



RSU 16 Student Handbook

2023-2024

Our mission is to prepare and support all students within a culture of excellence to do their best and to be their best, so that each can be a successful, contributing citizen, able to adapt to change and to successfully respond to the future.

Poland Regional High School
Whittier Middle School ❖ Minot Consolidated
School
Elm Street School ❖ Poland Community School

RSU 16
Superintendent Office
3 Aggregate Road
Poland, ME 04274
207-998-2727

<https://www.rsu16.org/>
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District Information

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tsanders@rsu16.org

Assistant Superintendent: Amy Hediger

ahediger@rsu16.org

Director of Special Services: Jo St Peter-Scott

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Director of Transportation: Stewart Mason

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Co-Curricula and Athletic Director: Don King

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Director of Technology: Linda Chaisson

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School Board Members

Please view [this link](#) on our webpage to learn about our school board members

School Information

<p>Poland Regional High School 1457 Maine Street, Poland, ME 04274 (207) 998-5400, (207) 998-5060 (Fax) https://www.rsu16.org/prhs School Office Hours: 7:00 – 4:00 School Hours: 7:40 – 2:10 (1:10 on Wednesdays)</p>	<p>Whittier Middle School 1457 Maine Street, Poland, ME 04274 (207) 998-3462, (207) 998-3481 (Fax) https://www.rsu16.org/bwms School Office Hours: 7:00 – 3:30 School Hours: 7:40 – 2:10 (1:10 on Wednesdays)</p>
<p>Elm Street School 129 Elm Street Mechanic Falls, ME 04256 (207) 345-3382, (207) 346-6264 (fax) https://www.rsu16.org/ess/index School Office Hours: 7:30-4:00 School Hours: 8:30 - 3:15 (2:15 on Wednesdays)</p>	<p>Minot Consolidated School 23 Shaw Hill Road Minot, ME 04258 (207) 346-6471, (207) 345-9535 (Fax) https://www.rsu16.org/mcs Office Hours: 8:00 – 4:00 School Hours: 8:30 – 3:15 (2:15 on Wednesdays)</p>
<p>Poland Community School 1250 Maine Street Poland, Maine 04274 (207) 998-4915, (207) 998-4998 (Fax) https://www.rsu16.org/pcs School Office Hours: 8:00 – 4:30 School Hours: 8:30 – 3:15 (2:15 on Wednesdays)</p>	

Purpose of Handbook

This student handbook is intended to provide you with general information about our schools, your rights as a student in our schools, and guidelines regarding our operating procedures. We hope that you will find this information useful. While we believe this handbook is comprehensive in nature, please do not hesitate to contact your school administration to clarify any information provided here or anything you believe is missing.

This student/parent handbook is updated regularly but there may be items in this handbook which conflict with district policy. In these cases, district policy supersedes information in this handbook and governs any and all procedures and decision making.

Affirmative Action/Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of RSU 16 to ensure equal employment/educational opportunities and affirmative action regardless of race, sex, orientation, color, national origin, marital status, religion, age or disability in accordance with all federal and state legislation. Affirmative Action officer for RSU 16 : Stacie Field, 998-2727 x102, sfield@rsu16.org.

AI Plagiarism

Students shall not engage in AI plagiarism, which refers to the use of artificial intelligence or automated tools to generate or produce academic work without proper attribution or authorization. AI plagiarism includes but is not limited to, the use of AI-based text generation models to copy, paraphrase, or present someone else's work as their own, without proper citation or acknowledgement.

Examples of AI plagiarism include utilizing AI language models, such as chatbots or essay generators, to create essays, assignments, or any other academic content without sufficient originality or proper citation. Students are expected to uphold the principles of academic integrity, which include the use of their own ideas, proper research and citation practices, and the acknowledgment of external sources.

Students found in violation may face disciplinary actions, including but not limited to academic penalties, loss of credit, and/or other consequences as determined by the school administration.

Attendance

Attendance at school is an essential factor in promoting student achievement. Continued absence from school will affect a student's academic progress.

1. Students are expected to be in school, all day, every day, and on time. The school day begins at **7:40 am at the high school and middle school and 8:45 at the elementary schools.**
2. Parents are asked to call the school (preferred method) or email the School Secretary (accepted alternate method) for all absences, tardies, and dismissals or send a note.
3. Notes and calls from home must be received within 48 hours to excuse tardies and absences.
4. Any student arriving late must report to the Main Office for attendance.
5. If absent, students are responsible for meeting with their teacher(s) and making up any missed work. Generally, work deadlines are extended one day for each day of absence.
6. Absence from school means that the student may not participate in any co-curricular activities that day unless granted special permission by school administration.

By state law, an absence is excused for one of these reasons **ONLY**: personal illness, but please remember that an illness resulting in three or more consecutive missed days may require a medical note for the absence to continue to be excused; an appointment with a health professional that must be made during the regular school day; observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day; a family

emergency; or a planned absence for a personal or educational purpose which has been pre-approved by administration. Consequences for unexcused absences will be determined by the school administration and in consultation with other school personnel.

Planned absences

RSU 16 recognizes that planned absences for family vacations or other recreational activities are important and will support students missing school for such events. Up to, but no more than five (5) days absent from school will be excused each year for such experiences. These absences must be planned and pre-approved by administration. Additionally, it is the expectation of the district that students complete missing school work in a reasonable time.

Tuancy

There are six different truancy thresholds:

1. A student who has completed 6th grade but is not yet 17 and has 10 or more cumulative unexcused absences.
2. A student who has completed 6th grade but is not yet 17 and has 7 or more consecutive unexcused absences.
3. A student aged 6 or above who hasn't completed 6th grade and has 7 or more cumulative unexcused absences.
4. A student aged 6 or above who hasn't completed 6th grade and has 5 or more consecutive unexcused absences
5. A student at least 5 years of age and not yet 6 years of age and has NOT completed grade 6, has been enrolled in public school and has not been withdrawn, and has 7 cumulative unexcused absences.
6. A student at least 5 years of age and not yet 6 years of age and has NOT completed grade 6, has been enrolled in public school and has not been withdrawn, and has 5 consecutive unexcused absences.

The truancy resolution levels are followed sequentially and the specific truancy resolution steps that must be followed are:

- Superintendent notified ([MRSA 20A 5051-A 2A-1](#))
- Designated school personnel to develop an intervention plan to address absences ([MRSA 20A 5051-A 2A-2](#))
- Official Parent Notification ([MRSA 20A 5051-A 2C](#))
- Superintendent notifies school board ([MRSA 20A 5051-A 2F](#))
- Parent meeting scheduled ([MRSA 20A 5051-A 2D](#))
- Notification to local law enforcement ([MRSA 20A 5051-A 2E](#))

Chronic Absenteeism

Students who are chronically absent (missing more than 10% of the days they are enrolled of the school year) will be referred to our student services team. Family meetings and support

plans may be utilized to try to improve student attendance. Chronic Absenteeism includes both excused and unexcused absences.

Tardiness and dismissals

All tardies and dismissals are unexcused unless they meet the State definition for excused absences as listed previously. If the tardies and dismissals are consecutive, as outlined above in the six truancy thresholds, then a student will be considered truant. Arriving late to school on a regular basis is disruptive to the learning environment and may prompt a meeting with school administration to address this problem.

Behavioral Threat Assessment Management

Behavioral Threat Assessment Management (BTAM) is a fact-based, investigative approach to evaluate threats and determine how likely a person is to carry out a threat of violence. By investigating, gathering facts, and assessing threats, the Behavioral Threat Assessment Management Team can do four important tasks:

- 1. Identify persons of concern:** This could be an individual at risk for violence against themselves or others. Keep in mind that these individuals may be any type of school stakeholder including, a student, staff member, parent, or community member.
- 2. Gather information/investigate:** Avoid focusing on a single factor. Consider interactions between the person, the situation, and the setting using multiple data sources.
- 3. Assess person and situation:** How concerned should we be about this individual? Be mindful of where the individual falls on the pathway to violence — ideation, planning, preparation, or implementation.
- 4. Manage the person/situation:** What are we going to do about it? How is the school or any other agency providing appropriate support and interventions? Are we taking necessary steps to deter the individual from engaging in violence?

Any behavior that you feel poses a threat of harm to others. This can include direct or indirect threats, concerning behaviors, social media posts, or any other action that causes concern. The best way to report concerning behaviors is by reaching out to your school administrator, counseling team, school resource officer or through RSU 16's Tip Line on our website about your concerns.

Bomb Threats

Bomb threats violate Board of Education policy as well as state and federal law. Making a bomb threat is both a civil violation and a crime under Maine law. Any student suspected of making a threat shall be reported to law enforcement authorities for investigation and possible prosecution. The administration may suspend and/or recommend expulsion for any student who makes a threat. In addition, bomb threats are an extreme disruption of the educational process. Any student who fails to report information or knowledge of a bomb and/or toxic or hazardous materials threat or the existence of a bomb, or other destructive device, in a school building or

on school property may be subject to disciplinary consequences, which may include suspension and/or expulsion. For the full policy, please see [EBCC Bomb Threats](#) on the district website.

Books, School Materials

The [Maine Learning Results](#), approved by the Maine Legislature, articulates goals for all Maine students to be “a responsible and informed citizen” and “an integrated and informed thinker.” Access to and choice of a wide range of reading material are vital to developing perspectives and insights that prepare students for participation in a global society. Students are assigned specific textbooks and learning materials for their educational programming. It is expected that each student will care for these materials and return them in good condition. If a textbook or library book is lost or damaged, parents/caregivers and the student are responsible to pay the replacement cost. Parents/caregivers have every right to limit the reading choices of their own child but do not have the right to limit the reading choices of all students. If a parent/caregiver wishes to restrict their own child’s access to a book that is part of the curriculum, please follow [Board Policy IMBB](#).

Bullying

All students have the right to attend public schools that are safe and secure learning environments. It is the intent of the RSU 16 School Board to provide all students with an equitable opportunity to learn. To that end, the Board has a significant interest in providing a safe, orderly, and respectful school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. Bullying is detrimental to the school environment and student’s learning, achievement and well being. It interferes with the mission of the schools to educate their students and disrupts the operations of the schools. Bullying affects not only students who are targets but also those who participate and witness such behavior. These behaviors must be addressed to ensure student safety and an inclusive learning environment. The administration in each of our schools does not condone and will take action in response to conduct that interferes with students’ opportunity to learn, the educational mission of the RSU 16 schools and the operation of the schools. Please reference the RSU16 board policy on the district website (JICK [Bullying and Cyberbullying in Schools](#)) for more information.

Bullying behavior, as established by state law, includes, but is not limited to, a written, oral or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a student or students that:

- 1) Has, or a reasonable person would expect it to have, the effect of:
 - a) Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property.
 - b) Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to the student's property;
- 2) Interferes with the rights of a student by:
 - a) Creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment for the student.
 - b) Interfering with the student's academic performance or ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by a school.

- 3) Is based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, or any other distinguishing characteristic, or is based on a student's association with a person with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

Students who are believed to have been bullied or are aware of incidents of bullying are strongly encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or school administrator.

Parents and other adults who believe that an incident of bullying has occurred are encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or school administrator.

Below are some terms that may help parents to identify if children are having conflicts with peers, displaying mean behavior, or are displaying bullying behavior.

- **Peer Conflict:** Conflict between and among peers is a natural part of growing up. Children will have times when they disagree and can't solve their own problems. They may even become so frustrated that they say mean things or act out physically. If it's peer conflict you will be aware that these children: usually choose to play or hang out together; have equal power (similar age, size, social status, etc.); are equally upset; are both interested in the outcome; will be able to work things out with adult help (after calming down).
- **Mean Behavior:** Children may try out behavior to assert themselves – sometimes saying or doing mean things – such as making fun of others, using a hurtful name, taking something without permission, leaving a child out, or “cutting” in line. If it is mean behavior, usually: it is not planned and seems to happen spontaneously or by chance; it may be aimed at any child nearby; the child being mean may feel badly when an adult points out the harm they've caused.
- **Bullying Behavior:** Bullying is serious behavior that has three key features – all three must be present for the situation to be considered bullying:
 - Power imbalance -- One child clearly has power over the other(s), which may be due to age, size, social status, and so on.
 - Intention to harm -- The purpose of the bullying behavior is to harm or hurt other(s) – it's intended to be mean and is clearly not accidental.
 - Repeated over time or a single significant event -- bullying behavior may continue over time, and get worse with repetition. There is a real or implied threat that the behavior will not stop, and in fact will become even more serious. Bullying can also happen with a single significant event that is threatening and meets the definition of bullying.

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Use

Cell phones and other electronic devices may not be used in any manner that disrupts the instructional process or violates Board policies or school rules. RSU 16 shall not be responsible

for the loss, theft or damage to cell phones or other electronic devices that students bring with them to school or school activities or use on school transportation.

The following provisions apply to student use of cell phones and other electronic devices: Students are prohibited from using privately-owned, personal electronic devices including, but not limited to cell phones, “smart phones,” “smart watches,” electronic devices, MP3/iPods players, handheld computers/PDAs, and electronic games at school or at school activities except when the teacher or building principal authorizes use for a specific educational, health or safety purpose. School administrators may designate appropriate times and places during which electronic devices and other listening devices may be used (e.g., during lunch periods, study halls, or on school buses traveling to school activities).

Student use of cameras, and other recording devices, is strictly prohibited in locker rooms, bathrooms, and other places where privacy is generally expected. In all other school locations, permission must be granted before photographing/videoing/recording another person during the school day and at school sponsored events.

The use of a cell phone or other electronic device in any manner that violates Board policy or school rules is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, harassment, cheating and violations of the student code of conduct. If a Board policy or school rule is violated, the teacher or school administrator may confiscate the device for the remainder of the school day. Student cell phones and other electronic devices may be subject to search if there is reasonable suspicion of a violation.

Students who violate Board policy or school rules will be subject to disciplinary consequences which may include:

1. Confiscation of the device until the end of the school day;
2. A conference with the student’s parent/guardian;
3. Exclusion of the device from school for an extended period of time;
4. Penalties up to suspension or expulsion from school, depending upon the nature and circumstances of the violation and the student’s prior disciplinary record; and
5. Referral to law enforcement.

Dress Code

Clothing, including jewelry and other accessories, is expected to be appropriate for the learning environment. It should strengthen school spirit and pride and focus attention upon learning and away from distractions. Immodest clothing is not acceptable.

- Clothing that openly exposes a student’s back, midriff, rear end, chest hair, shoulders, bra straps, or underwear is unacceptable.
- Tank tops are acceptable with straps wide enough to cover undergarments.
- Sheer shirts that reveal a student’s back, midriff, chest hair, shoulders, or underwear are not acceptable.

- Length of skirts and shorts must provide appropriate coverage.
- Clothing, including face coverings, advertising, depicting, featuring, or referring to alcohol, tobacco, weaponry, violence, drugs or profanity is not allowed. Racist, sexist, or otherwise harassing material is also not allowed.
- Clothing that causes disruption to the learning environment is not allowed. School administration reserves the right to determine whether clothing is disruptive.
- Clothing that presents a safety concern, such as shoes with wheels in the soles, high heels or large chains on clothing or worn around the neck, or that causes maintenance problems, such as cleats, shoes that scratch floors, are not allowed.

Students not wearing acceptable attire will be reminded and given the opportunity to change into acceptable attire. Parents will be contacted if there is an ongoing issue with appropriate attire. Final determination for appropriate dress is at the discretion of administration.

Drugs/Alcohol Use and Possession

Students are prohibited from consuming, possessing, furnishing, selling, receiving, buying, manufacturing, offering or being under the influence of prohibited substances in all of the following circumstances:

- Before, during and after school hours, at school, in any school building, on any school premises;
- In any school-owned vehicle or in any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities;
- Off school property at any school-sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function (such as a field trip or an athletic event) where students are under the jurisdiction of the school unit;
- Or at any time or place if the conduct directly interferes with the operation, discipline or welfare of the schools.

While at school or during any school activity, students are also prohibited from offering or accepting to furnish, sell, receive or buy prohibited substances at a location off school premises. Students are prohibited from wearing at school or school-related functions any article of clothing or product (such as T-shirts, hats, pins, etc.) that advertises, promotes, or references the use of prohibited substances.

Advertising of prohibited substances in school buildings, at school functions, on school owned property and in school publications is prohibited.

In determining the level of discipline for violations of this policy, the administration will consider any relevant facts and circumstances, including but not limited to the nature of the violation, the student's grade level, the student's behavior accompanying the violation, the student's willingness to cooperate with the investigation, the student's prior disciplinary record and any

action plan developed with the Substance Abuse Counselor and/or Student Services Team. All disciplinary consequences include referral to a substance abuse counselor.

Enrollment

Parents/guardians wishing to enroll their child in RSU 16 schools are required to provide immunization records, birth certificate and verification of residency in Mechanic Falls, Minot or Poland. Please contact the office for appropriate registration forms. If a student transfers to another school, the new school will contact us to send the child's records. It is helpful for parents/guardians to let us know in advance that their child will be transferring to another school. This will allow us to send records in a timely manner and plan appropriate closure for the child.

When a student enrolls in our school district, we will review their school records and previous school experience to determine appropriate placement in our schools. Considerations will include class size and student needs.

Field Trips

The school will provide permission slips for all field trips and students must return signed permission slips to participate in field trips. Phone call notifications from parents/guardians will not be accepted. Parental notification of a trip is sufficient only for the following exceptions: trips that occur within the district, with students traveling school to school; trips that involve an entire grade level for a curriculum related event; trips that are regularly scheduled as part of a particular educational program. The schools will provide adequate supervision during the trip to maintain discipline and safety and to respond to emergencies; and students participating in field trips are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with RSU 16 School Board policies and school rules. [Policy IJOA](#)

Graduation Requirements (HS Only)

Learning Area	Courses that must be successfully completed in order to demonstrate graduation level competency
English	English II and two other English credits: English III, Senior English, AP English Literature, AP English Language, dual enrollment/college English
Social Studies	Global Studies, U.S. History (US I and II or AP US), Comparative Government and Economics or AP Government and 3.5 credits
Math	Integrated Math 4
Science	Physical Science, Biology and Introduction to Chemistry or Chemistry
Learning Area	Other requirements

English, Math, Science	4 total credits in each of these learning areas
Visual/Performing Arts	1 credit of Visual and Performing Arts
Physical Education & Health	.5 credit Health, 1 credit Physical Education electives (at least one course with the personal fitness plan standard)
Technology	1 credit in Technology

Addition Requirements and Notes

- **24 course credits** and **4 Roundtable credits** are required for graduation. The typical number of credits earned from all required courses is 20.
- All students must pass **Roundtable** each year, including the **Freshman Roundtable Project**, the **Sophomore Exhibition**, the **Junior Career Portfolio** and the **Senior Celebration**.
- Students may earn credit toward graduation for completing an approved equivalent to one or more of the requirements listed above.
- Participate in state mandated testing.

In order to participate in the formal graduation ceremony with their class, it is expected that all students complete the graduation requirements listed in the policy AND pay all outstanding fees, charges, and debts incurred through the school or the district.

Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Harassment of any individual within the community is unacceptable. Harassment complaints should be immediately directed to a school administrator. For details, see the district policy, [ACAA Harassment & Sexual Harassment of Students](#).

Harassment of students because of, or the perception of, race, color, sex, religion, ancestry or national origin, sexual orientation, or disability is prohibited. Such conduct is a violation of the RSU 16 School Board policy and may constitute illegal discrimination under State and Federal laws.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, verbal abuse based on race, color, sex, religion, ancestry or national origin, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment that rises to the level of physical assault, battery and/or abuse is also addressed in the RSU 16 policy [JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety](#).

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or pressure to engage in sexual activity, physical contact of a sexual nature, gestures, comments, or other physical, written or verbal conduct that is gender-based that interferes with a student’s education. School employees, fellow students, volunteers and visitors to the school, and other persons with whom students may interact in order to pursue school activities are required to refrain from such conduct.

Harassment is considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. Harassment of students by district employees is considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. If criminal action is involved, the case will be referred to law enforcement.

Complaint procedure for Harassment

Any student who believes they have been discriminated against or harassed should report their concern promptly to the building principal. Students who are unsure whether discrimination or harassment has occurred are encouraged to discuss the situation with the building principal. School staff is expected to report possible incidents of discrimination or harassment of students. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report any concerns about possible discrimination or harassment of students. Students and others will not be retaliated against for making a complaint. Any retaliation by students or school staff will result in disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion or dismissal. Students are encouraged to utilize the school unit's complaint procedure.

For complaints by students: [ACAA-R Student Discrimination or Harassment Complaint Procedure](#)

However, students are hereby notified that they also have the right to report complaints to the Maine Human Rights Commission, 51 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333 (telephone: 207-624-6050) and/or to the federal office for Civil Rights, Regional Director, U.S. Department of Education, SW McCormack POCH Room 222, Boston, MA 02109- 4557 (telephone: 617-223-9622). Formal complaints under this policy must be made in writing.

Hazing

RSU 16 is committed to the personal development of each student in our academic programs, including our extra- and co-curricular programs. RSU 16 is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all participants, coaches, and supporters. As a result, we unequivocally oppose any situation created intentionally to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule to any person.

RSU 16 defines hazing as any act, whether physical, mental, emotional, or psychological, which subjects another person, voluntarily or involuntarily, to anything that may abuse, mistreat, degrade, humiliate, harass, or intimidate them, or which may in any fashion compromise their dignity as a person. Reported incidents will be investigated promptly and in a manner that protects the rights of the person filing the complaint, the person complained against, and the school. Student-athletes who participate in such actions will be subject to discipline by the coach and/or athletic administrator.

In the case of an organization affiliated with this School unit that authorizes hazing, penalties may include rescission of permission for that organization to operate on school property or to receive any other benefit of affiliation with the school unit.

Persons not associated with this school unit who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to ejection from school property and/or other measures as may be available under the law.

Immunizations

All children attending a public or private school in Maine, including homeschool students that participate in any extra curricular activities a public school, MUST have the following immunizations:

A minimum required for PK entry:

- 4 DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)
- 3 Polio
- 1 MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- 1 Varicella (chickenpox)

A minimum required for Kindergarten entry:

- 5 DTaP (4 DTaP if 4th is given on or after 4th birthday)
- 4 Polio (3 Polio if the 3rd is given on or after the 4th birthday)
- 2 MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- 2 Varicella (chickenpox) or reliable history of disease

Required for 7th grade entry:

- 1 Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis)
- 1 Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (MCV4)

Required for 12th grade entry:

- 2 MCV4, only one dose is required if the 1st dose is given on or after 16th birthday

Each immunization entry must include:

- Vaccine type, date, administered and the name of the provider

Please note that effective 2021/2022 school year only medical exemptions will be allowed per Maine Law LD798.

Laptops

RSU 16 is committed to preparing our students for a digital world. We provide all students in **grades PK-12** access to a school-issued laptop to ensure our students have equal access to digital resources.

All Students pay a yearly use fee that funds a district self-insurance fund. Any damage to a student laptop will be investigated to determine if the damage was the result of an accident or negligence. Accidental damage will be covered by the self-insurance fund provides money to repair the laptop at no cost to the student. Students must pay \$100 to defray the cost of repairs

due to negligence. The district reserves the right to require payment for the full cost of repairs and/or replacement in cases of extreme negligence, vandalism or multiple incidences of damage.

[Policies: IJNDB-C; IJNDB; INJB-R](#)

Medications in School

RSU 16 is committed to ensuring the safety of all students who may require medication at school. See policy [JLCD](#). Whenever possible, students should be given medication at home outside of the school day. To ensure safe practice, this medication policy was developed with the intention of keeping students requiring essential medications in school without placing undue burden upon those responsible for their care. Medication must be delivered by a parent/guardian. For prescription medication to be administered, in addition to parent/guardian consent, the physician should concur that the administration of a medication during school hours is necessary for the health of the student.

If it is necessary for your child to take medication during the school day, please be advised that the school board policy outlines limitations in this matter:

- 1. Students may not transport any medication to or from school.**
2. Students may not self medicate or provide medications to other students.
3. No over-the-counter-medication is allowed at school unless brought to school and administered by the parent/guardian.
- 4. All prescription medication must be brought to school by the parent/guardian in the original container or it will not be administered.** The following information must be on the container: the name of the child, the name of the medication, when the medicine is to be administered, and the number of days to be taken. If you request a second container from your pharmacy, they will provide one at no cost to you. Parents/guardians as well as your child's physician are required to complete a medication permission form. This procedure applies to both prescription and over the counter drugs. Due to possible adverse reactions, the first dose of any medication should be given at home, at least 12 hours prior to the child coming to school.
- 5. All prescription medication must be kept in the nurse's office.** Please understand it is the child's responsibility to remember to come to the nurse's office to take the medication. A log of students taking medicine will be kept.
6. By asking the school to administer medication to students, the parent acknowledges and agrees that unlicensed personnel may administer the medication.
7. If your child needs cough drops, please send a note to the teacher giving permission for your child to take them.

Over the counter medications not listed on the Standing Orders list will be treated as medications needing labeled containers, a medication form completed (by the parent/guardian and physician), and brought in by an adult. Parents/Guardians must sign a new permission form each year for standing order medications to be administered at school. Parents/Guardians are responsible for removing the medications from school once a medication has been discontinued, or at the end of the school year. Medications left in the clinic after students are dismissed on the last day of school will be discarded.

A copy of [the policy](#) and [appropriate forms](#) are available in the nurse's office.

Personal Property

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing personal items of value to school. Students should not have large quantities of money. Personal items that become a distraction may be confiscated and returned to a parent. The school is not responsible for the theft of personal items.

Pest Management Notification

Pest Control

Because pesticides pose risks, the school uses an alternative approach to merely applying pesticides. Control of insects, rodents, and weeds at our school focuses on making the school buildings and grounds an unfavorable place for pests to live and breed. Through maintenance and cleaning, we will reduce or eliminate available food and water sources and hiding places for the pests. We will also routinely monitor the school area to detect pest problems and prevent the pests from becoming established. Some techniques we will use include pest monitoring, sanitation, pest exclusion, proper food storage, pest removal, and—as a last resort—pesticides. This holistic approach is often called integrated pest management (IPM).

Pesticide Use

Sometimes pesticide use may be necessary to control a pest problem. When that happens, the school will use a licensed contractor specialized in such applications and will recommend the lowest risk products available. If higher risk pesticides must be used, notices will be posted at application sites in accordance with Board Policies ECB and ECB-E2.

Your Right to Know

Parents, legal guardians, and school staff will be notified of specific pesticide applications made at the school. Notification will be given at least five days before planned pesticide applications. Pesticide application notification signs will also be posted in school and on school grounds. Notification may not be given for pesticide applications recognized by law to pose little or no risk of exposure to children or staff. The school also keeps records of prior pesticide applications and information about the pesticides used. You may review these records, a copy of the school's integrated pest management policy and the Maine Board of Pesticides Control

Regulation CMR 01-026 Chapter 27 by contacting our IPM coordinator, Tony Bennett at 207-998-5400.

Promotion/Retention

The retention of a student in a grade is considered a last resort option to meet student needs. A range of interventions will be utilized by individual teachers and schools to provide significant and continual support to address potential learning and behavioral challenges. If retention is considered as an intervention, the decision will be made as much as possible in collaboration between parents, teachers and administration. Parents will be notified as early as possible that retention is being considered and no later than March 15. Parents dissatisfied with this decision have the right to appeal to the superintendent. Decisions regarding students who qualify for special education will be made through the IEP team process.

School Conferences

Student Led Conferences

All students in grades PreK-12 will prepare for and lead their own student-led conference twice a year. This is an opportunity for students to share their learning with parents. The students will come prepared to reflect on their learning, share evidence that demonstrates progress towards mastery and share their own personal and academic goals. In grades PreK-6, the student will prepare for their conference with their primary classroom teacher. In grades 7-12, the student will prepare with their Roundtable teacher.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

A Parent-Teacher Conference is a chance for the parent and teacher to discuss student progress. Typically the teacher reports student academic and social achievement to the parent. While Student-Led Conferences are designated as time for students to share their learning with parents, it is understood that teachers and parents will meet as issues arise during the school year. Teachers will strive to clearly communicate student progress throughout the year and will be available for parent requested conferences.

School Nutrition Program

Breakfast and Lunch are available at no charge to students each day. Ala Carte items are available to High School and Middle School students. These items cannot be charged and must be paid for either by having money preloaded on their account or by cash or check. Parents have online accessibility to view and pay on accounts through MySchoolBucks.com

Menus are posted monthly on RSU16.org under the Food Service tab.

Even though meals are at no charge to the students for the school year, parents are still encouraged to fill out the meal benefit application. The confidential information obtained through these applications help the district in qualifying for various different programs, such as Title One,

Federal and State Grants and the Summer Feeding Program. Those applications can be found on the RSU 16 website, at school or online at www.nlappscloud.com

School Publications

School sponsored student publications (i.e. Yearbooks, news articles, video news programs) are part of the education program and as such are subject to approval by administration. Administration reserves the right to edit the content of such publications to ensure it meets school guidelines.

Security Cameras

School buildings and buses have security cameras for the purpose of enhancing safety and security. Cameras may be used to investigate suspected violations of board policies, school rules or other inappropriate conduct, to monitor activity to promote safety and security, and to allow law enforcement to investigate school safety issues or possible criminal behavior. Parents/guardians of a student (or a student 18 years old or older) may, upon request, view the positions of a recording used as a basis for disciplinary action against that student. Such viewing will be conducted in the presence of the building principal, and in a manner that does not violate the confidentiality rights of other students. [Policy ECA](#).

Searches of Students

School administrators may question and/or search students in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedure. Students, their personal property, and their vehicles may be searched upon reasonable suspicion that they possess any items or substances which are prohibited by law, Board policies and/or school rules, or which interfere with the operation, discipline or general welfare of the school. When special circumstances exist, including but not limited to a suspected ongoing violation of the Board's drug/alcohol or weapons policies, or when a potential threat to safety is identified, school administrators may search groups of students or the entire student body without individualized suspicion. Student use of all school storage facilities, including but not limited to lockers, desks, and parking lots, is a privilege granted by the school. All storage facilities are school property and remain under the control, custody, and supervision of the school. Only locks provided by RSU 16 may be used to secure student lockers. Students have no expectation of privacy in school storage facilities or for any items placed in such storage facilities. School administrators have the authority to inspect and search storage facilities and their contents on a random basis, with or without reasonable suspicion, and without notice or consent. Canine patrols may be used. If a search produces evidence that a student has violated or is violating the law, Board policies and/or school rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school administrators and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken. Evidence may be forwarded to law enforcement authorities as required by law or as deemed appropriate by school administrators.

Searching of students administrative procedure policy can be found on the [Policy JIH](#)

504

Section 504 is part of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which was enacted by Congress to combat discrimination against individuals with disabilities in services, programs and activities administered by any entity that receives federal funds, including public schools. A student with a disability should be considered for eligibility under Section 504 if they have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities (includes but are not limited to) caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Examples of “impairments” include (but are not limited to) severe allergies, cerebral palsy, diabetes, and epilepsy.

If you suspect your child has a disability which would make your child eligible for a 504 plan, please contact the designated 504 Building Coordinator in your child’s school. [Follow this link to the 504 notice.](#)

Special Education

It is the responsibility of RSU 16 to identify all children within its jurisdiction who may be students with disabilities. Referrals for special education may be made by school personnel, parents and representatives of state agencies that have students placed in their custody or care. Parent referrals shall be in writing, stating the reason(s) for referral and be submitted to the Principal. All referrals will be forwarded to the Special Education Director and team leader.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRAL PROCESS:

RSU 16 has a duty to locate, evaluate and identify any child residing in the District who qualifies for Special Education services or any child attending public schools who may require Section 504 accommodations or services.

Students suspected of having a disability that requires special education will be referred to the IEP Team for an evaluation in all suspected areas of disability. Parents, professional school staff and/or other individuals or agency representatives with knowledge of the child, may make referrals of students to the IEP Team. Parent permission is required to proceed with the IEP referral process.

Student Athletes (HS & MS)

Concussion Return to Play Procedure

All Poland Regional coaches are required to be trained in CPR and Sport First Aid. In addition, PRHS will make every effort to have an athletic trainer available for home contests. If an athlete suffers trauma to the body or head, and displays the signs and symptoms of a concussion, they must immediately be removed from play and evaluated by the appropriate medical personnel such as the athletic trainer and/or team physician. If an athlete loses consciousness, or suffers

severe symptoms, the Emergency Medical System must be activated. If an athlete is seen by a health care professional for sport injury, they will be required to present a doctor's note for clearance to begin RTP, Return to Play. In the case of suspected concussion, clearance will be to begin the RTP Protocol monitored by the athletic trainer, school nurse or health care professional. In all cases, when returning from a concussion, there will be Return to Learn before Return To Play practice. A graduated school reentry plan is developed by the school staff, such as the concussed student's teachers, guidance counselor, school nurse, athletic trainer, neuropsychologist (if available), parent(s)/caregivers and medical provider. For more detailed information see the RTP protocol listed on the athletic web page.

Eligibility

High School- Students must be in good standing academically in order to participate in a leadership position, public performance, or in a competition event with other schools while fulfilling that requirement. A student that is in good standing must: Be enrolled and actively engaged in the required number of courses (the equivalent of 6 classes and Roundtable-[policy JJJ](#)). **Middle School-** If a student is receiving at least a 2.5 in all academic standards grades, he or she is eligible to participate. However, please be aware that a 3 indicates the student is meeting the standard. If a student has less than a 2.5 in any academic standard, but he or she has at least a 2.5 for his or her Habits of Work grade in that class, the student is eligible to participate. This indicates that the student is working toward meeting standards.

Registration Requirements

Any student in grades 7-12 who wishes to participate in athletics must complete the online registration at [FamilyID.com](#). Parents and athletes must register together to complete a health questionnaire, emergency contact information, and an assumption of risk form. To access the registration, log on to FamilyID.com and enter RSU16 as the organization name. In addition, a physical completed by a medical professional must be submitted and updated every two years.

Student Records

All student education records that are maintained by RSU 16, as required by both Maine Law and Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), shall be confidential. The district has designated the following information about students as directory information: name, the student's participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight of student athletes and grade level of students in extracurricular activities, date of attendance at the school, and honors and awards received. The district may disclose directory information about students in attendance if it has given the notification required by FERPA to parents of the students and to eligible students, and has not received timely written notice refusing permission to designate some or all of the types of information about a student as directory information. Under Maine Law, the school shall not publish on the internet, without written parental consent, any information, whether directory or otherwise, that identifies a student including, but not limited to, the student's full name, photograph, personal biography, e-mail address, home address, date of birth, social security number, and parents' names.

HS only: Federal law requires secondary schools to provide student names, addresses and telephone numbers to military recruiters and institutions of higher education, upon request. Parents and legal guardians of students, however, have the right to request that the school NOT release such information without prior written parental consent. To prevent the release of this information, please contact the high school guidance office to obtain the appropriate form.

Technology/Internet Acceptable Use

Regional School Unit 16's technology devices, network and Internet access are provided to support the educational mission of the schools. Privately owned devices are not allowed on the school's internal networks. Those devices may access the Guest wireless network. Compliance with the district's policies and rules concerning technology use is mandatory. Students who violate these policies and rules may, after being given an opportunity to respond to an alleged violation, have their technology privileges limited, suspended or revoked. The building administrator shall have the final authority to decide whether a student's technology privileges will be altered, based on the circumstances of the particular case. The building administrator's decision will be final. Such violations may also result in disciplinary action, referral to law enforcement and/or legal action. RSU 16's technology devices remain under the control, custody and supervision of the school unit at all times.

The district has the ability to monitor all technology devices and Internet activity by students. Students have no expectation of privacy in their use of school technology devices, whether they are used on or off school property. RSU 16 utilizes filtering technology designed to block materials that are obscene or harmful to minors, and child pornography. The district takes precautions to supervise student use of the Internet and also educates students about appropriate use of the Internet, but parents should be aware that the RSU 16 cannot reasonably prevent all instances of inappropriate technology use by students that may violate Board policies and rules, including access to objectionable materials and communication with persons outside of the school. The school unit is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information that students obtain through the internet.

Students may not use RSU 16 technology or internet service to: access or communicate inappropriate materials; violate copyright laws; engage in illegal activities; or plagiarize. Additionally, students must not avoid school internet filters designed for their safety. Students who damage school technology equipment intentionally may be billed for such damages and may face disciplinary consequences.

Tobacco Products Use and Possession

The RSU 16 Board of Education is committed to promoting the health, welfare and safety of students, staff and community members. RSU 16, including all buildings and property, will be tobacco (includes vaping devices and e-cigarettes) free 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. This includes all days that school is not in session and all functions taking place on school grounds.

School activities to be smoke free include but are not restricted to: buildings, parking lots, wilderness trails, playing fields, and athletic functions.

Transportation

Providing daily transportation to and from school, that is both safe and economical, is an important part of the school district's commitment to serving all students. Expectations for student behavior on district buses is an essential part of safety. These expectations are outlined in our [behavior matrix on the district website](#). School board policy [EEAC-R](#) "Student Transportation Procedure" guides our decision-making for determining bus stops and safety training for students. If you ever have concerns about your child's bus stop, please contact the transportation director.

Visitors

RSU 16 encourages the active interest and involvement of parents and citizens in the public schools. In order to avoid interruption of the instructional program and to promote the safety of students and staff, building principals have administrative procedures concerning visitors to the schools. Such procedures may vary from school to school due to differing considerations such as the age of the students and building layout and location. In all schools, visitors are expected to report to the main office upon arrival at the school to sign in and receive their visitor name tag. All visitors who wish to visit classrooms, observe aspects of the instructional program or meet with staff members are expected to schedule such visits in advance. Teachers and other staff may not use instructional time to discuss individual matters with visitors. School and classroom visits must not be disruptive or in any way interfere with the instructional program. All visits and visitors will be subject to the authority of the building principal, who may restrict or limit visits, or visitors as they consider necessary. For more information, please review [school board policy KI](#).

Weapons, Violence and School Safety

Weapons possession or use is prohibited on school property. "Weapon" is defined as 1) any article commonly used or designed to inflict bodily harm and/or to threaten, intimidate, coerce, or harass another person or 2) any object, although not necessarily designed to be a weapon, used to inflict bodily harm and/or to threaten, intimidate, coerce, or harass another person. Students found in possession of a weapon may be disciplined, up to and including expulsion. In addition, law enforcement will be notified. Firearms possession on school grounds, pursuant to federal law, is punishable by expulsion for a period of no less than one year and referral to law enforcement for criminal charges. See the district policy, [JICIA Weapons Violence & School Safety](#), for details.

Emergency Plans

In the event of an emergency an administrator or their designee will make the verbal

directive for the action plan. Administrators and staff are trained yearly on the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Students are also trained in how to respond to an emergency drill. We conduct various drills throughout the school year including school evacuations, fire drills, lockdown drills, and other relevant drills.

Electronic Signatures

Some school forms will be offered electronically and parents/guardians will sign electronically. These signatures will be considered official by school personnel. Anyone who does not wish to sign forms electronically may ask for a paper copy of the form.

School specific information, rules and expectations will be included in the remaining part of this handbook.

Doing What's Best For Kids



Poland Community School Student and Family Handbook 2023-2024

**1250 Maine Street
Poland, Maine 04274**

Phone: 998 – 4915

Fax: 998 – 4998

www.rsu16.org

Poland Community School
Information for Students and Families

School Office Hours

8:00 – 4:30

School Hours

K-6 Mon, Tues, Thurs, and Fri: 8:30 – 3:15

Early Release Wednesdays: 8:30 - 2:15

Pre-K AM: 8:30 - 11:15 PM: 12:30 - 3:15

Classes begin daily at 8:45

Early Release Wednesdays: **No Pre-K**

Principal: Brandi Comeau

Assistant Principal: Denelle Gendron

Important Phone Numbers

School Office

998-4915 Ext. 0	To call in an absence 998-4915 ext. 140 Nurse
998-4915 ext. 129	School Lunch Program
998-4915 ext.153	School Counselor
998-4915 ext. 148	Special Ed Team Leader

RSU16 Central Office

998-2727 ext. 103	Superintendent's Office
998-2727 ext. 107	Transportation Office
998-2727 ext. 110	Special Education Office

**For more information about RSU 16 Health Services, please see our school website at <http://www.rsu16.org/PCS/PCS.html>

RSU #16 VISION, MISSION and FRAMEWORK

Mission and Educational Philosophy

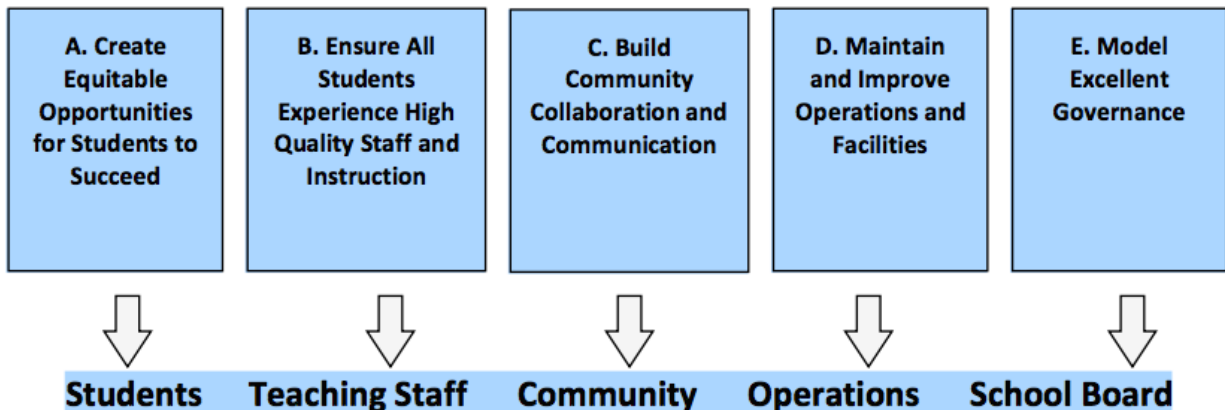
The mission of RSU 16 is to serve the community by providing its citizens with educational services in a safe and welcoming environment through our public schools and adult education programs. At RSU 16 we believe in providing each student with the opportunity to learn how they learn best, reach their full potential, become life-long learners, and contributors to their community.

Vision

We envision a truly regional school district that generates pride and garners full support from the governments and citizens of Mechanic Falls, Minot, and Poland. While students and families associate with particular schools, there is a strong sense that all schools are part of a unified district and that no school is more important or privileged than any others. All schools are our schools.

We envision students graduating from our schools who are well equipped for success in the 21st Century. All students have received a well-rounded education and have also been encouraged to excel in pursuit of their particular talents and aspirations. All students have skills and enthusiasm for life-long learning.

Framework



Annual Parent Notice Right to Request Teacher Qualifications

School: **Poland Community School** Date: **August 30, 2020**

Our school receives federal funds for programs that are part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended (2015). Throughout the school year, we will continue to provide you with important information about this law and your child's education. Based on current education law, teachers must have earned State certification and licensure. State certification and licensure is the training required to be a teacher.

We are very proud of our teachers and feel they are ready for the coming school year. We are prepared to give your child a high-quality education. You have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s). A paraprofessional provides academic or other support for students under the direct supervision of a teacher. If you request this information, the district or school will provide you with the following as soon as possible:

- a. if the teacher has met State certification and licensing requirements for the grade levels and subjects for which the teacher provides instruction
- b. if state certification and licensing requirements have been waived (is not being required at this time) for the teacher under emergency or other temporary status
- c. if the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline for which they are certified or licensed
- d. if the teacher has met State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements.

These requirements apply to the professional discipline in which the teacher is working and may include providing English language instruction to English learners, special education or related services to students with disabilities, or both; and e. if your child is receiving Title I or Special Education services from paraprofessionals, his or her qualifications.

Our staff are committed to helping your child develop the social, academic and critical thinking he or she needs to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals are highly skilled.

If you would like to request information about your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s), or if you have any questions about your child's assignment to a teacher or paraprofessional, please contact the following person at your child's school:

Name: Title:

Email: Phone:

Thank you for your interest and involvement in your child's education.

Sincerely,

Name Title

The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs and services. It provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and to coordinate compliance efforts:

Name: Title:

Address:

Telephone: Email:

Inquiries or complaints may also be directed to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue S.W., Washington D.C. 20202, or by calling (800) 421-3481 or (877) 521-2172 (TTY).

PCS Procedures and Practices

Absences/Tardiness

If your child will be absent or arriving late, please notify the office by 9 a.m. You can do this by calling 998-4915 extension 0 or sending an email to dyates@rsu16.org & sbarron@rsu16.org

Admissions/Withdrawals

Parents/guardians wishing to enroll their child at PCS are required to provide immunization records, birth certificate and verification of residency in Poland. Please contact the office for appropriate registration forms. If a student transfers to another school, the new school will contact us to send the child's records. It is helpful for parents/guardians to let us know in advance that their child will be transferring to another school. This will allow us to send records in a timely manner and plan appropriate closure for your child.

Attendance

Student attendance is an important factor in promoting academic achievement. We encourage your cooperation in making sure that your child is at school every day unless they are not well. Additionally, Maine State Law governs school attendance (Title 20-A, § 5001-A):

“A student is habitually truant if the student ...is 7 years old and has not yet completed grade 6 and has the equivalent of 5 consecutive unexcused absences or a total of 7 unexcused absences during a school year.”

By state law the definition of Excused Absence is for one of the following reasons:

1. Personal Illness;
2. An appointment with a health professional that must be made during the regular school day;
3. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day;
4. Family emergency;
5. Planned absence for a personal or educational purpose, which has been pre-approved by the school administration.

Please make every effort to see that your child arrives on time (between 8:25 and 8:45a.m.). There is no supervision before 8:25 therefore; we ask that students **do not** arrive before this time. We appreciate your help with this. For attendance purposes, any student arriving late is to report to the office before reporting to their classroom. It is our policy that after 10 absences, excused or unexcused, parents are contacted to schedule an attendance meeting with school personnel to develop a plan to improve attendance. Once a plan has been developed, attendance will be monitored carefully. Follow-up meetings may be necessary if improvement is not made.

Allergy Aware Zones

We have students at Poland Community School that have life-threatening allergies to peanuts and nut products. We are an allergy aware school and will designate an allergy- free spot. Peanuts and peanut products are some of the most common foods to cause allergic reactions in both children and adults. They are the most common cause of fatal food allergic reactions. For individuals who are allergic to peanuts and peanut products, accidental eating or contact with peanut products will produce swelling of the mouth and throat, loss of consciousness and, without timely treatment, death.

For the safety of students with allergies, we have set aside peanut-free zones at PCS that must be peanut and nut-based product free. No type of nuts or nut products can be in these areas, as they pose a threat to the safety of members of our student body. Compliance with the peanut free zone conditions must be followed at all times.

Books and School Materials

Students are assigned specific textbooks and learning materials for their educational programming. It is expected that each student will care for these materials and return them in good condition. If a textbook or library book is lost or damaged, parents/guardians and the student are responsible to pay the replacement cost.

Behavior

Establishing a **Respectful, Responsible, Safe** learning environment is a priority at PCS. The staff at Poland Community School has developed a Behavior Matrix, which identifies expected behaviors in common areas of the school. A copy is located in the appendix of this handbook. Parents are encouraged to review expectations with their children at home as well.

Bus Behavior

Transportation on the school bus is considered part of the school day; the rules and expectations for student bus behavior are taken seriously. The staff at Poland Community School works collaboratively with the transportation department, understanding that our student's day begins and ends with transportation to and from school and the experience can significantly impact their social/emotional and academic growth. We ask for parent support in reinforcing high expectations for excellent behavior on the bus.

Parents/guardians will be notified in writing if their child does not follow the behaviors identified on the matrix below. Please contact the Director of Transportation at 998-2727 x 107 if you have questions or concerns about bus riding privileges.

PBIS for School Transportation

SAFE	RESPECTFUL	RESPONSIBLE	CONSTANT <i>The school bus is an extension of classroom expectations</i>
1. Wait for the bus 15 feet from pickup location. 2. Wait for bus to stop completely before starting to get on or off. 3. Board and exit single file with calm body. 4. Stay seated at all times. Drivers may assign seats. Face the front of the bus at all times. 5. Keep aisle clear and everything inside the bus. 6. Wait for driver's signal before crossing at least 15 feet in front of the bus.	1. Give the respect of full authority to the bus driver. 2. Maintain and respect personal space of yourself and others. 3. Use polite language. 4. Voice level 0-1. 5. Show care for school bus and personal property. 6. Leave no trace.	1. Be on time for pickup before and after school. 2. Be willing to share your seat; maximum 3 to a seat. 3. Eat and drink when off the bus. 4. PreK-6, no technology on the bus. Grades 7-12, follow appropriate use of technology (found in your Student Handbook). 5. Exit promptly and quietly with all belongings. 6. Board and leave the bus only at your assigned bus stop location. 7. Carry backpacks and other belongings on your lap.	1. Always follow all Student Handbook guidelines. 2. Always follow directions of all adults promptly. 3. Always follow bus protocols. 4. Serious and/or repeated conduct issues may result in a student having their riding privileges suspended by the Principal in consultation with the Director of Transportation. In such cases, the parent/guardian is responsible for providing transportation to and from school or other activities.

The expectations in school are the same for the bus. If you can't or don't do something in school, same for the bus. Thanks!

For further clarification, contact Stewart Mason at 998-2727 ext. 107.

Cancellation of School

We will be using our automated messaging system (Student Information Software) to notify parents of school cancellations and other important school information. It is very important that we always have updated contact information. Please notify the school as soon as possible if you have changes to your contact information.

In addition to Infinite Campus, local television stations will announce school cancellations. The following television stations will be notified: WGME Channel 14 TV, WMTW Channel 8 TV, WABI Channel 5 TV, and WCSH Channel 6 TV.

In the event of dismissal during the school day, families will be notified through the automated messaging system. Local television stations are also notified. Students will be reminded to go to the places designated on their emergency forms. K-2 Bus students will be dropped off at

home only if an adult or older sibling is present. Please make sure the school office has current emergency information to help the school plan for unforeseen events.

Concerns

In a building with nearly 480 students and 70 staff, misunderstandings and miscommunications can easily arise and sometimes mistakes are made. We strive to keep the lines of communication working well at all times and do our best to do the right thing in each of our interactions with children and families. If there is cause for concern or a complaint, our practice is first to discuss it with the person most directly associated with the issue. If there is a concern or question in the classroom, first talk to the classroom teacher.

Communication between parents/guardians and teacher(s) is essential. At any time throughout the year, if you have questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher to schedule a meeting or phone conference. Teachers may be contacted by phone, written notes, and by email. If the problem cannot be resolved and/or continues to be an issue, please do not hesitate to contact administration for assistance.

Emergency Contact Information

It is extremely important that parents review the emergency form, make necessary changes and return it to the school as soon as possible. If your contact information changes during the year, please contact the office to update it. Be sure your mailing address and phone numbers are correct. Please provide names and numbers of people who live locally and can be responsible for your child in case the school cannot reach you. The emergency contacts may include friends, relatives, or neighbors who can take care of your child if he/she is ill and cannot remain in school. In an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, the school will call rescue and contact parents.

GaTE (Gifted and Talented Education): RSU 16 defines gifted and talented students as those who need differentiated instruction or services beyond those provided in the regular school program. They show evidence of a realized or potential exceptional ability or aptitude, skill, or creativity that is beyond that of their same aged peers.

According to the State mandate, up to five percent of each school's population may be identified for GaTE services in two areas: academic and the arts. Once nominated for the academic program, an identification team will consider standardized test scores, cognitive test results, school records, teacher and parent referrals and samples of student work. Artistic candidates (visual art and music) will be required to submit samples of work and an art panel will determine eligibility.

A variety of instructional strategies and enrichment opportunities are designed to support the unique academic, artistic, social and emotional needs of each student in the program.

For more information, contact Ell Fanus, GaTE Teacher: efanus@rsu16.org

Head Lice

Occasionally students contract head lice. If a problem is detected, the school nurse will notify parents and a treatment will be suggested. To help reduce the possibility of lice, students should not swap hats or other clothing, and never borrow combs or brushes.

Homework

If a teacher assigns homework, it is to practice a specific skill or subject. Homework frequently involves math practice and reading a book independently or with a parent/guardian, sibling, or other adult. If your child has made a good effort by being actively engaged in completing his/her homework for a reasonable length of time, you might choose to discontinue the work and send the homework back with a quick note at the top identifying the challenges. Please let the teacher know as soon as possible.

There are clear recommendations for the amount of time students in grades 1-6 should be spending on homework. A student's grade level multiplied by ten minutes per day is the maximum amount of time the student should be spending on all subjects combined per school night. See chart below for reference:

Kindergarten: Occasionally Assigned

Grade 1: ten minutes

Grade 2: twenty minutes

Grade 3: thirty minutes

Grade 4: forty minutes

Grade 5: fifty minutes

Grade 6: sixty minutes

Illness or Injury

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the nurse will evaluate the child and contact the parents/guardians or emergency contact person if the child is too ill to remain at school. The school is not equipped to care for students who are ill, but will provide a place for students who are waiting to be picked up. Accident reports are completed for all injuries sustained at school. Parents/guardians or emergency contact people are notified by phone and in writing if a student is injured and what treatment was provided. Students who have a fever and/or a sore throat or cough should stay home until they are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of anti-fever medicine). Students with diarrhea or vomiting should also stay home for 24 hours after diarrhea or vomiting has stopped, before returning to school.

Library Books

Students visit the school library each week, where they receive instruction in library and research skills and have the opportunity to borrow books from our children's book collection. If a library book is lost or damaged, parents/guardians and the student are responsible to pay the replacement cost.

Lost and Found

It is helpful if parents/guardians mark their child's clothing and belongings so that misplaced articles can be returned to the owners. Our school's Lost and Found is located at the entrance to the gym. Please encourage your child to check the Lost and Found regularly to retrieve missing clothing or possessions. There are an enormous number of articles that end up in the Lost and Found each year. Items are displayed on tables in the school lobby or gym before vacations, with the hope they will be claimed. Even so, a large number of items remain at the

school at the end of each school year. All remaining items are given to a charitable organization at the end of the school year.

Medication at School

It is the policy of PCS that only essential medications are administered to students at school. Whenever possible, medications should be scheduled to allow a student to receive all prescribed doses at home. If your child must take medication while at school a parent/guardian or other responsible adult must bring the medication to school where it will be kept in the Nurse's Office. All medication must be in the original container. If you request a second container from your pharmacy, they will provide one at no cost to you. Parents/guardians are required to complete a medication permission form. This procedure applies to both prescription and over the counter medications. As part of our beginning of the year paperwork, we will ask parents/guardians to sign a standing order permission form for meds that might be needed at school. Due to possible adverse reactions, the first dose of any medication should be given at home for at least 12 hours prior to the child coming to school.

Nutrition Program (Breakfast and Lunch)

Breakfast and lunch are complementary and available to students each day. Breakfast will be served between 8:30 and 8:45. Monthly menus are sent home.

** If adults are going to visit the school to have lunch with a student please call the school by 10:00 to order lunch. The adult lunch price is \$3.75.*

A lunch will be provided for any child who does not bring one from home. It is important that all students eat breakfast and lunch so they have the energy to be the best learners they can be. If a student frequently skips lunch, parents/guardians will be contacted. Students are encouraged to eat most of their meals and drink their milk or water. It is helpful for parents/guardians to check the menu with their child to decide which lunches they like and will eat. A salad bar with fresh fruits and vegetables is also available every day. Most days there is also a choice of an entree. However, if your child does not like both options, please send in a lunch from home so that you are confident your child has eaten a healthy meal.

Please Note: We ask all families to complete the free/reduced lunch application, even if you don't believe you will qualify, as it provides important information that could potentially increase the state subsidy we receive. An increase in funding would result in improved educational programming. We appreciate your help with this. Please return your application in a sealed envelope.

Parent/Teacher Association (PTA)

PCS is fortunate to have an active and enthusiastic Parent/Teacher Association. The Poland PTA generously supports enrichment opportunities for our students. Each year the PTA funds performances for the whole school, as well as special events for individual grades or classrooms. All parents/guardians are welcome to join and get involved in the PTA. Watch for notices of PTA meetings in students' totes.

Contact: PolandPTA@gmail.com.

Personal Items at School

Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones, electronic games, music devices, and trading cards to school. Under special circumstances, students may use music devices or electronic games while they are on the bus. These items must be kept in backpacks and may not be used during the regular school day. Students are prohibited from using electronic devices, including “smart” devices and cell phones, without express permission from staff while at school, per school board policy.

Under no circumstances may students bring weapons or items that may be used as weapons to school. This includes chains of any kind and replicas of weapons. Items of value or personal importance should not be brought to school.

Physical Education

All students have Physical Education once a week. For student safety and to preserve the gym floor, students are required to wear sneakers for Physical Education class. The sneakers should tie or fasten and fit in such a way that they don't come off during activities. Students must also wear pants or shorts during class.

If a student needs to be excused from the activity they must present the teacher with a note from a parent or doctor. If a student has an extended injury or illness, they must have a doctor's note before returning to physical activities.

Title IA Services

Title I Literacy Teacher: Amy Kohtala-Langevin

Title I Math Teacher: Amy LaPrel

Title 1A is a federally funded program under the No Child Left Behind Act. Its purpose is to provide supplemental instruction in reading, writing and math for eligible students on a short or long-term basis. This assistance is in addition to classroom instruction and supports the regular language arts and math programs. Teacher recommendations, as well as various assessments are used to determine eligibility. A Math Teacher, a Literacy Teacher and three Title 1A Educational Technicians provide support services. Parental input is a valuable part of the Title 1A program and therefore, parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning. Persons interested in obtaining more information about Title 1A are encouraged to contact their child's classroom teacher or our Title 1A Math and/or Literacy Teacher(s).

Recess

All children go outside for at least 20-30 minute recess each day, weather permitting. Children should come to school prepared with appropriate clothing to play outside each day. During winter months, students should have boots with them every day. In order to play in the snow, younger children must wear snow pants or waterproof pants. Hats, mittens or gloves, and a warm coat are essential for winter recess. Students will remain inside if the actual or “feels like” temperature is 15 degrees F, or below. We use weather.com to base our decision.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report cards are completed 2 times each year, in January and on the last day of school in June. Progress Reports are issued in October, December, March and May. Our grading system is a 4-point scale. The points on this scale indicate the child's progress compared to expectations for students at that grade level at that time in the school year.

Visitors

While we welcome visitors to our school, to maintain a productive learning environment, it is important that visits to our classrooms are scheduled, approved and designed to support the educational process. Visits to observe a classroom or teacher are not encouraged or generally approved. This practice is enforced to maintain the integrity of our learning environment, the ability of our teachers to focus their full attention on our students and their instruction, and confidentiality of our students. All visitors should stop by the office to be issued a badge.

Volunteers

Volunteers are parents, guardians, and community members who assist in the classroom or provide other support in school. These roles may range from performing clerical tasks, to sharing personal travel or vocational experiences, supporting instruction, working with small groups and/or individual students. Volunteers are always needed! There are many ways volunteers can help our school community. There are also things that can be done in your home if you are not available to come into the school during the day. Volunteers are sometimes needed to help supervise field trips. If you are interested in becoming a Poland Community School Volunteer, please contact Sioux Barron @ sbarron@rsu16.org . She will schedule you for a one-time mandatory volunteer training (approximately 45 min), complete the necessary paperwork, and take your picture so she can have a badge made for you!

PCS Behavior Expectations Matrix

	Hallway/ Stairway	Cafeteria/ Lunch	Bathroom/ Water Fountain	Recess/ Playground	Assembly	Dismissal
Be Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Give quiet waves to greet others -Respect all hallway displays -Use a level 0 or 1 voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use 0 voice level in line -Use quiet voice while seated (1-2 voice level) -Use appropriate, polite language -Use table manners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Respect the privacy of others -Leave area clean and neat -Wait patiently and quietly in line (0-1 Voice level) -Treat equipment appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Practice sportsmanship -Show kindness with words and actions -Be inclusive -Take turns and share 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Enter and Exit the assembly quietly (0 voice) -Raise hand to answer a question -Follow staff directions -Applaud appropriately to show appreciation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use 1-2 voice level -Follow directions of staff
Be Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Go directly to where you need to be -Keep eyes forward -Walk single file -Follow arrows to show which stairs to use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wash your hands for 20 seconds before and after eating -Sit at assigned seat -Raise your hand for help and permission to leave your seat -Clean up your space -Place your mask in a safe and clean space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wash hands for 20 seconds before and after using the bathroom -Go, flush, wash, leave -Return to class promptly -Use an appropriate amount of bathroom supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wash your hands for 20 seconds before and after recess -Return equipment to appropriate place -First whistle - freeze, second whistle - line up -Be an effective problem solver -Follow directions -Be prepared for the conditions -Stay with your cohort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Be an active listener -Look, listen, and learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wear weather appropriate clothes -Wait with staff until released to parent -Confirm with staff who the adult is who is picking you up -Do not step out in-front vehicles -Be prepared when your name is called for dismissal -Leave your classroom as soon as you are called
Be Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Walk on the right hand side -Maintain social distancing using paw prints on the floor -Carry personal belongings properly -Walk up and down stairs one step at a time -Keep body to yourself -Wear your mask 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Eat only your own food -Keep body and objects to yourself -Walk at all times -Wear your mask -Leave social distancing space between yourself and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use bathroom/fountain with permission -Report inappropriate unsafe behavior -Leave social distancing space between yourself and others -Wear your mask 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stay within your zone -Use equipment appropriately and safely -Keep body and objects to self -Report unresolved conflicts, accidents, or injuries to staff -Wear your mask when you can not use socially distancing space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Keep the aisles clear -Stay with your teacher -Keep hands and feet still and to yourself -Leave social distancing space between yourself and others -Wear your mask 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use walking feet to the gym -Only leave with the person who is supposed to pick you up -Provide social distancing space between yourself and others -Wear your mask -Meet your parent outside of the building

Staff and Faculty Contact information

Brandi Comeau	Principal	Ext. 114
Denelle Gendron	Asst. Principal	Ext. 113
Sioux Barron	Admin. Asst.	Ext. 118
Donna Yates	Secretary	Ext. 117
Jessica Bosse	School Nurse, LPN	Ext. 140
Abby Gervais	School Counselor	Ext. 153
Danielle Higgenbotham	School Counselor	Ext. 108
Pook	School Social Worker	Ext. 106
Nicole Patenaude	Pre-K Teacher	Ext. 112
Sarah Chaput	Kindergarten	Ext. 159
Karen Beaudoin	Kindergarten	Ext. 110
Emma Martineau	Kindergarten	Ext. 158
Darcy Hilton	Kindergarten	Ext. 111
Debbi Conley	Grade 1	Ext. 183
Amy Eastman	Grade 1	Ext. 180
Amy Orlando	Grade 1	Ext. 182
Makenna Canty	Grade 2	Ext. 179
Chris Gurney	Grade 2	Ext. 177
Phillip Hodgkins	Grade 2	Ext. 174
Shelley Jackson	Grade 2	Ext. 176
Deb Daigneault	Grade 3	Ext. 175
Leah Galipeau-Eldridge	Grade 3	Ext. 172
Caitlin Mansir	Grade 3	Ext. 168
Katie Shaw	Grade 3	Ext. 164
Rose Walker	Grade 4	Ext. 219
Sheryl Scribner-Rocha	Grade 4	Ext. 220
Kimberly Simpson	Grade 5	Ext. 218
Kristie Ferland	Grade 5	Ext. 207
Emily Flanigan	Grade 5	Ext. 202
Gabby Smith	Grade 5	Ext. 214
Margaret Hansen	Grade 6	Ext. 204
Abrina Deslaurier	Grade 6	Ext. 206
Sharon Plante	Grade 6	Ext. 205
Jodi Barber	SPED K-2	Ext. 138
Donald Drake	FLS/SPED	Ext. 137
Jean Oligny-Warrow	SPED 5-6	Ext. 209
Christina Bichrest	FLS/SPED	Ext. 154
Holly Toothaker	SPED 3-4	Ext. 156
Ell Fanus	GATE	Ext. 217
Caiti Black	OT	Ext. 155
Tiffany Witherell	Speech	Ext. 106
Hannah Baldinelli	Library	Ext. 103
Kellie Whitten	Art	Ext. 161
Tony Orlando	Music	Ext. 104
Kelly Michaud	PE	Ext. 122
Tanya Vanasse	Technology	Ext. 161
Kitchen Staff	CAFE	Ext. 129
Jenna Pursely	Learning Lab	Ext. 107
Title 1 Staff		Ext. 121

Handbook Acknowledgement Form

The 2021-2022 handbook can be reviewed electronically



Student and Family Handbook

Acknowledgement Form 2023-2024 _____

Student Name (please print) _____

Teacher

Grade

My signature indicates that I have read and reviewed the 2023-2024 Poland Community School Student and Family Handbook with my child (*electronic or hardcopy*).

An electronic version can be found on the Poland Community School web page.

If you would like a hard copy, please notify the school office and we will send one to you.

998-4915 x118 or sbarron@rsu16.org

Signature

Date