

Monhegan School

2018-2019 Student Handbook

August 15, 2018

Dear Monhegan School Community,

On behalf of the school committee, superintendent, teacher and staff, welcome to the 2018-2019 school year. As always, we have great expectations for a year full of growth, learning and excitement, exceptional community participation and successful inter-island school collaborations.

This handbook is intended to be a tool to help facilitate communication between home and school, with useful information about the school all in one place. It also serves to inform all students and parents of the rules and expectations of school. Further, it provides an appendix of policies that must be shared with families annually. There is a Monhegan School Policy Manual binder kept at the school and online (www.monheganschool.org) for your reference, containing all of the school policies in full.

Our teacher, superintendent, guidance consultant, special ed. consultant, school nurse and school committee members are readily available to address needs. Current contact info. is listed on page i. Our Guidance Consultant contacts families before her visits to schedule appointments with parents/guardians. The superintendent is available to meet in person approximately one day per month, but can always be reached at by phone.

The school committee meetings are held monthly. Everyone is welcome to attend.

If reading through this handbook brings to mind questions, ideas, or suggestions, please share them! We want to maintain an open dialogue between school and home, and to work together as partners for the benefit of our students and their community.

Sincerely,

Jes Stevens
Chairman, Monhegan School Committee

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*** Note: The Monhegan School Policy Manual, containing all of the school policies in full, is posted online at www.monheganschool.org and a paper version is accessible at the schoolhouse.**

Monhegan School Directory - digital and/or hard copy provided to staff and families and available by request from Monhegan School Committee

[2018-2019 Monhegan School Calendar](#) (Website Link) - digital and/or hard copy provided to staff and families and available by request from Monhegan School Committee

School Committee

The School Committee holds regular meetings usually at the schoolhouse, typically early in the fourth or fifth week of each month. Meeting dates can be found on the school calendar. An agenda is posted at least 48 hours before each meeting outside the Monhegan Plantation office and at the island's grocery store and is also sent by email to all school families, staff and administration. The Superintendent is present at most meetings. Meetings are open to the public, and everyone is invited to attend. School committee minutes are posted at the Post Office after approval.

School Day

Daily Schedule:

The Monhegan School schedule for kindergarten through 8th grade is as follows from Monday through Friday:

8:00 am – Morning session begins

11:15 am – Students go home for lunch

12:30 pm – Afternoon session begins

3:00 pm – Students are dismissed for the day

Please note: students should not arrive at the school any earlier than fifteen minutes before the morning and/or afternoon sessions. Refer to the school calendar for notes on any exceptions to the daily schedule.

Early-Kindergarten (Early-K) Program:

The Early-K Program is open to children who are four years on or before October 15th of the academic year of entrance. The Early-K program offers 3.25 hours of programming per day when school is in session. The schedule will be developed after consultation with the parents and superintendent. Flexibility of scheduling for each child is based on our intent to meet the developmental needs of each child. Parents are responsible for dropping off and picking up early-K students. For further details, review of the Early Childhood Education policy ([IHB1](#)) is strongly recommended.

Absences

Regular attendance is a vital part of every student's success in school. Maine state law requires that all students 7 years of age and older be in school unless excused because of illness, medical appointment, religious holiday, family emergency, educational disruption (as

defined by law), or planned absence for educational or personal purpose approved by the school. Students under 7 years of age are highly encouraged to adhere to the same expectations of attendance. Parents are expected to notify the teacher of any absence, unplanned or planned. If a student will be absent due to travel or personal purposes, parents are expected to discuss the planned absence with the teacher as early as possible. This allows for lessons to be prepared for the student to work on during the absence, so as to keep up with her/his work. In the case of illness, the student will be given one week to complete make-up work after returning to school.

Field Trips

Field Trips may be used to enrich the school program. Whenever trips are made away from Monhegan, each student must have a signed permission slip from a parent or guardian. The teacher will judge whether all children are able to handle participation in a planned trip. A regular school day will be in session for any child in early-kindergarten through eighth grade unable or not permitted to attend a field trip.

All drivers who will transport students during field trips must submit proof of auto insurance covering the vehicle(s) to be used to the Superintendent. Parents are encouraged to submit proof at the beginning of the academic year if they think they might use their vehicle(s) to transport students during field trips.

Guidance Program

Our guidance consultant is available to all students and their families to consult and assist with any issues of emotional or personal development. During the 2018-2019 school year, the Guidance Consultant will visit at least 4 times, tentatively in September, October, and as needed following consultation with the superintendent. For sixth through eighth grade students, the Guidance Consultant assists with the preparation for and transition to the move off the island for high school. The Guidance Consultant emails each family prior to each visit to arrange meetings and can be contacted by phone or email throughout the year.

Expectations for Student Behavior

We maintain high expectations for student behavior. We believe it is every person's right to be treated with dignity, fairness and respect. Teachers will set the guidelines for classroom behaviors and expectations. Whether in the school, on the grounds, on field trips or at any school events, the following rules apply:

- **Respect Personal Feelings.**
This means no bullying, harassing, hazing or teasing;
No threats of any kind, either verbal or physical;
No obscene or vulgar language or gestures.
- **Respect Personal Space.**
This means keeping hands, feet and objects to oneself at all times.

No wrestling, hitting or tackling games are allowed.
No violent actions will be tolerated.

- **Respect Personal Property.**
This means showing care for what belongs to others.
No taking another's property without permission;
No harming school property or equipment.
- **Respect People.**
This means listening to and following all directions in a cooperative and respectful manner.
Speak politely to other students, visitors and all adults.

By school committee policy and state and federal law, Monhegan School is a tobacco free, drug free and weapon free environment. Tobacco products, alcohol, guns or weapons (including pocket knives and toy weapons) **are not allowed at any time anywhere on school grounds.** Animals are prohibited from entering the schoolhouse, except under specific circumstances outlined in the Animals in School policy (IMG).

Disciplinary consequences for unacceptable behavior depend on the seriousness of the violation and the student's prior behavioral record. Consequences will range from a verbal warning for minor misconduct up to and including expulsion for the most serious offenses. Behavior that violates the law may be referred to law enforcement authorities. The teacher has the authority to judge the appropriateness of student conduct and enforce consequences.

Procedures for disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, are in the Student Code of Conduct, which is to be found in the appendix to this handbook. **Please review the Code of Conduct with your child(ren) and be sure they understand the rules for behavior.**

Technology Resources

We offer computers, network, and Internet access to support the educational mission of the school and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff.

Provision of technology resources is a team effort at our school. While the school does own some of the available technology equipment, including tablets, the majority of our computer and network equipment and much of our technical support are loaned or contributed through State of Maine entities. Networkmaine's Maine School and Library Network (MSLN) supplies an internet connection, technical support, and other internet services, including web filtering. The Maine Department of Education's Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) loans/leases MacBook laptops to the school and provides the software, professional development, technical support, wireless network, and other tools and services needed to support use of those laptops. The teacher is responsible for day-to-day oversight of computers, internet access, and other technology resources. The Technology Consultant provides

technical support to the teacher and students as needed, including assistance upon request with obtaining home internet access via the MLTI laptops.

With access to technology resources, come expectations of responsibility. Student use of computers, networks and Internet services provided via the school is a privilege, not a right. Adhering to the school's policies and rules concerning computer and internet use is mandatory. These policies and rules also apply to laptops issued directly to students, whether in use at school or off school premises. Students who violate the school's policies and rules may have their computer privileges limited, suspended, or revoked. Such violations may also result in disciplinary action, referral to law enforcement, and/or legal action. The school's policy and rules for computer and internet use are listed in the appendix of this handbook. **Please review the Rules for Computer & Internet Use with your child(ren) and make sure they understand the expectations.**

The school has video-conferencing capabilities. As needed, we will set expectations and address questions regarding student involvement in video-conferencing.

Academics

Homework and Study Skills

Homework and study skills are two functions that are very important in enhancing a student's academic career at the Monhegan School. Homework serves as a way to review and reinforce lessons that are taught during the day. Homework is also a way to allow students to develop work and study habits that will assist them later in life. Lastly, homework is a time when students can finish and review assignments they may not have been able to complete during the school day for various reasons.

All students will receive homework at the Monhegan School, but the amount and degree of difficulty will depend on their grade level. Any time you can check over your student's assignments to see that these expectations are being met will help your student to understand the importance of valuing their work. This also shows them that you understand the importance of the assignment and the expectations that go with it.

If at any time you feel that your student is having difficulty with homework assignments or you are concerned with the amount of work your student has, please feel free to contact the teacher.

Early-Kindergarten (Early-K) & Kindergarten Screenings

The primary purpose of early-kindergarten and kindergarten screening is to better plan and prepare for the instructional needs of every child. During the first month of early-K enrollment, the school will conduct a screening that covers several developmental areas. Should the screening produce evidence of developmental delays in any key area, a referral will be made to the parents to follow up with an evaluation by Child Development Services (CDS). That evaluation would be scheduled and coordinated by the parent(s) and would most likely be

conducted on the mainland. Access to CDS services must be initiated by the parent before the child turns 5-years-old.

For students who enter Monhegan School without having attended early-K, the school will provide kindergarten screening within the first month. This process closely parallels the Early-K screening, using appropriate age norms.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team Referral

Teachers, by contacting the superintendent and parents, will refer any child that they believe may be in need of Special Education services to the IEP Team for an evaluation in the suspected areas of disability. The team is usually comprised of parents, teachers, administrators and special service providers. Parents may at any time refer their child to the IEP Team by contacting the superintendent or the teacher. The school will maintain an IEP for any student who has been identified with a disability and in need of Special Education services.

Gifted and Talented (G/T) Program

A guiding philosophy of Monhegan School is that all students should be encouraged and supported to develop their unique strengths and abilities. In order to support students with exceptional academic, intellectual or artistic aptitude, the school works to provide appropriate accelerated and special programming. Beginning in the third grade, various measures, including an IQ test, local assessments and recommendations, are used to identify students eligible for G/T programming. The school engages a G/T specialist who consults with the teacher to develop an individualized Talent Development Plan for each identified student.

Standardized Testing

Along with other public schools in Maine, we administer the state selected assessment test for grades 3-8, unless parents choose to opt out. Test results will be given to parents and we encourage parents to discuss them with the teacher.

School Records, Safety & Health

Progress Reporting

Progress reports are issued three times a year on a trimester basis. Students in grades early-K to 8 will receive a written narrative. Portfolios will also be maintained of each child's work. Although there are parent-teacher conferences scheduled following the first, second and third trimesters, parents are encouraged to keep in touch with the teacher and arrange a meeting whenever needed.

Student Records

The privacy of parents and students is protected by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This law provides parents the right of access to their child's records and defines limits to the disclosure of records. Please see "Notification of Rights under FERPA" in the appendix for more information.

Emergency Information

It is important to keep up-to-date emergency information on file at the school for each student. Be sure the teacher has this current information:

1. Name of parent, guardian or other responsible person(s), address, and telephone numbers (day and evening)
2. Name and phone number of the child's physician
3. Names and phone numbers of two other adults who can be contacted in case parent/guardian cannot be reached
4. Any pertinent medical or physical conditions and instructions for handling the situation (e.g., seizures, severe allergies, diabetes)

Student Health Screenings & Services

The school nurse visits Monhegan once a year, usually in September or October, to perform a vision, hearing and growth screening. Beyond minor first aid, school staff are not authorized nor trained to provide medical or nursing services. The school nurse is available for consultation by telephone and email year-round.

Immunizations

All students who enroll in the school are required by Maine law to present a certificate of immunization or evidence of immunization against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chicken pox). A copy of the Day Care Immunization Standards are available on the Maine Dept. of Education website (<http://www.maine.gov/doe/publicpreschool/requirements/health.html>) to help determine what immunizations are needed prior to enrollment. Please contact the school nurse should you have questions.

State law does make a provision for an exemption based on personal, medical, or religious objection to immunizations. In such cases, parents must contact the school nurse to complete a letter of exemption. Should a case of vaccine-preventable disease occur in the school community, the under- or non-immunized child will be excluded from school for a specified amount of time, during which the school is not responsible for provision of tutoring services. Any letter of exemption must be updated annually for the exemption to remain valid.

Medication in the School

The only medications considered necessary to be taken at school are those prescribed by a physician to be taken on a schedule that cannot be adjusted to outside school hours. When it becomes necessary for a student to take any form of medication at school, an Administration of Medication form signed by the parent and prescribing doctor must be returned to the school before any medication can be administered. This also applies to school field trips; in addition, a parent may be required to accompany his/her child on the field trip. In such cases where parents arrange for medication to be administered in school or on field trips in the absence of a parent, parents should be aware that they are permitting personnel not licensed in the medical field to administer the medication. Any medication should be delivered to school staff by the parent and should be in the original prescription bottle or, if an over the counter medication, it should be in the original container.

School/Home Relationship

Education takes place both in and out of school. The best education happens when there is communication and collaboration between home, community, and school. When information and expectations are shared, and skills, knowledge, and values reinforced, students learn in an environment of support and respect.

Open and active communication between parents, students, the community, and the school is essential to ensure that our children have the best opportunity to learn. This school handbook is one means of sharing information. Our guidance consultant contacts each family by email before her monthly visits, and is available to talk with you. Our superintendent also visits monthly and checks in with parents. School Committee meetings are open to all. Most importantly, our teacher is available to parents when they want to talk.

One of the great advantages of our small school and island community is that parents have so many opportunities to be involved in their child's education. Volunteers help keep the school vibrant and connected to the community. Whether it is helping with a project at school, chaperoning a field trip, sharing your knowledge and interests with the students, or supporting your child's study habits at home, your participation makes a difference.

Friends of Monhegan School

Friends of Monhegan School is a fundraising arm of the school that organizes fundraisers and accepts donations to be used for field trips, as well as for modest expenses of the school not directly tied to student and staff needs (e.g. artwork framing, piano tuning, landscape plantings for School and Teacher Houses honoring students and teachers). We can always use more Friends! Help with fundraising and ideas are always welcome. Contact a member of the School Committee for details.

Monhegan School Youth Arts Initiative

Monhegan School Youth Arts Initiative (MSYAI) is a fundraising arm of the school, started in 2015, that fundraises and accepts donations to be used exclusively to expose Monhegan students to artforms that they have difficulty accessing due to the community's remote location. MSYAI is used to enhance rather than supplant tax-payer funded Monhegan School's visual and performing arts programming. Specifically, the MSYAI funds: 1) visits and programming *at Monhegan School* by artists and performers from whom students would otherwise not have the opportunity to learn due to geographic isolation, 2) virtual lessons taught by professionals in various art forms, and 3) field trip expenses directly related to attending museums, performances, and hands-on learning opportunities in the arts. Contact the teacher or a member of the School Committee for details on how to assist with this fundraising work.

Parent Teacher Conferences

At a minimum, there there will be one conference scheduled each trimester to discuss student goals and progress. In reality, there is no limit to the opportunities to be in touch with your child's teacher. Parents are encouraged to arrange a conference whenever they feel the need, by calling the teacher and finding a time to meet.

Parental Concerns Procedure

We believe that concerns and questions can almost always be resolved by talking with each other. When communication between the teacher and parents is open, constructive and respectful, the child is the winner. However, if parents have a concern or complaint that cannot be resolved by meeting with the teacher, there is a procedure to follow which brings the issue to the Superintendent and then, as necessary, to the School Committee. (Please see Parental Concerns Procedure KBD in the school policy manual).

Appendix

This appendix contains the following policies that the Monhegan School is required to distribute to students and parents at the start of each school year:

[Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity & Affirmative Action, AC](#), 6/30/03 revision;

[Hazing, ACAD](#), 7/26/04;

[Monhegan School Student Code of Conduct, ADAA-A](#), 5/19/08 revision;

[Drug/Alcohol Use & Possession, ADB](#), 8/31/90;

Bomb Threats, EBCC, 12/16/02; - hard copy provided to families and available by request to Monhegan School Committee

[Pest Management, ECB](#), 10/20/03

[Student Computer & Internet Use, IJNDB](#), 7/23/12;

[Student Computer & Internet Use Rules, IJNDB-R](#), 10/26/09;

[Bullying, JICK](#), 01/29/13

[Notification of Rights Under FERPA, JRA-E](#), 4/23/03

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