or gestures that are profane, lewd, vulgar or abusive.
  - e. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
  - f. Engaging in any willful act, which disrupts the normal operation of the school community.
  - g. Computer/electronic communications misuse, including any unauthorized use of computers, software or internet/intranet account; accessing inappropriate websites; or any other violation of the district's acceptable use policy.
2. Engage in conduct that is insubordinate. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in charge of students or otherwise demonstrating disrespect.
  - b. Lateness for, missing or leaving school without permission.
  - c. Skipping detention.
3. Engage in conduct that is disruptive. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Failing to comply with the reasonable directions of teachers, school administrators or other school personnel in charge of students.
4. Engage in conduct that is violent. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching and scratching) upon a teacher, administrator or other school employee or attempting to do so.

- b. Committing an act of violence (such as hitting, kicking, punching and scratching) upon another student or any other person lawfully on school property or attempting to do so.
  - c. Possessing a weapon. Authorized law enforcement officials are the only persons permitted to have a weapon in their possession while on school property or at a school function.
  - d. Displaying what appears to be a weapon.
  - e. Threatening to use any weapon.
  - f. Intentionally damaging or destroying the personal property of a student, teacher, administrator, other district employee or any person lawfully on school property, including graffiti or arson.
  - g. Intentionally damaging or destroying school district property.
5. Engage in any conduct that endangers the safety, morals, health or welfare of others. Examples include but are not limited to:
- a. Lying to school personnel.
  - b. Stealing the property of other students, school personnel or any other person lawfully on school property or attending a school function.
  - c. Defamation, which includes making false or unprivileged statements of representations about an individual or identifiable group of individuals that harm the reputation of the person or the identifiable group by demeaning them.
  - d. Harassment, which includes a sufficiently severe action or a persistent, pervasive pattern of actions or statements directed at an identifiable individual or a group which are intended to be or which a reasonable person would perceived as ridiculing or demeaning.
  - e. Intimidation, which includes engaging in actions or statements that put an individual in fear of bodily harm.
  - f. Hazing, which includes any intentional or reckless act directed against another for the purpose of initiation into, affiliating with or maintaining membership in any school sponsored activity, organization, club or team.
  - g. Selling, using or possessing obscene material.
  - h. Smoking a cigarette, cigar, pipe or using chewing or smokeless tobacco.
  - i. Possessing, consuming, selling, distributing or exchanging alcoholic beverages or illegal substances, or being under the influence of either, "Illegal substances" include, but are not limited to, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look alike drugs, and any substances commonly referred to as "designer drugs."
  - j. Inappropriately using or sharing prescription and over-the-counter drugs.
  - k. Gambling.
  - l. Indecent exposure that is, exposure to a sight of the private parts of the body in a lewd or indecent manner.
  - m. Initiating a report warning of fire or other catastrophe without valid cause, misuse of 911, or discharging a fire extinguisher.
6. Engage in misconduct while on a school bus. It is crucial for students to behave appropriately while riding on district buses to ensure their safety and that of other passengers and to avoid distracting the bus driver. Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Excessive noise, pushing, shoving and fighting will not be tolerated.
7. Engage in any form of academic misconduct. Examples include but are not limited:
- a. Plagiarism
  - b. Cheating
  - c. Copying
  - d. Altering records
  - e. Assisting another student in any of the above actions

**Enforcement of the Rules**

It is important that each member of our school community learns about how rules will be enforced. Administration and faculty have developed a schedule of responses to infractions of school rules that are designed to help protect the rights of others, and guarantee that each individual meets his or her responsibilities.

The administrative responses are meant to assist students in the development of skills, which will help them interact with others. In all cases, anyone charged with rules infractions is entitled to seek clarification about how an administrative response is assigned. The most common administrative responses to rules infractions include, but are not limited to:

Student Conferences	Reprimand	Loss of pass privileges
Loss of extra-curricular activities privileges	Restitution for damages (in money or comp time)	Administrative detention
Internal suspension	External suspension	Administrative conferencing
		Extended external suspension

Administrative conferencing refers to the involvement of any of the following persons in the case student's rule infraction:

Parents or Guardians	Principal	Law Enforcement Personnel
Teachers	Superintendent	Social Service Representative
Counselor	Probation Officer	School Resource Officer

This summary, based on the District's Code of Conduct, Board of Education Policies, and State Laws on School's Against Violence in Education (SAVE), outlines the rules and procedures under which our school operates. A complete copy of the Code of Conduct can be obtained from the main office or by calling Mrs. Brown at 284-2267. The intent of the code is to promote responsible behavior that creates an orderly and safe school environment. SSCS operates on a progressive discipline philosophy designed to bring about behavioral change. The history and disciplinary record of each student will be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, every effort will be made to respond in a firm and consistent manner.

**E. STUDENTS ATTENDANCE**

**STUDENTS ATTENDANCE**

**A. Age of Entrance**

In accordance with the regulations of the Sharon Springs Central School BOARD OF EDUCATION, students will be admitted to Kindergarten in September only if they have reached or will reach the age of five years on or before December 1 of the school year in question. Any child reaching the age of five years after December 1, must wait until the following September to enter Kindergarten.

## B. Regularity of Attendance

1. The State Education Law (3205) (3202) 1 requires that:
  - a. Children who turn six (6) on or before December 1 of the school year must attend school from the start of classes in September of that school year. Children who turn six (6) after December 1 must begin school no later than the first day of session the following September.
  - b. Children who turn seventeen (17) during the school year must remain in school until the end of that school year.
  - c. Children should be entering or leaving school at the beginning or end of a school year. (Chapter 198 of the Laws of 1992).
  - d. Under New York State Education Law, Section 3205, parents are responsible for the regular attendance of their children for instruction. **In accordance with NYS Law, after a student has been absent from school, a written excuse should be sent to the school upon his/her return.** New York State Law defines truancy as a student who is absent from school without the consent of a parent or guardian. Therefore, in order for a student not to be considered truant, parental contact must be established with the school nurse, or in extenuating circumstances, school administration. This may be in the form of a note or a phone call. A phone message may also be left on the nurse's voice mail. Even if an absence is unexcused, it will not be considered a truancy unless NO note or phone call has been received. If an absence is considered a truancy, it will be subject to disciplinary action.

## 2. Absences and Excuses

If your child has a scheduled appointment with a physician or dentist, please inform the school prior to the appointment. After the appointment, please bring a note from the physician/dentist to the school nurse.

- a. **EXCUSES:** The law requires that upon return to school from an absence, an excuse be submitted. This is shown to the homeroom teacher and then turned in immediately to the attendance office. The excuse should state the student's name, reason for his/her absence, days and dates absent from school and the signature of the parent/guardian. The excuse must be brought in within three (3) school days.
- b. **LEGAL ABSENCES:** The following are considered by the State of New York to be legal absences:
  - sickness
  - serious illness or death in the family
  - impassable road or weather conditions
  - religious observance
  - quarantine
  - court appearance
  - attendance at health clinic
  - approved cooperative work program
  - approved college visits
  - approved education trips
  - military obligations.
- c. **ILLEGAL ABSENCES:** Most absences not mentioned in item 2b. are interpreted under the law as illegal absences. The two categories of illegal absence are unlawful detention and truancy.
  - 1.) **Unlawful Detention** – Unlawful detention occurs when the pupil is absent with the knowledge and consent of his/her parent or guardian, for other than legal reasons (e.g. visiting, vacation, work, needed at home, etc).

Parents should be advised that unlawfully detaining their children from school could result in the child not receiving credit for the work missed on the days of unlawful detention.
  - 2.) **Truancy** – A student who is absent from school without the consent of a parent or guardian is considered to be truant. Truancy from school is assumed anytime a student is illegally absent for two or more consecutive class periods.

## C. Elementary School Attendance Regulations

The Administration and Faculty of Sharon Springs Central School believe that regular attendance in classroom instruction is an essential part of the learning process. The insistence on good attendance provides students with a clear reminder of the importance of classroom instruction and its relationship to academic achievement. Therefore, to be able to progress to the next grade level at Sharon Springs Central School students must fulfill the necessary requirements of the grade and comply with the following attendance requirements:

**When a total of twenty-seven (27) days or twenty (20) consecutive days of absence per school year has been reached, a review board in the form of the Pupil Personnel Service Team will review the recommendation that the student repeat or that a PINS petition be filed and intervention procedures in this regulation have been followed throughout the accumulation of the total consecutive days.**

The eighty-five percent (85%) rule of attendance means that:

1. In a full year a student must not be absent from class more than twenty-seven (27) days (legally or illegally). If a student enters school after the beginning of the year, his/her attendance will be figured on eighty-five percent (85%) of the total days he/she could be present.

For example, on 170 days he/she would have to be present 145 days, thus only being absent 25 days. On 100 days possible attendance, he/she would have to be present 85 days and could only be absent 10 days. Parents should be aware of the fact that students who leave early during the days for appointments and things of this nature are subject to have such time be considered as absence and added to total absence from school. Students who have vacations extended, or who are taken out on vacation during the year will have these days added to their yearly total. VACATION DAYS ARE ILLEGAL ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL.

2. Any student who accumulates twenty-eight (28) absences during a full year of study, or one more day of absence than the number allowed if he/she enters school after the first day of school in September, will not be allowed to progress to the next grade level. THEREFORE, IF A STUDENT ENTERS SCHOOL AFTER THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER, HIS/HER PARENT WILL BE GIVEN THE NUMBER OF DAYS HE/SHE MAY BE ABSENT. PARENTS PLEASE KEEP THIS NUMBER FOR FUTURE REFERENCE. The Administrator will adhere to the procedure as set forth in Education Law, Section 3214 (3) for removal.

Any student who is absent from school but is enrolled in a school approved tutorial program (home study as in the case of prolonged illness) shall be considered as present for instruction. The tutorial program will operate with the same attendance regulations as all other classes. Parents, who know that their child will be absent for a prolonged period of time, (over 20 days), should immediately submit a notice from the child's physician stating the nature of the illness and the duration so that home study/tutoring may be arranged and the child may be considered present. In addition, this will permit the child to fully recover before coming back to school and prevent a relapse.

Students who will not be allowed to progress to the next grade level due to non-compliance with the attendance regulations will remain in the class so that they will be able to get a good foundation for next year's course work. The students, in addition, will receive support services in order to assist him/her in improving his/her attendance. A student who does not comply with the attendance regulations may be required to appear for a Superintendent's Hearing. This hearing may result in a long-term suspension from school. Students who do not comply with the attendance regulations will not be permitted to attend summer school in order to progress to the next grade level.

#### **D. Outstanding Attendance Awards**

1. Category 1: Perfect Attendance- No minutes missed...no absences, tardiness, or early dismissals for any reason with the exception of a school sponsored field trip.
2. Category 2: No absences. All tardiness and/or early dismissals excused because of medical or dental appointment(s). A written excuse from the doctor or dentist must be supplied upon return.
3. Category 3: A combined 1-3 absences, tardies and/or dismissals, regardless of reason. A student may also submit a written appeal to be recognized for this award if his/her absence is due to an extenuating medical condition.

#### **E. INTERNET REGULATIONS**

##### **Privileges:**

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. Each student who receives access at Sharon Springs Central School will participate in a discussion with the librarian or business/computer teachers pertaining to the proper use of the network. The teacher will deem what is inappropriate use and their decision is final. The district may deny, revoke, or suspend specific user access. District personnel are authorized to use Internet and computing resources only in accordance with the educational and administrative goals of the district. Responsibility for activity initiated through the District computer account is the sole responsibility of the adult who accessed the Internet.

##### **Etiquette:**

Computer users are expected to abide by the general accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Be polite. Messages should not be abusive to others.
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other language deemed inappropriate.
3. Do not reveal personal information. Do not reveal the personal addresses and/or phone numbers of fellow students or colleagues.
4. Illegal activities or inappropriate sites not intended for educational-related research are strictly forbidden.
5. Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt network services for other users.
6. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
7. Students will not have e-mail accounts. Access will only be authorized for district personnel. Chatrooms, instant messages, Napster or similar services will not be allowed.
8. Do not download software without authorization.
9. Employing the network for commercial purposes is not allowed.
10. No student owned hardware/software/CD's allowed in the computer lab.
11. District computers users are reminded that their computer usage is a privilege that will be monitored, and can be, if necessary, removed.

##### **Non-Liability:**

Sharon Springs Central School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. Sharon Springs Central School District will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via Sharon Springs Central School District is at the user's own risk. This includes inappropriate information obtained by accidental access through error. Sharon Springs Central School District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained.

**Security:**

Security on any computer system is a high-priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify a teacher who will in turn notify an administrator. Do not use another individual’s account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to login to Internet as system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to Internet.

**Vandalism:**

Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is deemed as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy hardware, software, icons or desktop setup, data of another user, Internet, or any agencies or other networks that are connected to Sharon Springs Central School District. This includes but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

**Exception of Terms and Conditions:**

All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to Sharon Springs Central School District. These terms and conditions reflect the entire agreement of the parties and supersede all prior oral or written agreements and understandings of the parties.

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A copy of license for software should be on file in the Business Office.

***Alma Mater***

*Dear Schoolmates, ever loyal, true and faithful  
Gathering 'neath the maples on the hill;  
With courage, faith undaunted for our future;  
As we older grow we love thee still.*

*The Purple and the White shall wave forever  
Keep this emblem ever clean and bright.  
Oh, may the glorious folds be sullied never,  
Love for aye, the Purple and the White.*

*All hail to thee, our dear old Sharon  
Open wide your portals to the right.  
Still o'er the fields of conflict ever waving,  
Float for aye, the Purple and the White.*