



**Voluntown
Elementary
School**
P.O. Box 129
195 Main Street
Voluntown, CT 06384-1821
860/376-2325
Fax 860/376-6690

**WELCOME BACK
TO SCHOOL**

August 2018

Dear Students, Parents/Guardians and Community Members,

I would like to welcome you to Voluntown Elementary School's 2018-2019 school year. I hope everyone has had a fantastic, relaxing summer! I know I did! I enjoyed spending time in the sun, reading, gardening, and playing with Sinatra and Lucy, my pets. I cannot believe that Sinatra is now 4 years old and weighs 160 pounds!

I am thrilled to begin my sixth year as your Principal. Serving as Principal/Assistant Superintendent is as much an honor as it is a responsibility. I am energized and deeply committed to making a positive difference in the lives of your children. We will accomplish this by having high expectations for all students. Our goal is for all students to grow socially, emotionally, and academically. I am very excited by the amazing possibilities of the coming school year.

Our first day of school for K-8 students will be Wednesday, August 29, 2018. Students will begin classes promptly at 8:50AM and be dismissed at 3:20PM. Our first day of school for PK students will be Friday, August, 31, 2018.

The faculty and staff have been working very hard this summer to prepare for this school year, and we believe that you will have a rewarding, educational experience. Education is a shared responsibility. It is important for us to keep open lines of communication between home and school. We must work as a team to guide your child toward success! You can help to accomplish this by communicating with your child's teacher, attending school functions, and assisting your child in understanding the importance of education. Parents are always welcome at VES and are encouraged to become involved. The PTO offers many opportunities as well, so please get as involved as your schedule will allow!

Our remarkable staff, involved parents and committed students come together to make Voluntown Elementary School a unique place. Nothing motivates a child more than when learning is a partnership that is valued by schools, families, and the community. On behalf of the staff, we are energized and excited about the upcoming school year! We look forward to working with your children!

Open House has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 11th from 5:00-6:00 PM (PreSchool-Grade 4) and 6:00-7:00PM (JHS - Grades 5-8). Our Student Services Department/Specials Teachers will be available from 5:30-6:30PM.

Enclosed you will find the Assistant Principal's Welcome Letter, our Attendance Letter and Procedures, our Arrival/Dismissal/Special Transportation Procedures and Forms. During the first week of school, a packet will be sent home with all students, which contains all necessary information and resources for families. This packet includes our Safety Letter, Visitor/Volunteer Guidelines, and a DCF Authorization Form. Thank you in advance for your understanding and adherence to our procedures that are put in place to keep the students, faculty/staff, and visitors to VES safe.

Please do not hesitate to call or e-mail me, or any of the VES staff, if you have any additional questions. I cannot wait to see you!

Warm Regards,

Alycia M. Trakas
Principal / Assistant Superintendent



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August 2018

Dear Voluntown Students, Families, Staff, and Community Members,

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year!

I am thrilled to begin my fourth year as Assistant Principal at Voluntown Elementary School! This time of year is exciting as the halls begin to fill with students and staff eager for the new opportunities that lie ahead. I am looking forward to all of the upcoming changes and new academic adventures. There are many positive changes ahead that will support our students' learning and challenge their thinking. I am looking forward to reconnecting with students and staff as they begin to fill the hallways!

Fostering a strong home and school connection is one of my goals as we start this school year. I hope to promote positive relationships by working closely with students, parents and staff in order for all learners to be successful.

I have worked in Voluntown as a sixth and first grade teacher for eight years and just completed my third year working in Administration. I have enjoyed every year as an educator and look forward to returning in this capacity. I reside in Rhode Island with my two daughters, Aubrie 9 years old and Callie 4.5 years old along with my husband Corey. We love spending our days together outside, on the softball field or swimming at the beach!

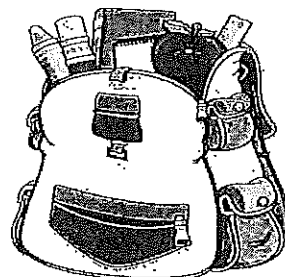
Being an educator is a rewarding and fulfilling experience that I truly enjoy. I look forward to working with everyone again this year!

Warm Regards,

Amy Suffoletto

Assistant Principal

Voluntown Elementary School





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Dear Parents and Guardians,

Every year, at the beginning of the school year and upon any enrollment during the school year, we must inform parent/guardian(s), in writing, of his or her obligations under section 10-184 of the Connecticut General Statutes (see below).

Sec. 10-184. Duties of parents, School attendance age requirements.

All parents and those who have the care of children shall bring them up in some lawful and honest employment and instruct them or cause them to be instructed in reading, writing, spelling, English grammar, geography, arithmetic and United States history and in citizenship, including a study of the town, state and federal governments. Subject to the provisions of this section and section 10-15c, each parent or other person having control of a child five years of age and over and under eighteen years of age shall cause such child to attend a public school regularly during the hours and terms the public school in the district in which such child resides is in session, unless the parent or person having control of such child is able to show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public schools. The parent or person having control of a child five years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is six years of age and the parent or person having control of a child six years of age shall have the option of not sending the child to school until the child is seven years of age. The parent or person shall exercise such option by personally appearing at the school district office and signing an option form. The school district shall provide the parent or person with information on the educational opportunities available in the school system.

Sincerely,

Alycia M. Trakas
Principal/Assistant Superintendent

Amy L. Suffoletto
Assistant Principal

Absences/Attendance:

Every year, at the beginning of the school year and upon any enrollment during the school year, we must inform parent/guardian(s), in writing, of his or her obligations under section 10-184 of the Connecticut General Statutes (see below).

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Absences:

When a student is absent, a parent or guardian **MUST** inform the school regarding the absence by either calling the school or sending an email/written note. This documentation is required within 10 days of the absence or the absence will be marked unexcused. The school will make every effort to contact home whenever a student is absent.

When any student has been ill or expects to be absent due to illness for three days or more, he/she may obtain assignments by telephoning the school office before 8:50 a.m. These assignments can be picked up at the end of the school day after 3:20 p.m. Teachers are not required to provide special work for students who will be absent for reasons such as a family vacation. Students missing more than half the instructional day for the purpose of travel or vacation are considered as "absent".

Teachers may use WIN to review missed concepts to the student upon their return. However, teachers are not obligated to provide extra help or tutoring outside of the school day. If tutoring is necessary, the cost would be the responsibility of the parent. Effective July 1, 2017, any student serving an in-school suspension is to be counted as "in-attendance".

Makeup Work due to an Absence:

Students are responsible for making up any missed work from an absence. If a student is absent from school, work that is already due must be turned in upon his/her return. If a student is absent from school on a day of a test/quiz, it is expected that he/she will take it on the day of their return. Our teachers will provide him/her with a copy of all missing assignments on the day of their return. At that time, the teacher will create a makeup work plan for the student, based on the subject, instructional objectives, and type of assignment, not to exceed 5 days after returning to school.

Excused and Unexcused Absences:

Voluntown Elementary School follows the Connecticut State Board of Education's Guidelines for Excused and Unexcused Absences. Please use the chart below to help explain what are acceptable reasons for a student absence to be considered excused, as well as the required documentation that must be report to the school (within 10 days of a student absence).

| Total # of Days Absent | Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to Be Considered Excused | Documentation Required within 10 days |
|------------------------|--|--|
| One through nine | Any reason that the student's parent or guardian approves. | Parent or guardian note/email/phone call. |
| 10 and above | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Illness (Note: to be deemed excused, an appropriately licensed medical professional must verify all student illness absences, regardless of the absences length. • Student's observance of a religious holiday. • Death in a student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family. • Mandated court appearance (additional documentation required). • The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (parental documentation is not required for this reason). • Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators (opportunities must meet certain criteria). | <p>Parent or guardian note/email/phone call and in some cases additional documentation (see details of specific reason).</p> <p>Note/Email/Phone Call message must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of absence • Reason for absence • Name/signature of parent/guardian reporting the absence |

Excused Absences for Children of Service Members:

An enrolled student, age five to eighteen, inclusive, whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the armed forces, as defined in section 27-103, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has an immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone, or combat support posting, shall be granted ten days of excused absences in any school year and, at the discretion of the Board of Education, additional excused absences to visit such child's parent or legal guardian with respect to such leave or deployment of the parent or legal guardian.

Attendance Requirements:

In order to take full advantage of all that school has to offer, students need to make every effort to be in school each day. Good attendance is a major contributor to academic success. We work closely with the home to monitor student attendance. Classroom learning experiences are essential components of the overall educational process. Prompt and regular attendance to school and to individual classes is a valid and reasonable requirement to promote academic success.

In order to be promoted to the next grade level, the following requirements must be met:

- PreSchool/School Readiness: A student must meet all Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS).
- Elementary (Kindergarten – 4th grade): A student must meet all grade level expectations.
- JHS (5th – 8th grade): A student must receive a passing grade in each subject area (65% or better).
- A student may not be absent from school for more than eighteen (18) days in one school year. A student with extenuating circumstances may appeal to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Any student who is absent six (6) days, his/her parents or guardian will receive an informal notice.
- Any student who is absent nine (9) days will be notified of State attendance policies by the school administration. His/her parent or guardian will receive a formal written letter.
- Any student who is absent sixteen (16) days within a school year, a conference will be called with the student, parent/guardian(s), teacher(s), school counselor and an administrator to develop an individual attendance plan for the student to ensure daily attendance.
- Any student who has been deemed "truant" and/or "habitually truant" during the school year, a conference will be called (no later than 10 days after they have been deemed "truant" and/or "habitually truant", with the student, parent/guardian(s), teacher(s), school counselor and an administrator to develop an individual attendance plan for the student to ensure daily attendance. A referral will be made to community agencies providing student and family services.

Chronically Absenteeism Definitions:

- **Chronically absent:** an enrolled student whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal or greater than ten (10) percent of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during the school year.

Truancy Definitions:

- **Truant-** according to C.G.S. section 10-198a a "truant" is a student age five to eighteen who has four (4) unexcused absences in a month (period of time, not specific months named in a calendar) or ten (10) unexcused absences in one school year.
- **Habitual Truant-** according to C.G.S. section 10-198a a "habitual truant" is a student age five (5) to eighteen (18), inclusive, who is enrolled in a public or private school and has twenty unexcused absences.
- **Defiant-** a student who has been continuously overtly defiant of school rules.

Attendance: TARDINESS (Reminder – School Starts at 8:50AM)

The School System provides daily bus transportation for students. Students who do not use this transportation are still expected to arrive at school on time, ready to participate and learn. They are expected to plan their time effectively to arrive at school and classes in a timely manner.

A student who is not present in homeroom for attendance at 8:50AM and prepared to start academic classes is considered tardy. Any time a student is tardy, they must sign in at the main office.

One of the most valuable life skills a student can learn is taking the responsibility of arriving at school everyday on time. This skill can easily be accomplished and will transfer as a valuable asset for the future. One of the most important times of the school day is in the morning. This is the time when important school news is announced, teachers define the plans for the day, and instructional goals are reviewed and set. The whole tone of a child's school day is set in the first part of the day. Being punctual is ESSENTIAL, as it minimizes disruption to the learning environment and maximizes valuable instructional time. Please help support your children in learning habits that will help them be successful at school and throughout life.

Please note that excessive accumulated time from being tardy and/or dismissed early from school, may be calculated in determining the total number of instructional time lost.

An excused tardy includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Illness
- Doctor's appointment
- Extreme family emergency
- Extreme inclement weather

An unexcused tardy includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Oversleeping (parent or child)
- Alarm did not go off
- Missed Bus
- Sleeping in

Consequences for being late to school:

In addition to the following consequences all missed work must be completed (work is due the next school day).

Elementary (Kindergarten - 4th grade)

6th through 8th tardy:

9th

10th or more tardy:

Informal Notice will be sent home.

Formal Written Letter will be sent home.

Meeting with student, parent/guardian(s), school counselor and administrator to discuss consequences and/or "action plan".

Junior High (5th-8th grade)

3rd tardy:

4th through 6th tardy:

7th through 9th tardy:

10th or more tardy:

Verbal warning.

20 minute lunch detention.

30 minute detention; detention slip will be sent home to be signed by a parent/guardian; 24-hour notice will be given for detentions.

Meeting with student, parent/guardian(s), school counselor and administrator to discuss consequences and/or "action plan".



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2018-2019 Student Arrival Procedures
Effective as of November 2014

When dropping off your child(ren) in the morning at school, please enter the lower parking lot (first lot to the left) to the new drop off point/crosswalk. Students will exit the vehicle and be safely monitored using the crosswalk to enter the building by our staff member(s) on morning bus duty.

When dropping off your PreSchool child(ren) in the morning at school, please walk him/her to the staff member at the Early Childhood door. We thank you for accompanying your child to the Early Childhood door for their safety. Please park in the Early Childhood parking lot (the right parking lot when you enter VES).

Buses are the only vehicles that are allowed to pull up to the front of the building between the hours of 8:15-9:00AM and 3:00-3:45PM.

Thank you for your adherence to our student arrival procedures. This will help alleviate the traffic backup on Route 138 and ensure that our students, staff, and visitors to VES are safe!

Please feel free to contact Alycia Trakas, Principal/Assistant Superintendent, at 860-376-2325 ext. 121 or atrakas@voluntownct.org with any questions or concerns.

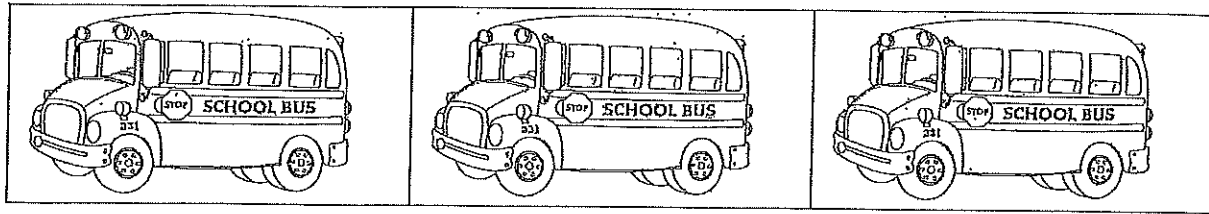
Best Regards,

Alycia M. Trakas
Principal/Assistant Superintendent

Amy Suffoletto
Assistant Principal

Terry Chenette
Transportation Coordinator

Paul Ricard
Director of Facilities and Grounds



2018-2019 DISMISSAL PROCEDURES Effective August 2015

WALKERS/BIKE RIDERS

By checking the appropriate line on the DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FORM, students in grades 5-8 may obtain permission to walk or ride their bicycle to/from school.

Students who walk or ride to school are not to report to school before 8:30AM. Students riding a bicycle will walk their bicycle to the designated parking area on the playground.

Students who walk or ride from school will be dismissed at 3:20PM through the Early Childhood doors; students are to leave the school grounds immediately.

Please be reminded that by CT State law students under the age of 15 are required to wear a helmet.

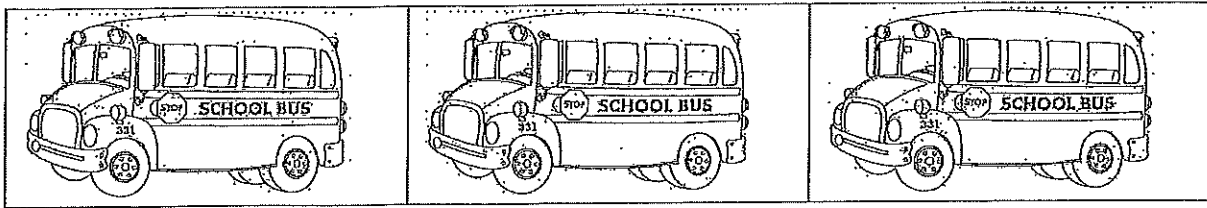
DISMISSAL AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY (3:20PM)

Attached you will find a DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FORM. You will be given four choices of how your child(ren) will be dismissed throughout the school year. You must check one choice, sign and return this form to the main office during the first week of school. If you choose to have your child dismissed as a walker or pick-up every day, your child will be dismissed from the Early Childhood doors before all buses have been dismissed. Parking is available in the Early Childhood parking lot (the right parking lot when you enter VES). Due to security and safety reasons, parents/guardians picking up children at the end of the school day will no longer be allowed to wait in the school.

EARLY DISMISSAL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY (before 3:00PM)

Students that are picked up early during the school day (before 3:00PM) will be dismissed from the main office. Please send a note in with your child to let us know you plan on having them dismissed early. This note must be turned into your child's homeroom teacher at the start of the day. We will also take phone calls or emails (send communications to Rhonda Bursey, Office Clerk, at rbursey@voluntownct.org or 860-376-2325). Please be advised that the main office must be notified of an early dismissal by 3:00PM, otherwise, we will not be able to honor your request. After 3:00PM, students must be picked up at dismissal time (3:20PM) through the Early Childhood doors. Please note, we do not dismiss students between 3:00-3:20PM.

Parent/Guardian must sign out of the school with the main office personnel. Anyone who is signing out a student must be included on his/her emergency card. Please be prepared to have ID. If an emergency arises, and it becomes necessary for someone who is not listed on this card to pick up a student, it must be authorized by the parent in writing or faxed to the main office. No exceptions will be made.



2018-2019 DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FORM
Effective August 2015

To: Parents of Students in Grades PK-8

From: Alycia M. Trakas, Principal/Assistant Superintendent
Amy Suffoletto, Assistant Principal

Our Crisis Intervention Team and School Security Safety Committee have put into effect the following dismissal procedures. **Due to security and safety reasons, if you are picking up your child at the end of the school day, you will no longer be allowed to wait in the school.** Your child will be dismissed from the Early Childhood doors. While waiting, please utilize the Early Childhood parking lot (the right parking lot when you enter VES). Any student not riding the school bus must be picked up promptly at 3:20PM.

This form will serve as your permission for dismissal and no other signature will be required. In an effort to update our records on students who are being picked up, and who have permission to walk or bike to and from school, please read the following and check the appropriate line.

- _____ My son/daughter will ride the school bus until further notice.
- _____ My son/daughter will be picked up from school every day. Your child will be dismissed with the walkers and bikers **BEFORE** the first bus is called through the Early Childhood doors.
- _____ My son/daughter has permission to walk or ride a bike every day (must be in grades 5-8).
- _____ My son/daughter will bring in a note for a specific day on which he/she will be picked up, will be walking, or will be biking. This note must be turned into your child's homeroom teacher at the start of the day. We will also take phone calls or emails (send communications to Rhonda Bursey, Office Clerk, at rbursey@voluntownct.org or 860-376-2325). Please be advised that the main office must be notified of a pick-up by 3:00PM, otherwise, we will not be able to honor your request and your child will be dismissed from school at 3:20PM via bus.

A Special Transportation Request must be on file for any student being picked up, or dropped off at a different address other than their home prior to the start date of request.

If there are any questions, please call the Voluntown Elementary School at (860) 376-2325. Please sign and return during the first week of school. Thank you!

Name of Student: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION REQUEST

Due to the number of requests received to accommodate childcare/babysitting, after-school jobs, etc., the Voluntown Board of Education has set the following priorities and established procedures to ensure the safety of the children it transports and the reasonableness of its transportation operation. We will no longer be able to honor daily notes asking for different transportation services. If a parent wishes to request that a child be picked up or dropped off at a location other than his/her home to accommodate childcare/babysitting needs, they must complete this form. On a regular day-to-day basis, PreK-8 students will not be allowed to ride a bus other than their assigned bus to their home. This means that a child cannot ride a different bus to go to someone else's house after school.

Daycare requests will be granted under the following circumstances:

- Request is for a period of three months or more;
- Location of the requested day care provider is on an existing bus route;
- There is space available on the bus to which the student would be assigned if the daycare request is honored;
- Location of the A.M. pick up is the same Monday through Friday, and the location of the P.M. drop off is the same Monday through Friday;

The Superintendent and Transportation Supervisor will address daycare provisions that do not meet the above criteria on an individual basis.

A NEW FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH ANY CHANGE, and must be updated prior to the beginning of each school year.

Request For Long Term Bus Schedule Change

(Please complete one form per child)

Please note that, per Board of Education policy, approval of this request is contingent upon available bus space. Preference is given to those students who reside on the bus route; therefore, a student who has been approved to ride a bus for daycare purposes may have this permission revoked at any time if space is needed to accommodate any new students on that route.

This request applies to:

| Student's Name | Address | Grade | Teacher |
|----------------|---------|-------|---------|
|----------------|---------|-------|---------|

It is my intent that this will be a long-term schedule (for at least three months), which I would like to have begun on _____.

Please be specific about pick-up/drop-off points that are different from the regularly scheduled bus stop for your child. Complete addresses are necessary.

Daycare Provider's Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____
Specific Arrangements: _____

Description of Day Care Provider's House or Other Drop-Off Location: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ HomePhone _____ WorkPhone _____