



**Providing a culture that encourages engagement, integrity
and honor in a supportive
individualized learning environment**

Student Handbook

6/3/26

**125 School Street
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819**

The Arlington School is a general and special education independent school approved by the State of Vermont. The Arlington school does not discriminate based on any sex, race, color, religion, and handicap, and sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin.

About The Arlington School . . .

The Arlington School is an approved, independent high school serving a population of up to 50 students in grades 9-12. The Arlington School provides a diverse educational setting which nurtures the student, assisting each individual in reaching his or her full potential.

At Arlington, we utilize a restorative approach to support students and staff in navigating conflict and strengthening relationships. Our Restorative Program is designed to promote healing, build community, and address challenges in a positive and productive manner. Through the use of restorative circles, both students and staff are provided with a safe and supportive space to share their perspectives, express how situations have affected them, and work collaboratively toward resolution. These practices help foster understanding, accountability, and connection among all participants. We prioritize restorative circles for both students and staff to ensure a safe, inclusive environment where everyone can learn, grow, and thrive.

The Arlington School is administered by Northeastern Family Institute, a statewide provider of mental health treatment services to children and families.

The Arlington School Mission & Philosophy . . .

Mission

We provide a culture that encourages engagement, integrity and honor in a supportive individualized learning Environment

Philosophy

The school community recognizes individual strengths and celebrates differences in a positive learning environment. Students and staff work together to create a trusting community focusing on mutual respect. Students are encouraged to increase their growing independence with opportunities for responsible decision making. Curriculum is process oriented and intended to satisfy and challenge the individual learning needs of all students. Ultimately, students successfully transition out of high school with the skills required to be productive and healthy members of the community and society.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide students with an independent high school choice.
- To assist students with developing a positive and healthy view of school and the learning process.
- To encourage students to take personal investment and control over their academic endeavors.
- To promote independence as the students transition toward adulthood.

DESCRIPTION OF ENROLLMENT

- The Arlington School is approved by the State Board of Education as a licensed Vermont Independent high school.
- The Arlington School does not discriminate on the basis of religion, color, national origin, race, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or gender.
- The Arlington School is co-educational in population.
- Specific disabilities served include Specific Learning Disabilities, Emotional Disturbance, Learning Impairment, Other Health Impairments (including ADD/ADHD).
- Students on an IEP receive services and case management.
- If we are at capacity, we have a wait list and enrollment is where the student falls on our waitlist.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Arlington School does not discriminate on race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or marital status in its governance, education, admissions, or employment policies

Staffing

- (1) Full time Math Teacher
- (1) Full time English Teacher
- (1) Full time Science Teacher
- (1) Full time Humanities Teacher

In addition to the classroom faculty, staff includes:

- (1) Regional Director
- (1) Program Director
- (1) Assistant Director
- (1) Administrative Coordinator
- (2) Special Educator
- (7) Classroom Counselors
- (1) Resource Specialist/504 Coordinator
- (1) Restorative Coordinator
- (1) Full Therapist
- (1) Clinical Social worker

Clothing

- Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing and jewelry.
- Any articles of clothing or jewelry that depicts themes of violence, drugs, alcohol, racism, sexism or is sexually inappropriate are not acceptable.
- Clothing should cover the midriff area in all circumstances—pants should cover undergarments and shirts should cover the stomach and undergarments. Shorts and skirts should be appropriate length in all circumstances.
- We value student's individuality and we expect students to remember they are in a public

building. All outfits are determined appropriate at the discretion of the Program Director.

If a student arrives at school wearing inappropriate clothing, he or she will be asked to remove the item or cover it up (turn clothing inside out; or wear clothes the school has if available- all school articles are to be returned). If this is not possible, parents will be notified to bring in appropriate attire or the student will not be allowed to be part of the program community until he or she changes their clothing. If a student habitually disregards the dress code, disciplinary action may take place.

School Cancellation

In case of weather emergency, school closing or delays parents will receive a robocall by 6am letting them know the status of the day. Information will also be sent to FM station 97.7 Magic and WCAX. Please use your best judgment and consult your transportation providers if your town receives a greater amount of snow or more inclement weather than the St. Johnsbury area.

Electronic Devices

1. Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, all public and approved independent schools in Vermont are required, under Act 72, to implement a “bell-to-bell” policy limiting student use of cell phones and personal electronic devices. This means the policy applies from the time students arrive on campus until dismissal.
At our school, students are expected to turn in their personal electronic devices, including cell phones, upon arrival. Devices will be secured in a designated cell phone locker located in the front office and will be returned at dismissal.
2. Headphones are allowed only with the permission of teachers or staff. During non-instructional time.
3. Personal laptops and other electronic devices are only allowed with prior permission.

Substance Abuse Policy

To support the health, safety, and well-being of all students, the use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or substances that appear to be alcohol or drugs is not permitted on school property or at school-related events. This includes possession of tobacco or nicotine products by students under the age of 21.

If a concern arises related to substance use or possession, parents/guardians and, when required, law enforcement will be notified. The student will not return to school until a restorative reentry meeting is held with the student, their parent(s)/guardian(s), and school team to ensure safety and plan next steps. Referrals to substance use counseling or additional therapeutic supports may be recommended.

If a student appears to be under the influence and there are concerns for their health or safety, medical support may be sought. The student may be transported to NVRH or the nearest medical facility. Emergency services may be called when necessary, including situations involving medical distress, loss of responsiveness, refusal of care, or behaviors that pose a safety risk to the student or others.

Reentry to school will include a restorative reintegration plan developed collaboratively with the student and their team. This plan may include therapeutic supports, check-ins, coping strategies, and agreed-upon steps to repair trust and strengthen the student's connection to the school community. The goal is to support learning, safety, and long-term well-being.

Tobacco Products in Public Schools

The Arlington School is a Smoke Free environment. Tobacco use and/or possession are prohibited in The Arlington School building, on our grounds, or in our schools vehicles. Smoking includes possession and use of cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, pipes, lighters and chewing tobacco.

If a student is in possession of tobacco or is smoking on or in The Arlington School property the following: disciplinary actions may occur:

- Tobacco products will be confiscated and only returned to a parent or guardian over the age of 21
- Police may be called
- Student will be sent home
- A re-entry meeting with parents/guardians

Citation Procedure—Violation Code

The new law is codified at Title 7 V.S.A. 1005 (a). Two codes will be used. 'TOB' will be used when the violator has a Vermont learner's permit or junior operator's license. 'CIG' will be used when the violator has not yet been issued a license or learner's permit in Vermont. All tobacco products in the violator's possession should be confiscated and disposed of according to your department's procedures.

Title V.S.A. 1007—Selling or Furnishing Tobacco Products

Fines for selling or furnishing tobacco products to a person less than 21 years of age are \$100.00 for a first offense and \$500.00 for subsequent violation, plus a \$17.50 surcharge. The violation code is 'CHU'.

Penalty:

Possession of a tobacco product by a person under the age of 21 is punishable by a fine of \$25.00, plus the \$17.50 surcharge, for a total of \$42.50.

If the fine is not paid within 60 days of the issuance of the violation (citation), the commissioner of Motor Vehicles will suspend the violator's operator's license for no more than 90 days, or, in the event the violator has not yet been licensed, delay the initial licensing of the violator for not more than one year.

NOTE: The law does not apply to employees of tobacco license holders; i.e., store clerks and cashiers.

Weapon's Policy Approved 6/3/96

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Arlington School recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe environment in which to learn. The following policy was adapted from the St. Johnsbury School District:

RATIONALE

It is the intent of the St. Johnsbury School District to comply with the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1995, and Act No. 35 of the 1995 session of the Vermont General Assembly requiring school districts to provide for the possible expulsion of students who bring weapons to school. It is further the intent of the district to maintain a student discipline system consistent with the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Vermont State Board of Education rules.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy, the terms “weapon” and “to school” shall have the following meanings:

“Weapon” means a:

1. A firearm including an antique firearm
2. A rifle
3. Any explosive, incendiary or poison gas
 - a. Bomb
 - b. Grenade
 - c. Rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces
 - d. Missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce
 - e. Mine or
 - f. Similar device
4. Any weapon which will or which may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant and which has any barrel with a bore or more than one half inch in diameter.
5. Knives (including pocket or utility knives and Blow guns are considered weapons.
6. Any object that is fashioned to be used as a weapon.

*****“To School” means any setting which is under the control and supervision of the school district. It includes school grounds, facilities and vehicles used to transport students to and from school or school activities or outside community locations where students are participating as part of a school activity. ******

Procedure:

1. All weapons will be confiscated by The Arlington School will not be returned.
2. The police and DCF will be notified.
3. A meeting with parents, students and school personnel will be arranged to discuss educational placement.

Legal references:

Gun Free Schools Act, October 31, 1995

Act No. 35 of the 1995 session of the Vermont General Assembly.
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (PL 94-142)
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices,
Sections 4311, 4312.

Discipline Policy:

We have a responsibility to create an environment that ensures all members of our school community have the right to learn in a safe and orderly environment and one that fosters respect for themselves, for others and for property. We use a Restorative Practice approach. Our goal is to teach students to make good choices, learn to repair relationships, build strong communities, to be responsible for their actions and to develop appropriate social skills. This policy is in place to provide a safe, orderly and respectful environment for all members of our school community

Procedure:

For any disciplinary concern, the following process shall be used:

- The student and staff member attempt to resolve the behavioral concern. This may include behavior cues, verbal redirection, verbal plan, apologies, curriculum adaptations, in-class time-outs, time away with another staff member, community restorative circle.
- The student may be asked to step out of the class for a limited period of time. Staff will encourage all behavior interventions such as “taking space”, working independently, and/or checking in 1:1 with a staff member.
- Crisis Intervention - In the case of a student hurting themselves or others, parents/guardian will be called. If needed, the police will be notified and asked for assistance.

Intervention Planning

When a student continues to display significant behavioral concerns, an IEP/ Treatment Team meeting may be called by staff or parent to seek further assistance for that student.

Suspension

In School Suspension

Certain behaviors may warrant an in school suspension; not being safe to themselves or others, destruction of school property, leaving campus without permission, plagiarism, repeated disregard to school culture, norms and expectations.

Out of school Suspension

Certain behavior may be serious enough to require immediate suspension from school or to ensure a safe and orderly environment. Such behaviors that pose a clear and present physical and/or emotional threat to the rest of the school community include, but are not limited to: threats of violence, bomb scares, causing serious physical harm to another person, throwing objects that could hurt others, willfully destroying or defacing school or personal property (restitution must be made by the student), possession or use of illegal or dangerous substance (tobacco, alcoholic beverage, drugs, etc.), possession of a weapon, hazing or harassment. A re-entry meeting with parent/guardian will need to occur before student returns to school.

Expulsion

Some behaviors warrant expulsion. These behaviors may include fighting, threatening, and harassment, possession of weapons, the use of weapons, and other serious offenses. School administration will meet with student, parent/guardian, and LEA to determine if expulsion is the safest choice for all. “Appeals Process (discipline section). The program director makes all determinations related to discipline, including suspensions and expulsions. For suspensions, the program director notifies both students and parents/guardians with a phone call.

Parents/guardians of students on IEPs also receive a letter, a copy of which is sent to the LEA. A student and their parent/guardian must participate in a re-entry meeting before the student is welcomed back for classes. For expulsions, the program director contacts the LEAs before a decision is made to expel a student. Generally a meeting is conducted involving the LEA, the student and their parent/guardian along with the program director. Appeals for suspensions or expulsions are facilitated by the regional director. To request an appeal, students, LEAs or parent/guardians should contact the Program Director at 748-4424.

Special Education Students:

For students on an IEP, disciplinary measures that interfere with the implementation of the IEP will be referred to the IEP team for manifestation determination and program consideration.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is when a student uses other writer’s words as their own and does so without giving the writer credit for their work. Plagiarism is considered theft and is against federal law and school policy.

The following are examples of plagiarism:

- Not using quote marks around the authors words.
- Not giving credit for the material (citing the source)
- Using someone else’s video, photography, and audio work, is also examples of plagiarism.

There are two types of plagiarism, Deliberate and Accidental.

Deliberate Plagiarism is:

- Obvious copying of text
- Buying someone’s paper
- Getting someone to write the paper for you
- Falsifying sources
- Paraphrasing another’s ideas without citing the work.
- Students are not permitted to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to complete assignments or schoolwork unless explicitly approved by a teacher.

Accidental Plagiarism is:

- Poor translation of another’s work
- Incorrect citation, not knowing the correct citation style
- Quotations misplaced within own writing

- Forgetting to put quotation marks around direct quotes
- Students are not permitted to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to complete assignments or schoolwork unless explicitly approved by a teacher.

Cheating

- Using cheat sheets
- Copying from other's work
- Having someone else complete your assignment or test for you
- Students are not permitted to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to complete assignments or schoolwork unless explicitly approved by a teacher.

Consequences for plagiarism or cheating may result in the following:

- No credit for assignment
- Will be asked to redo assignment
- Removal from course
- Meeting with parents
- Suspension or expulsion

Classroom teachers, after consultation with school administration, will determine the appropriate consequence for plagiarism and cheating. If warranted, school administration may impose additional discipline measures, up to expulsion.

Bag and clothing checks

Students are eligible for bag checks for safety reasons. Random clothing checks will be done throughout the year or when there is a safety concern at the discretion of the Program Director or Assistant Director.

The Arlington School

Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students

I. Statement of Policy

The Arlington School, (hereinafter "Independent School") is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect.

It is the policy of the Independent School to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Harassment may also constitute a violation of Vermont's Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and/or Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972.

It is also the policy of the Independent School to prohibit the unlawful hazing and bullying of students. Conduct which constitutes hazing may be subject to civil penalties.

The Independent School shall address all complaints of harassment, hazing and bullying according to the procedures accompanying this policy, and shall take appropriate action against any person - subject to the jurisdiction of the board - who violates this policy. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a student for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment, bullying, or hazing as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the board's disciplinary policies or the school's code of conduct.

The Model Procedures are expressly incorporated by reference as though fully included within this Model Policy. The Model Procedures are separated from the policy for ease of use as may be required.

SECTION: INCIDENTS

Arlington School Bullying Prevention and Response Policy

Purpose

The Arlington School is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and therapeutic learning environment. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, and unsafe behaviors are not tolerated.

Because Arlington is a therapeutic school, all incidents are addressed using a trauma-informed, clinically guided approach. A Risk Assessment Team (RAT) is central to this process. The team ensures that incidents with elevated risk to self or others are evaluated promptly, safely, and with clinical oversight. The RAT collaborates with administration, clinicians, and outside providers as appropriate while supporting restorative interventions, skill-building, and safety planning.

Risk Assessment Team Membership:

- Director
- Assistant Director
- Restorative Justice Coordinator
- School Clinicians
- Special Educator (as needed)
- Outside providers (as needed)

Below is a brief overview. For the full policy please see attached which outlines behavioral expectations, reporting procedures, definitions, and the school's structured response to bullying and harassment.

1. Definitions

A. Bullying

Bullying is defined as **repeated or significant one-time behavior that causes harm or distress and involves an imbalance of power**, whether physical, social, emotional, or related to mental health or developmental needs.

Types of bullying include:

- Physical – hitting, pushing, property damage
- Verbal – threats, insults, name-calling
- Social/Relational – exclusion, gossip, manipulation
- Cyberbullying – online harassment, harmful posts, impersonation

Intent is not required for intervention; harm must be addressed even if behavior occurs during dysregulation.

B. Harassment

Harassment is **unwelcome conduct based on a protected characteristic** that creates a hostile, intimidating, or abusive environment. Protected characteristics include race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and others.

Harassment may include:

- Derogatory or discriminatory comments
- Threats or intimidation
- Sexual harassment
- Sharing offensive images or messages
- Exclusion or discrimination based on identity
- Sexual harassment, which means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, that includes sexual violence/sexual assault, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and includes situations when one or both of the following occur:
 - (i) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education, academic status, or progress; or
 - (ii) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.

Sexual harassment may also include student-on-student conduct or conduct of a non-employee third party that creates a hostile environment. A hostile environment exists where the harassing conduct is severe, persistent or pervasive so as to deny or limit the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program on the basis of sex.

- Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to cultural customs.
- Harassment of members of other protected categories, means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity and

includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.

Harassment may trigger **Title IX** or other legal reporting requirements.

C. Difference Between Bullying and Harassment

Bullying	Harassment
Harmful behavior with a power imbalance	Harmful behavior tied to a protected characteristic
Repeated or one serious incident	Single severe incident or repeated behavior
Not necessarily identity-based	Always identity-based
School therapeutic/disciplinary response	May also involve legal/Title IX procedures
Not always unlawful	Can violate civil rights or state/federal law

A behavior can be **both bullying and harassment**.

Constitutionally Protected Speech

It is the intent of NFI Vermont to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with student rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The purpose of this policy is to (1) prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person’s protected characteristics as defined below and that has the purpose or effect of substantially disrupting the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources or creates a hostile learning environment; (2) prohibit conduct intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate students in a manner as defined under this policy.

D. “Complaint” means an oral or written report information provided by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment or bullying.

E. “Complainant” means a student who has provided oral or written information about conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment or bullying, or a student who is the target of alleged hazing, harassment or bullying.

F. “Designated employee” means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of hazing, harassment and bullying pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. 570a(a)(7). The designated employees for each school building are identified in Appendix A of this policy.

G. “Employee” includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the NFI Vermont Schools, an agent of the school, a school board member, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, “agent of the school” includes supervisory union staff.

H. “Equity Coordinator” (or Designated Employee) is the person responsible for implementation of Title IX (regarding sex-based discrimination) and Title VI (regarding race-based discrimination) for the NFI Vermont Schools and for coordinating the NFI Vermont Schools compliance with Title IX and Title VI in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The Equity Coordinator (or Designated Employee) is also responsible for overseeing implementation of the NFI Vermont Schools *Preventing and Responding to Harassment of Students and Harassment of Employees* policies.

I. “Hazing” means any intentional, knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with others, against another student: In connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the educational institution; and

- (1) Which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, endangering the mental or physical health of the student.

Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extra-curricular, or military training program goals, provided that:

- (1) The goals are approved by the educational institution; and
- (2) The activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the educational institution, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.

With respect to Hazing, “**Student**” means any person who:

- (A) is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;
- (B) has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurs; or
- (C) intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after an official academic break.

J. “Notice” means a written complaint or oral information that hazing, harassment or bullying may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the hazing, harassment or bullying, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred. If the school learns of possible hazing, harassment or bullying through other means, for example, if information about hazing, harassment or bullying is received from a third party (such as from a witness to an incident or an anonymous letter or telephone call), different factors will affect the school’s response. These factors include the source and nature of the information; the seriousness of the alleged incident; the specificity of the information; the objectivity and credibility of the source of the report; whether any individuals can be identified who were subjected to the alleged harassment; and

whether those individuals want to pursue the matter. In addition, for purposes of violations of federal anti-discrimination laws, notice may occur when an employee of the NFI Vermont Schools, including any individual who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or responsibility, knows or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known about potential unlawful harassment or bullying.

K. “Organization” means a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or other similar group, whose members primarily are students at an educational institution, and which is affiliated with the educational institution.

L. “Pledging” means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an

M. “Retaliation” is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment, hazing or bullying or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, intimidation, and reprisal.

N. “School administrator” means an Executive Director, Regional Director, Director or their designee and/or the NFI Vermont Schools Designated Employees.

O. “Student Conduct Form” (or equivalent) is a form used by students, staff, or parents, to provide, in written form, information about inappropriate student behaviors that may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying.

New Policy 3/2025 for AOE School Designation. Reference AOE Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing, and Bullying of Students (2016). See Arlington School Policy and Procedure for further info- This is updated quarterly. Please see attached response policy for further information.

2. Schoolwide Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to:

1. Treat peers and staff with respect
2. Maintain personal boundaries
3. Communicate in safe, regulated ways
4. Seek adult support when distressed
5. Report unsafe behavior promptly

Staff actively teach emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and communication skills.

The Risk Assessment Team (RAT) may become involved proactively when patterns of concern are identified, even before a formal report, to prevent escalation.

3. Reporting Procedures

A. Students

Students may report bullying or harassment to:

- Any trusted staff member
- Clinician or therapist
- Advisor
- School administration
- Anonymous reporting form (if available)

B. Staff

All staff must:

1. Ensure immediate student safety
2. Listen without judgment
3. Validate the student's experience
4. Document the concern same day
5. Notify Administrator and Risk Assessment Team if risk indicators are present

Staff must be alert to warning signs that may require RAT evaluation, including severe aggression, threats, or self-harm.

4. School Response Procedures

A. Immediate Response

Upon receiving a report:

- Separate students if needed
- Provide support for regulation and emotional stabilization
- Engage clinicians
- Gather initial factual information

Alert the Risk Assessment Team if elevated risk is suspected

B. Formal Investigation

Administration and clinical staff will investigate within 48 hours, including:

- Interviews with reporting student
- Interviews with alleged aggressor (once regulated)
- Witness statements
- Review of digital evidence
- Consultation with clinical staff and RAT as needed

C. Determination

The school determines whether the behavior constitutes:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Both bullying and harassment
- Conflict
- Aggression linked to dysregulation
- Other behavioral concerns

The Risk Assessment Team may recommend additional safety measures, supervision adjustments, or clinical supports during this process.

5. Risk Assessment Team (RAT)

A. Purpose

The RAT ensures a coordinated, clinically guided response for incidents with potential safety concerns. It evaluates elevated-risk situations and ensures interventions support safety, therapeutic care, and accountability.

B. Membership

- Director
- Assistant Director
- Restorative Justice Coordinator
- School Clinicians
- Special Educator
- Outside providers (as needed)

C. Activation Criteria

The team may be activated for incidents involving:

- Threats of harm to self or others
- Severe emotional or behavioral dysregulation
- Escalating aggression
- Intimidation or coercion
- Suicidal ideation, self-harm, or emotional crisis
- Patterns of concerning behavior

D. Responsibilities

- Conduct structured risk assessments
- Develop or adjust safety plans
- Recommend clinical interventions
- Adjust supervision and environment
- Monitor risk and follow-up
- Communicate with families/providers as appropriate

RAT involvement complements disciplinary and restorative processes but does **not replace accountability**.

6. Interventions and Consequences

A. For the Student Engaging in Bullying or Harassment

May include:

- Clinical intervention
- Behavior or safety plan
- Restorative process (if safe and voluntary)

- Increased supervision
- Loss of privileges
- Adjusted schedule or transitions
- Social-emotional skill-building
- Suspension for serious/repeated incidents

RAT may recommend enhanced supervision or clinical follow-up.

B. For the Student Impacted

May include:

- Clinical counseling
- Safety planning
- Safe adults and spaces
- Schedule or transition adjustments
- Ongoing emotional support
- Optional restorative process

7. Restorative Practices

Used when safe, voluntary, and clinically appropriate:

- Restorative conversation
- Restorative circle
- Apology letter or reflection
- Collaborative repair activity

RAT may advise on restorative timing if safety or emotional readiness is a concern.

8. Safety Plans

Plans may include:

- Identified safe adults
- Safe spaces
- No-contact agreements
- Adjusted transitions
- Coping strategies
- Increased supervision

RAT may lead development or adjustments to safety plans for higher-risk situations.

9. Follow-Up and Monitoring

- **1-week follow-up**
- **30-day follow-up**
- Ongoing monitoring by staff, clinicians, administration, and RAT as needed

10. Confidentiality

Information is shared only with staff who need it to support student safety and therapeutic care.

11. Anti-Retaliation

Retaliation against reporters or participants is strictly prohibited and addressed immediately.

12. Parent/Guardian Communication

Parents/guardians are notified according to Arlington School procedures. Collaboration with outside providers may occur with proper consent.

APPENDIX A

Designated Employees:

The following employees of The Arlington School have been designated by the Independent School to receive complaints of bullying and/or harassment pursuant to this policy and 16 V.S.A. § 570a(a)(7) and 16 V.S.A. §570c(7) and under federal anti-discrimination laws;

Name: Denise Tomaselli

Title: Special Educator

Contact Information: 748-4424

Name: Brandi Wood

Title: Therapeutic Case Manager Contact Information: 748-4424

Equity Coordinator:

Michelle Richard, Program Director

802-748-4424

INTERNET SAFETY POLICY

For All NAFI/NFI Affiliated Schools

Introduction

This policy covers all schools that are affiliated with NAFI/NFI. Its purpose is to (a) prevent user access of its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material* via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

*Inappropriate Material: This includes but is not limited to: unlawful, threatening, abusive, harmful, malicious, obscene, pornographic, profane, libelous, defamatory, infringes any Intellectual Property Rights, constitutes or encourages a criminal offence or contains a virus, worm, Trojan horse or other harmful code, or may be damaging to any other person or body.

Access to Inappropriate Material

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet filters*") shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information.

* Internet filters: Block access to unwanted Internet content. Businesses can block content based on traffic type. For example, web access might be allowed, but file transfers may not. Content can also be blocked by site using lists of URLs cataloged by content that are updated frequently. Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors (*Inappropriate material).

Subject to staff supervision or approved persons, technology protection measures may be disabled or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bonafide research or other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the NAFI online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children’s Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called ‘hacking,’ and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

Education, Supervision and Monitoring

It is the responsibility of all NAFI staff members to educate, supervise and monitor usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy and the Children’s Internet protection Act. Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of NAFI Information Technologies Managers or designated representatives.

Adoption

NAFI adopted this Internet Safety Policy at a public meeting, following normal public notice, on xx.xx.2009.

TECHNOLOGY PROTECTION MEASURE

The term “technology protection measure” means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

1. OBSCENE, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
2. CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or Harmful to minors.

HARMFUL TO MINORS The term “harmful to minors” means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

1. Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
2. Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and

3. Taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

SEXUAL ACT; SEXUAL CONTACT The terms “sexual act” and “sexual contact” have the meanings given such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.

Graduation Requirements

All students must successfully complete 22 credits, including at minimum the following courses of instruction aligned with the Vermont Framework or comparable standards:

- Four credits of English language arts
- Three credits of Science
- Three credits of Mathematics
- Two credits of Social Studies
- One Credit of US History
- One credit of the Fine Arts
- One and a half credits of Physical Education
- One credit of Health
- Five and a half Elective credits

Any additional requirements established specifically by The Arlington School and/or sending school district as outlines in a student Individual Education Plan, (IEP).

Grading

Grades are as follows:

A	90-100	Indicates superior achievement
B	80-89	Indicates better-than-average achievement
C	70-79	Indicates average achievements
D	60-69	Indicates below average achievement but enough to award credit
F	59	Indicates significantly below average achievement and no credit will be awarded
P	Pass	Credit awarded
I	Incomplete	No credit awarded until work is completed

*Credit will be awarded per quarter

Any work turned in after the marking period will not be accepted unless approved ahead of time by Program Director, teacher and where applicable, special educator.

Grades will be based on the following:

Electives

50% participation
50% classwork

Core Courses

33% participation
33% classwork
33% assessments

Honor Roll:

80 and above in all classes
Have to attend school more than half of the quarter (23 days or more)
Have to earn a P in SEL

High Honors:

90 and above in all classes
Have to attend school more than half of the quarter (23 days or more)
Have to earn a P in SEL

Attendance Philosophy:

The purpose of this policy is to assure that students and their families have support in ensuring attendance at school. School attendance is critical to successful school performance. Being present and on-time is an important life skill to be cultivated.

Mandatory Study Hall

Freshmen:

All freshmen will be assigned to study hall daily. If a student is absent or does not complete work for a class, this will be recorded in the tracker, and the assignment will either be sent with the student or provided to us to complete during study hall. If a student refuses to complete assigned work during study hall, this will be documented in the tracker/log.

Upperclassmen:

If a student misses more than one day of a class, they will automatically be assigned to Friday study hall for each class subject missed. Classroom teachers will be responsible for providing a general, appropriately leveled assignment for study hall staff to give the student. This will help address situations where students report they cannot complete work due to absence and not understanding the expectation of the assignment.

Students assigned to Friday study hall will remain for one full block unless they complete assignments for all required classes. Assignments will be prioritized based on the classes in which the student has the lowest grade

Truancy Policy:

33 V.S.As 632 (12)

A child may be found in need of state care or supervision if the child is repeatedly and without cause truant from school.

The Arlington School expectation of families regarding tardiness and truancy:

It is shared responsibility to be sure that every child is safe and accounted for on every school day. A student is considered tardy if they arrive later than 8:20a.m. If your child is absent from school, it is essential that you notify the school prior to 9:00 a.m. Please inform the school of scheduled appointments that have been made during the school day.

Compulsory Attendance 16 V.S.S.s 1121

A person having control of a child between the ages of six and sixteen shall cause the child to attend an approved public school, an approved or recognized independent school or a home study program for the full number of days, unless the child: Is mentally or physically unable to attend; or has completed the tenth grade; or is excused by the superintendent or majority of the school directors as provided in this chapter, or is enrolled in and attending a postsecondary school, as defined in subdivision 176(b) (1) of this title, which is approved or accredited in Vermont or another state.

Excused Absences

Regular attendance is basic success in high school. Absences are excused for the following reasons:

- Personal illness, verified by parent or guardian- if student will be out longer than 3 days, a dr. note must be provided in order for this to be excused.
- Serious illness of a family member
- Chronic illness, verified by physician
- Prolonged illness (more than 8 days) verified by physician
- Bereavement
- Appointments with medical doctors/dentist that cannot be scheduled after school
- Prearranged absences verified in advance by a parent/guardian and approved by Administration
- Please send in a note explaining why your child is absent

Unexcused Absences

Absences which are not due to the above reasons. Also leaving school without authorization is considered an unexcused absence for that day. Once a student leaves the school for the day they will not be allowed back in the building, unless they have a standing appointment and can produce a note.

Reporting your child absent

Be sure to call school first thing in the morning to let us know why your child will not be in school. Follow up with a written note within 2 days. If we do not receive a call and a note it will be considered an unexcused absence.

All students are allowed up to 10 excused absences for the school year. However, the hours will need to be made up after school or with homework being sent home. Students are responsible for making a plan with their teachers on how this work will be made up.

Unexcused Absences

After TEN absent days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letter is sent home to parent/guardian.• A copy of the letter will be sent to the student's home school district to the student service director• A parent/ guardian meeting will be scheduled with school personnel, and regional director• The loss of academic policy will be reviewed with the parent and student.• Student will write an essay on the consequences that continued absences will have on their academic and life success.
After FIFTEEN absent days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letter is sent to parent/guardian requesting an immediate meeting.• A copy of the letter will be sent to the student's home school district, which includes the superintendent and the student service director. They will also be invited to the meeting.• A referral will be made to DCF (Department of Children and Families)• A copy of letter goes to the Caledonia States Attorney. The States Attorney makes the decision whether the case should go to the Caledonia County Court or District Court. Depending on the court's decision the family could face a fine of \$1000.00 or they could develop another alternative sanction, which could mean the family is court-ordered to be involved with The Department of Children and Family (DCF).
After Twenty Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letter is sent to parent/guardian requesting an immediate meeting.• A copy of the letter will be sent to the student's home school district, which includes the superintendent and the student service director. They will also be invited to the meeting.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A meeting will be held to discuss the suitability of the student's placement at The Arlington School.
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Loss of course credit

The Arlington School reserves the right to impose academic penalties for absences. After ten absences in a single semester a student may lose credit for that course unless there are circumstances beyond the student's control which can be discussed with the program director. Also, excessive absences may lead to discussion with the sending school district to discuss placement.

Tardiness

Students must arrive by 8:00a.m. If a student arrives after this time they will be marked tardy and they will be marked absent from their first class. It is the student's responsibility to work with their teacher to make up time missed. Parents MUST report their child tardy in order for it to be excused. If tardiness is a reoccurrence, a meeting will be held and a plan put in place to ensure student timeliness.

Emergencies

In case of an emergency in which you need to contact your child immediately, please call the school at (802) 748-4424 x2300. If there is no answer, please leave message.

Enrollment Policy

Students who are not enrolled in another educational institution may enroll in The Arlington School until October 1st, for the fall semester and until February 1st for the spring semester, cases will be reviewed on an individual basis and plans will be established to make-up any missed work. Missed work must be completed by the end of the semester in which a student enrolls and will include after school tutorial time. Students who are enrolled in another school can transition into The Arlington School any time during the school year.

Meals

Breakfast and lunches are provided free at The Arlington School if a family completes a free and reduced hot lunch application. If your child has special dietary needs, please let us know so that we can make special arrangements. Students are welcome to pack their own lunches if they wish. A hot lunch menu is posted monthly so students can decide ahead of time if they wish to bring their own lunch on specific days. Students and staff are responsible for the cleanliness, set, and clean-up meals. Breakfast is served from 7:40am-7:55am; students arriving after this time should plan to eat breakfast at home. Lunch is served from 11:40am-12:20pm (M-Th) & 11:30-12:00 Fridays. Students will not be served lunch before or after this time unless special arrangements have been made.

Medications

In order to ensure the safety of all students, medications are to be hand delivered by parent or guardian to the Program Director or Administrative Assistant. Medications need to be in the original bottle, which was given by the pharmacy. Bottle labels need to clearly state the name,

dosage requirements and prescribing physician. We do not accept medication handed to us by students, nor do we give weekend medications directly to a student. Designated staff will assist students in the self-administering of medications. Staff and students both sign off on a medication sheet to record the date and time the medication was given. Discontinued medication is disposed of properly by staff. Refused medications are noted in our records and parents are notified.

Phone Calls

Students may use the phone for emergency use or if they need to check in with a family member. Phone calls will be supported by staff. Staff will assist in passing incoming messages onto students.

Personal Belongings

Personal belongings will be locked in the closet during the day. Students may access cell phones and personal items at certain times of the day. If students bring backpacks or purses to school they are subject to be searched prior to being brought into the building for safety purposes. Although the Arlington School will make every effort to keep items safe, we cannot fully guarantee their security. The Arlington School will not reimburse students for lost or stolen personal belongings or money.

Computer Use

The use of The Arlington School's technology resources is a privilege—not a right. Students will be given login credentials for their use and may not share use with other students. Inappropriate use can result in restriction or cancellation of access privileges. Commonly accepted guidelines for developmentally appropriate skills will be used in determining access levels.

Student Responsibilities—Responsible student users of The Arlington School technology resources may not:

- Interfere with the normal and proper operation of this technology or the Internet.
- Adversely affect the ability of others to use our equipment or services.
- Conduct themselves in ways that are harmful or deliberately offensive to others.

Behaviors that can result in restriction or revocation of access rights include, but are not limited to:

- Involvement in any activity prohibited by law.
- Downloading files without prior authorization, or changing computer files that do not belong to the user.
- Usage of personal e-mail accounts or web pages, (including facebook.com).
- Involvement in online games and chat rooms.
- Storing or transferring obscene materials.
- Transferring chain letters.

Copyrighted & Other Proprietary Materials

All users shall respect copyright and proprietary interest of any materials accessed by the school technology resources. Copying protected materials is an offense subject to criminal and civil prosecution.

Visitors

Parents and guardians are welcomed at The Arlington School. All unrelated student visitors are not permitted on school grounds. If a student will be picked up from someone not on their emergency list, please call the school or send in a note with your child. Former Arlington School students should make an appointment to visit faculty.



Parents and Students

We hope that this handbook will be helpful as a guide in understanding our schools' policies, philosophy, and mission. If you have any concerns or questions, we are always available to address them with you, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to working with you and your family.