



Student and Parent Handbook

2016-17

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction
Diversity and Tolerance
Equal Opportunity in School Programs and Practices
R.I.S.E.
Discipline Policy
Violent and Threatening Behavior
Child Study Team Guidelines
Uniform Policy
Visitation Policy
Student Pick Up and Drop off Policy
Attendance Policy
Tardiness Policy
Parties
Health Examinations and Immunizations
Administration of Medicines
Early Room and Extended Day
Breakfast and Lunch Programs
Extended Learning and Enrichment
School Emergency Closings
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) on Student Records
Public Health Code Regulations

INTRODUCTION

This booklet is designed to share our school policies and objectives with you. We hope it will provide you and your child with a clear understanding of the rights and responsibilities of a student at Side by Side.

In accordance with Federal guidelines, we will be distributing the following information to parents, students, and staff members of Side by Side on an annual basis.

DIVERSITY AND TOLERANCE

We believe that it is important for schools to actively promote social and cultural tolerance. Our children are growing up in a world that is rapidly changing and becoming ever more diverse. We feel that it is essential that they learn to respect differences (ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation) and work with many different kinds of people in an open and flexible manner.

Our aim at Side by Side is to use the diversity of our community and our student body to teach tolerance. We have a wonderful opportunity to create a community where our differences can be discussed and celebrated and where all children can learn to work together successfully.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Side by Side affirms its intent to provide equal opportunity in its programs and practices regardless of race, color, creed, religion, economic status, national origin, sex, age, marital status, or specific needs.

It is the policy of this school, in conjunction with the Norwalk Board of Education, to identify, evaluate, and provide appropriate educational services for students who are handicapped within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

R.I.S.E (RESPECT, INDEPENDENCE, SOCIAL-JUSTICE, EMPATHY)

In January 2011, Side by Side formally adopted a safe school climate plan identified by the acronym R.I.S.E. The purpose of this plan is to create a positive school climate for all children and adults of the school community. The four behavioral expectations that are essential to promoting and maintaining a positive climate: RESPECT, INDEPENDENCE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, and EMPATHY, are also integral components of the unique mission and charter of Side by Side Charter School. This plan includes specific measures to prevent and alleviate the occurrence of bullying in school as well as a protocol for addressing reported acts of bullying when they occur.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Our behavioral expectations and discipline methods are based on the notion that every person in this school, teacher or student, is worthy of respect. We believe that every child has the right to feel safe from bullying, ridicule, and physical or emotional harm. Therefore, we do not tolerate behavior that is disruptive, disrespectful or emotionally damaging to others, nor do we use public humiliation or embarrassment as methods of discipline.

We believe that children have many choices besides passivity or aggression for dealing with conflict. We also believe that moral development is an ongoing, developmental process that is fostered by the right environment.

In light of these beliefs, we strive to create an atmosphere in which children can hear each other and be heard, and where they take an active part in solving their problems. Our aim is to give our children the tools they need to resolve conflict constructively so that they can develop an internal sense of control. We feel that this will foster moral and emotional growth and help children see that they can play a meaningful role in creating a more peaceful and just world.

At SbS, we follow the philosophy of guidelines of the Responsive Classroom, an approach to teaching that fosters respect and responsibility in the social curriculum.

We use the school discipline policy statement from Fitchburg Public Schools, K-8; Fitchburg, Massachusetts, as printed in the book, *Teaching Children to Care* by Ruth Charney. It is as follows:

1. Students will be given a reminder about inappropriate behavior.
2. If the reminder is not enough, the student will have a brief time-out or thinking time within view of the supervising adult, for the purpose of regaining self-control. After the time-out, the student will return to the lesson or activity. Discussion of the behavioral incident does not take place at the initiation of time-out. However, at a later time, discussion of rules and expectations may occur at staff discretion.

DISCIPLINE POLICY CONTINUED

A. If the misbehavior is flagrant or repeated; students may go to time-out directly, without the reminder step. In such cases, the teachers should notify the parents.

B. Teachers will use the strategy of time-out for small infractions consistently, rather than waiting for extreme behavioral incidents. Time-out is an opportunity to stop, regain self-control, and make a better plan, and all children may need it occasionally. Staff, students, and parents should understand that time-out is an intervention designed to help students regain self-control. *It is not a punishment for losing self-control.*

3. If during a time-out, a student continues to behave inappropriately or continues to be disruptive, the classroom teacher will have the student go to time-out in a “buddy teachers” room. An adult will accompany the student to and from a time-out area in that room. The student will return to his/her own classroom to resume regular activity when appropriate. In most cases, if the buddy teacher stop is needed, the classroom teacher will contact the parents to inform them that the buddy teacher strategy was used and that the child may need to use it again from time to time.

4. If a student becomes disruptive in the buddy teacher’s room or continues to misbehave upon return, the director or a designee will escort the student to the director’s office for a time-out there. The student will remain there until the director or designee determines that the student is ready to re-enter the classroom. The director or designee will contact the parent at his/her discretion.*

5. For safety reasons, teachers may skip the buddy teacher stop and send a child directly to the director or designee, who will escort the student to the office. The director or designee will contact the parents at the administration’s discretion.*

6. Steps 1 through 5 are used for inappropriate behavior to help children regain their self-control in the shortest time possible. Teachers will help students improve their behavior through these and other means that are reasonable and respectful of students needs.

7. For most students, the steps to self-control described here will be successful. In other cases, further specific management plans may be developed with the knowledge and help of parents, teachers, specialists, and administrators. Other consequences, as established below under the heading *violent/threatening behavior* may also be applied. Parents and students are expected to be familiar with the consequences described there.

*Parents are responsible for picking up his/her child if the misbehavior continues.

VIOLENT/THREATENING BEHAVIOR

In cases of physical contact with intent to hurt and/or threats of intent to hurt, the child or children involved will be immediately removed from the classroom and brought to the director and/or the social worker. Parents will be called by the director. Depending on the severity of the incident, the child or children may receive an in-school suspension where they will spend a specified amount of time in another classroom or an out-of-school suspension at home for a specified amount of time. In both cases, the student will be supplied with class work and homework by his/her teacher or reflective work relating to the specific offense. In the event of an out-of-school suspension, a Child Study Team meeting must be held before the child comes back to school. Parents are required to attend this meeting with their child. A Discipline Notice will be sent home that must be signed by the parent and returned to the school before the child can return to his/her classroom.

If we are considering suspending a child, we will, in accordance with Sections 10-233a-10-233g of the Connecticut General Statutes, inform the student of the prohibited conduct of which he or she has been accused and give the student an opportunity to tell his or her side of the story. No suspension will exceed 10 days. In the case of suspension, the school reserves the right to require a psychological evaluation and recommendation prior to the student’s return to school.

If we are considering expelling a student, we will hold a formal hearing at which evidence of the misconduct is presented and an opportunity is given for the student to cross-examine the Board’s witnesses. The student will also have the opportunity to present her or his own evidence. This is in accordance with Sections 10-233a-10233j of the Connecticut General Statutes. If a child is expelled from Side by Side, the parent has the option to return to the local school district in which they live.

CHILD STUDY TEAM GUIDELINES

The purpose of the Child Study Team is to respond to a concern about a student or group of students by gathering the appropriate adults for information-sharing and problem-solving meetings. At the meeting(s), area(s) of concern are identified and a course of action is decided upon by the Team members. Recommendations may include classroom modifications, discipline strategies, and/or referral for PPT.

The Team includes the child's teacher, parent/guardian(s), the social worker, and the director. Other possible Team members are the teacher/director, the nurse practitioner, other teachers, school staff, and other personnel associated with the child and family. The makeup of the Team may change over time as additional members are invited to share their views. All Team members are required to treat any information that comes up in the meetings with confidentiality.

UNIFORM POLICY

The Side By Side Charter School uniform is an emblem for students – a public way to show a commitment to this very special community and to the values it represents: integrity, achievement, hard work and service. The uniform policy at Side By Side Charter School is intended to help students maintain respect for themselves as well as for the school community, and is considered a point of pride and honor. The logo, which is displayed as part of this uniform, is a symbol the Side By Side Charter School's innovative approach to education, and the desire of this community to develop in students a global responsibility; an openness that helps all of us to come closer together, yet with a willingness to go outside the traditional boundaries that may bind our creativity and our unity. The bold colors of our logo celebrates the Side By Side Charter School's energy and uniqueness, while the artwork which is derived from many artistic traditions throughout the globe reflects the mission of our school in terms of embracing cultural diversity.

At the discretion of the school, days may be designated as "dress down" days for special occasions or unique events. Requests for "dress down" days must be made to and approved by the Director of the school.

Uniform Code:

- **All uniform shirts must be purchased through Side by Side Charter School.**
- All students are expected to comply with the Uniform Policy beginning the first day of school
- All students must wear clothing that is clean, neat, reasonably pressed and is the correct size. Clothing that is either too small or too over-sized will be considered not within the uniform code.

The Lower School uniform code consists of the following:

1. Official navy or green school uniform polo shirt with school logo for both boys and girls. Solid colored white, navy or green long-sleeved shirts that match the school colors may be worn underneath the short sleeve polo.
2. Navy or Khaki pants for boys or girls. Jeans of any color or style are not allowed. Cargo pants or any pants with adornments such as extra zippers, pockets, strings, etc. are not allowed.
3. Girls may wear either a navy or khaki skirt/skort instead of the pant option. As with pants, skirts are to be unadorned – plain skirts only. Skirt length shall be no more than 3 inches above the knee. Full length skirts are not allowed. Navy blue knee socks or tights/leggings are required when wearing a skirt.
4. Polo shirts may be worn untucked or tucked.
5. All students must wear socks and closed toed shoes or sneakers. Shoes must have flat soles. Boots may be worn in colder weather. Sneakers **MUST** be worn on gym days.
6. Hats, scarves or other non-uniform items are not allowed during the school day.
7. On gym days only, students may wear the optional "gym day" uniform, which consists of the official uniform Side By Side Charter School tee-shirt and navy sweatpants. Only Side By Side Charter School uniform tee-shirts are allowed and only on a gym day. Plain navy ankle-length sweatpants, no adornment of any kind, may be worn. Official Side By Side gym sweatpants may also be worn.
8. Shorts: Shorts without adornments of any kind, navy or khaki, may be substituted for the pant option. In addition, gym shorts, again plain navy, may be worn instead of sweatpants on gym days only.

UNIFORM POLICY CONTINUED

The Upper School uniform code consists of the following:

1. Boys or Girls - Official navy or white school uniform polo shirt with school logo. Solid colored white or navy long-sleeved shirts that match the school colors may be worn underneath the short sleeve polo.
2. Boys or Girls – Official school uniform long sleeved dress (button-down) shirt with school logo.
- 3.
4. Girls only – Official school uniform girl’s style collared shirt in navy or white with school logo. Solid colored white or navy long-sleeved shirts that match the school colors may be worn underneath the uniform girl’s style collared shirt.
5. Navy or Khaki pants for boys or girls. Jeans of any color or style are not allowed. Cargo pants or any pants with adornments such as extra zippers, pockets, strings, etc. are not allowed.
6. Girls may wear either a navy or khaki skirt/skort instead of the pant option. Again, skirts are to be unadorned – plain skirts only. Skirt length shall be no more than 3 inches above the knee. Full length skirts are not allowed. Navy blue knee socks or tights/leggings are required when wearing a skirt.
7. All school uniform shirts may be worn untucked or tucked.
8. All students must wear socks and closed toed shoes or sneakers. Sneakers and Shoes must have flat soles. Boots may be worn in colder weather. Sneakers **MUST** be worn on gym days.
9. Hats, scarves or other non-uniform items are not allowed during the school day.
10. On gym days only, student who choose to may wear the optional “gym day” uniform, which consists of the official uniform Side By Side Charter School tee-shirt and navy sweatpants. Only Side By Side Charter School uniform tee-shirts are allowed and only on gym day. Plain navy sweatpants, no adornment of any kind, may be worn. Official Side By Side gym sweatpants can also be worn.
11. **Shorts:** Shorts without adornments of any kind, navy or khaki, may be substituted for the pant option. In addition, gym shorts, again plain navy, may be worn instead of sweatpants on gym days only.

Enforcement & Consequences:

All students are expected to adhere to the full uniform policy as described in the policy during every day of school (unless announced as a “dress-down” day by the school.) Gym days allow for official gym uniforms, but coming to school in the gym day option when it is not a gym day is considered “out of uniform.”

“Out of Uniform” consequences:

Enforcement of the student uniform policy by the staff is to be consistent and objective. The school Director has ultimate authority with regards to any question as to whether or not students are in compliance with the uniform policy. Parents are expected to ensure that their children come to school properly dressed.

First Offense: A formal “warning notice” will be sent home by the homeroom teacher. Child will be required to wear a school-based uniform shirt for the remainder of the day (The loaned shirt is to be washed and returned to the school to avoid being charged for purchase)

Second Offense: Child will be sent to the Director for parent notification. Parents will be required to come to school to bring the appropriate needed uniform piece(s) to school. Disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to detention or community service will also be issued.

Third Offense: Second offense consequences will be issued. In addition, a mandatory meeting with school administration will be held with parent/guardian. Disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to detention, community service and/or a 1-day In-School-Suspension will also be issued.

The Side by Side logo is the copyrighted exclusive property of Side by Side Charter School and cannot be reproduced on any medium without the express approval of the school Director and/or Board of Directors.

VISITATION POLICY

Parents are always welcome to observe in the classroom. However, it can be very disruptive to learning to have unannounced visitors in the classroom. If you'd like to visit, please call ahead to schedule an appropriate time to come in.

If you would like to volunteer in your child's classroom or in another classroom, please notify the parent community coordinator and the teacher so that they can pick a time where you would be most helpful and brief you on the planned lesson or activity. Occasionally, a child exhibits behavior that is disruptive to the class as a result of his or her parent volunteering in the classroom. If this is the case, you may be asked by the teacher or the parent coordinator to work in another classroom.

If you need to pick up your child before our regular dismissal time, please notify your child's teacher with a note or phone call in the morning. Parents must sign out their children in the sign-out book located in the lobby.

If you have something to drop off to your child, such as a lunch or a jacket, please give it to the school secretary, and she will notify your child's teacher.

For the safety of your children, we also ask that any non-staff member who enters the building sign in at the front desk and obtain a visitor's name tag if he/she will be visiting/volunteering in a classroom.

STUDENT PICK UP AND DROP OFF POLICY

The regular school day is from 9:00 to 3:30. Please drop your children off at 9:00 in the lobby, unless they are in kindergarten or pre-k, in which case you should bring them to their classrooms at 9:00. If you need childcare before 9:00, please see the information about our Early Room in the Family Resource Center Handbook.

The school day ends at 3:30. All students NOT attending after-school activities are expected to be picked up at this time. If a child is not picked up on time, he/she will be automatically enrolled in our "Extended Day" program to ensure their safety and to provide proper adult supervision. ***Families will be charged a full-day fee for any child that is enrolled in Extended Day for this reason.***

If you are picking up your child before the end of an Extended Day at 5:30, she or he must be picked up and signed out by an authorized person. Please notify us, in writing, if anyone other than the regular authorized person is picking him or her up. Pre-k and kindergarten parents should pick up their children in the classroom. Students must be picked up at 5:30. If an emergency arises, we will allow a five minute grace period. There is a late fee of \$15 per student for each 15 minutes or part thereof. Please see the [Family Resource Center Handbook](#) for complete information.

In addition, please notify us in writing if you want your child to walk home alone or with another child, and please let us know in writing, anytime your child will be going home by a different means than usual. Even older children sometimes get confused about how they are supposed to get home.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In order for children to learn, both academically and socially, they need to attend school on a consistent basis. It is the parents' responsibility to make sure that their children attend school, unless they are absent for one of the following reasons:

An illness or injury that prevents participation in regular school activities

A medical or dental appointment that can only be made during school hours (please try to schedule appointments after school hours whenever possible)

An acute, serious illness or death in the family

*Please limit family vacations to our scheduled vacation periods

**Please note: Children should not be sent to school if they have had a fever in the last 24 hours, have a temperature higher than 98.8, have vomiting or diarrhea, or have an unidentified rash. See the chart at the back of the booklet for specific illnesses.

If your child cannot attend school due to one of the reasons listed above, the absence is considered an excused absence. Absences for family vacations are not excused or legal, and the staff is not required to provide work for children who are absent for this reason.

ATTENDANCE POLICY CONTINUED

If your child is absent for any reason, please do the following:

- Notify the school by phone if your child will not be attending school that day.
- Notify the school when your child will be coming in late due to a medical or dental appointment, even if the child will be attending school later in the day.
- Send in a note with your child when she or he returns stating the reason for the absence, the dates of absence, and your signature.

If the child is marked absent by the teacher, and we have not heard from his or her parent, a staff member or parent volunteer will call his or her home. This is done to ensure the safety of the child.

On January 2, 2008, the State Board of Education approved the following definition of attendance for public school districts:

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion will be considered absent.

This definition took effect at the start of the 2008-9 school year. Students must be at school 3.25 hours to be marked present.

If a child has more than four (4) unexcused absences during a month or more than ten (10) at any time during the school year, we will request that the parent participate in an attendance assessment meeting. An attendance assessment meeting will also be held if there is an unusual pattern of absences. The purpose of such a meeting is to determine if family assistance is needed to ensure that the child attends school consistently.

If we are unable to contact the parent or a parent will not attend meetings regarding attendance, the matter will be referred to The Juvenile Matters Court Unit of the Family Division of Connecticut Superior Court, as specified in Connecticut General Statute 10-198a.

Because Side by Side is a charter school committed to the success of every child, we reserve the right to require a child to attend summer school if he or she has been excessively absent. This may be a condition for promotion.

TARDINESS POLICY

Classes run more smoothly and students are better able to focus on their day if everyone arrives to class on time. In order to encourage all members of the Side by Side community to arrive on time, we have adopted the following regulations regarding tardiness:

The regular school day starts at 9:00. All students who arrive before 9:00, must be supervised by a parent/guardian until the start of the school day or must register either for Early Room (available from 7:30 – 9:00) or for the Breakfast Program (available from 8:30 – 9:00). Please see the Family Resource Center Handbook for more details on Early Room. If a child is consistently arriving to school earlier than 9:00 without meeting these requirements, his/her parent/guardian will be contacted to address this matter.

All students should be in their classes and ready to begin work at 9:00. Children and parents who arrive at school after 9:10 will need to sign in at the office and obtain a late pass in order to enter his/her classroom. Children must be brought into the building by a parent, or they will not be allowed up to their classrooms. Any child arriving to school after 9:10 will be considered **tardy** for that day. All student tardiness will be recorded in the school attendance files.

If a child is tardy four (4) or more times in a month or more than twelve (12) times at any point during the school year, that child's parent or guardian will be asked to meet with the teacher, director, or social worker to discuss solutions to the problem. Lateness due to school bus or public transportation is NOT considered a tardy.

PARTIES

Children's parties, birthdays and otherwise are important to the child and family hosting the celebration. We understand that it is often not possible to invite the whole class to a party. Therefore we ask that you consider the feelings of children not invited by distributing invitations through the mail and not at school. We also ask that you be discreet about discussing social arrangements around children who are not included. Gifts are not to be brought in to school even if they are for a party scheduled for after school. Of course, parents may make arrangements with teachers to honor birthdays at school by providing simple snacks for the entire class. Goody bags, party hats, balloons, cameras, and/or video are not permitted. Students are not to give presents to each other at school.

HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

In compliance with state mandate, Side by Side requires physical examinations prior to school entry and/or before entering kindergarten and some time during the sixth-grade year. Children whose parents fail to provide proof of the required health examination prior to the opening of school will be recommended for exclusion until such time as the conditions are satisfied. In addition, all newly entering students must submit an updated immunizations health form to the school nurse. Students will not be permitted to attend without this record. Only parents who file a notarized written objection based on religious belief or medical advice will be exempt from these requirements.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES

The school nurse may administer medicines, including such controlled drugs as the public health officer may, by regulation, designate, to any student pursuant to the written order of a physician, dentist, APRN, or PA licensed to practice medicine in this state and the written authorization of the parent or guardian of a child. Medicines without the written order of an authorized health care practitioner will not be administered.

In the absence of the school nurse, the director or teacher designees who have been properly trained may administer medication in accordance with the written authorization of the parent or guardian. In addition, if authorized by a physician, dentist, APRN, or PA and by the parent or guardian, the self-administration of bronco-dilators and EpiPens by students will be allowed.

School personnel who administer medication are expected to comply with the procedures for administration set forth in regulation 5141.8.

EARLY ROOM AND EXTENDED DAY POLICY

Please see the Side by Side Family Resource Center Handbook for complete details on our Early Room and Extended Day programs.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

Side by Side offers the Free and Reduced Breakfast and Lunch Program for our students. Applications for Free and/or Reduced Priced Meals are sent home the first week of school and are available throughout the school year. Breakfast is available in the gymnasium from 8:30 to 9:00 am. Current breakfast prices are \$1.25/day for both lower and upper school students, and reduced price breakfast is \$0.30/day for all qualifying students.

Lower school lunch (pre-K thru 5th grades) is currently \$2.65/day; and Upper School is \$3.25/day. Reduced price lunch meals are \$0.40/day for qualifying lower and upper school students. Milk only purchases are \$0.50/day.

All students are assigned a PIN# by the Frank Harris Nutrition Center through Norwalk Public Schools for the POS (point of sale) system at Side by Side for the purchase of breakfast and/or hot lunch meals. Parents have two options for paying for meals: send your payment in the form of cash or check in an envelope marked with your child's name and grade and that money will be put into your child's account based on his/her PIN #; or use myschoolbucks.com to register and create an online payment account. **Myschoolbucks** allows parents to replenish their child's account at any time throughout the school year and receive "low balance" alerts.

Following is additional information explaining the Norwalk Public School's policies for students that have lunch but have not paid:

Lower School:

Step 1. When a student, for the **first** time, does not have money in his/her lunch account: The student will be informed of the negative balance by the cashier at the time of checkout. A hot lunch will be provided and charged to his/her account (\$2.65 regular price, \$0.40 for reduced price).

After 3 days of non-payment, a list will be given to the school (director, social worker, outreach worker etc.). The Director or designee will contact the parents of the outstanding balance and ask for payment.

Step 2. After 5 days of non-payment, contact will be made once again to discuss the outstanding balance. If payment is not received, an alternate lunch will be provided and the student's account will continue to be charged \$2.65/.040 per each meal. (This could be extended to the 10th day).

Note: Alternate lunch meal for lower school is a cheese sandwich, milk and vegetable. If a food service debt is owed, report cards can and will be held; nor will scholarships/discounts for future programs be available.

Upper School:

Step 1. When a student, for the **first** time, does not have money in his/her lunch account:

- The student will be informed of the negative balance by the cashier at the time of checkout. A hot lunch will be provided and charged to his/her account (\$3.25 regular price, \$0.40 for reduced price).
- No deli items will be served, only the hot lunch meal offered for that day will be served.

Step 2. When a student, for the **second** time, does not have money in his/her lunch account:

- The student will be informed at the register he /she must bring in money the following day or they will receive an alternate lunch.
- At the end of the lunch period the café manager will inform the director or his designee of the unpaid balance. The director or designee will make contact with the parent to inform them of the outstanding balance and ask for payment and inform the parent that only an alternate meal will be served.

Step 3. When a student, for the **third, fourth and fifth** times, does not have money in his/her lunch account:

- The student will be informed at the register that they can only have the alternate lunch meal.
Note: Alternate meals at the upper school will consist of a cheese sandwich, vegetable and milk.

The parent will be informed that after the fifth non-payment no lunch will be served until the account is cleared.

If a food service debt is owed, report cards can and will be held; nor will scholarships/discounts for programs be available.

EXTENDED LEARNING AND ENRICHMENT AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Extended Learning is a scheduled after-school program offered for students (grades 2-8) in order to provide academic assistance in literacy and mathematics. This small group instruction, designed to facilitate more curriculum-based learning, occurs outside of the traditional school day (3:35-4:30) one day per week throughout the school year and is taught by a member of our teaching staff. Students will be referred to Extended Learning by their classroom teachers based on their individual learning levels, and the method and nature of instructional support will be determined in collaborative data team. Additionally, high achieving students in grades 5-8 that have been recommended by their teachers, will have the opportunity to participate in an after school enrichment group. Recent Enrichment offerings have included a “Lego Engineering” team that competed with teams across the state in the FIRST LEGO League Robotics competition as well as Odyssey of the Mind for students in grades 2-4 and Rainforest Link, a cultural exchange initiative developed by Stepping Stones Museum for Children.

SCHOOL EMERGENCY AND CLOSINGS POLICY

Side by Side follows the Norwalk Board of Education closings for emergencies such as snow. If they are closed or have a delayed opening we have the same. We may also post our own closings for Extended Day activities when there is an emergency. In case of inclement weather, please listen to WNLK at 1350 AM, WICC at 1600 AM or News 12 for the Norwalk Public School closings. You can also call the Norwalk Public Schools Inclement Weather Hotline at 854-4123.

All students must have an emergency form on file in the school office, which includes a parent’s current home and business telephone number. This form must be signed by the parent when a child is registered at Side by Side. If there is any change in information during the school year, please notify the office immediately.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) ON STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents and students over the age of 18 years certain rights with respect to the student’s educational records. They are:

The right to inspect and review the student’s educational records within 10 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit a written request to the director of the school that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parents or eligible students of the time and place where the record may be inspected.

The rights to request the amendment of the student’s records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask Side by Side to amend a record that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. They should write the director of the school and clearly identify the part of the record that they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If Side by Side decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent, it will notify the parent in writing of the decision and advise them of the right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support-staff member (including health or medical staff); a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditory or medical consultant, or therapist; or a parent or student serving on a special committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in his or her tasks). A school official has a legitimate interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, Side by Side will disclose educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

Individuals have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the regulations of FERPA. The name and address of the administration office of FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
 U.S. Department of Education
 600 Independence Avenue, SW
 Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

PUBLIC HEALTH CODE REGULATIONS: Rules for Absence and Exclusion From School
 (As set forth in the Public Health Code of the State of Connecticut)

As a rule, children should not be sent to school if they have a cold or communicable disease, had a fever in the last 24 hours, have a temperature higher than 98.8, have vomiting or diarrhea, or have an unidentified rash. The chart below refers to specific illnesses. Communicable diseases must be reported to the Department of Health at 854-7776 by the child’s physician or parent.

DISEASE	TIME PATIENT IS EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL
Chicken Pox	Six days from onset
Diphtheria	Until two negative cultures have been obtained by a physician
German Measles	Five days from onset
Impetigo	On certification from a physician that patient is under adequate treatment
Fungus Ringworm of Scalp	On certification from a physician that patient is under adequate treatment
Influenza	Until clinically well
Ivy or Shrub Poisoning	Not excluded
Measles	Five days after rash appears
Meningococccic Meningitis	Until certified by physician as cured
Mumps	Until glands are normal
Pediculosis (Head Lice)	Until all signs of nits are gone
Pinkeye	On certification from a physician that patient is under adequate treatment
Poliomyelitis	Ten days
Rash	Until diagnosed by physician plus certification that patient is under adequate treatment
Scabies	Until diagnosed by physician plus certification that patient is under adequate treatment
Scarlet Fever Streptococcal Sore Throat	On certification from a physician that patient is under adequate treatment
Tuberculosis (Active)	Until three negative cultures have been obtained by a physician
Whooping Cough	Three weeks after whooping begins

These rules are in general as set forth in the Public Health Code of the State of Connecticut.