

COMPASS SCHOOL HANDBOOK

2010-2011

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Vision

Compass School provides a unique model for publicly accessible education, serving children in our region while making an impact on the larger educational world. We embody an inspiring learning community that balances personalized education with high expectations for all, leading each student to successful graduation and post-graduate experiences.

Mission

The Compass School inspires and educates students to gain the knowledge, skills, and personal qualities essential to pursuing their dreams and having a positive impact on the world.

Our Values

At Compass, we...

- *Integrate rigorous academics with teaching to the whole person (intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and aesthetic).*
- *Live and teach our values, creating a community of respect, tolerance, democracy, healthy relationships, and service.*
- *Establish student responsibility, leadership and ownership.*
- *Recognize the importance of great teachers—skilled, committed, inspired, whole people.*
- *Ensure that all students experience a variety of opportunities and approaches to learning.*
- *Personalize our approaches and attend to individual needs and passions so that every child can experience success.*
- *Hold high expectations for all.*
- *Combine classroom learning and real world experiences that extend education beyond the school walls.*

Learning Results

The Compass program is thoughtfully designed to develop:

- **Knowledge and Academic Achievement** through rigorous courses designed to address meaningful issues using a wide range of learning styles.
- **Citizenship and Leadership** through involvement in school wide democracy, community service and interaction with diverse cultures near and far.
- **Self Awareness and Confidence** through our rigorous portfolio evaluation process requiring all students to reflect deeply on their strengths and areas for growth.
- **Problem Solving and Critical Thinking Skills** through diverse experiences that demand students apply their learning to real world challenges.
- **The Ability to Work with Others and Value Diversity** by working closely with peers and adults to create a stronger community at Compass and in the larger world.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Philosophy

Compass School offers a middle and high school program that balances depth of understanding and breadth of coverage, is responsive to student needs, and involves students actively in the learning process. Compass prepares students for the world outside school and encourages them to become active and involved community members.

The Compass program is built around our Five Learning Realms: Knowledge, Thinking and Reasoning, Communication, Community Involvement, and Personal Development. Students develop in each of these realms by engaging in meaningful investigations that will expand their thinking and knowledge, help them to develop skills and exercise judgment, and encourage them to explore the connections in the world around them.

The framework of the Compass School follows a curriculum of diverse learning experiences that initially grounds students in their immediate surroundings and radiates out to the larger world as they progress towards graduation. Assessment uses a variety of strategies, seeking to be performance-based and focused on key understandings and the ability to apply information and skills. Students, teachers, and parents are encouraged to have an active role in determining the topics and activities of the evolving curriculum.

Teaching, Learning, and Student Growth at Compass

As students move through the Compass program, they are led from structured learning situations with a high degree of teacher direction and support to increasingly independent learning experiences. Students are encouraged to undertake studies that challenge them and that draw on their personal interests and abilities. With the guidance of the faculty and the help of peers, students learn the skills of organization, decision making, problem solving, and critical and creative thinking. As they progress through their high school years, students are given opportunities to take increasing ownership for their learning and to exercise leadership for themselves and the school as they become responsible and independent learners.

Student success is our goal. The small size of the school, flexible programming, and a supportive learning community promote individual attention to Compass students. By providing engaging learning experiences, opportunities to build on student interests, and specific attention to individual needs, Compass School aims to help each student develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to succeed in school and beyond.

STATE APPROVAL

Pursuant to Vermont Statutes Annotated, Title 16.166(b), The Vermont State Board of Education has granted independent school approval to Compass School. Compass is also an approved member of the Coalition of Essential Schools, a national network of quality schools dedicated to student centered, principles based learning (see www.essentialschools.org for more information). The Common Principles are listed at the end of the handbook.

LIFE AT COMPASS

The School Day

Students should be at school by 8:20 and classes at 8:25 when attendance is taken. Please do not drop off children before 7:30 as supervision is not provided and the school is not open.

Classes begin at 8:25, and advisory (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday) or all school meeting (Monday and Thursday) is scheduled at 10:10. We suggest that students bring a healthy snack for this morning break. Classes resume at 10:30 and continue until lunch. Students should bring lunches or purchase them through the school lunch program. Our breakfast and lunch program features healthy, tasty food, some grown at school. A weekly menu will be provided. The cost of lunches is \$3.75 per day, with \$37.50 and \$75 lunch cards sold through the office. Breakfasts are \$2.00. Students are expected not to use the phone for lunch arrangements or to have food delivered to school. Lunch is followed by afternoon classes beginning at 12:10 the first semester and 12:40 during second semester that are held until 2:10.

Exploratories are offered three days a week: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, beginning at 2:30 and continuing until dismissal at 4:00. Students who may be involved in an exploratory outside of school must be picked up by 2:30.

Wednesday and Friday are staff meeting days with 2:10 dismissal for all students.

All parents must see that their children have transportation to and from school. Departure from school must be no later than 4:15 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and 2:30 on Wednesday and Friday.

SCHEDULE

First Semester

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Friday

7:30 Building open
8:25 Math/Spanish Period 1
9:20 Math/Spanish Period 2
10:10 Advisory/All School Meeting
10:30 Main Lesson Block I
11:30 Lunch
12:10 Main Lesson Block 2
1:10 Main Lesson Block 3
2:10 Break **(Friday Dismissal)**
2:30 Exploratories
4:00 Dismissal

Wednesday

7:30 Building open
8:25 Math/Spanish Period 1
9:20 Math/Spanish Period 2
10:10 Advisory
10:30 MS: Main Lesson Block I, HS Seminar
11:30 Lunch
12:10 Supervised Study/All School Event/Service
2:10 Dismissal

Second Semester

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Friday

7:30 Building open
8:25 Math/Spanish Period 1
9:20 Math/Spanish Period 2
10:10 Advisory/All School Meeting
10:30 Main Lesson Block I
12:00 Lunch
12:40 Main Lesson Block II
2:10 Break **(Friday Dismissal)**
2:30 Exploratories
4:00 Dismissal

Wednesday

7:30 Building open
8:25 Math/Spanish Period 1
9:20 Math/Spanish Period 2
10:10 Advisory
10:30 MS: Main Lesson Block I, HS Seminar
12:00 Lunch
12:40 Supervised Study/All School Event/Service
2:10 Dismissal

SNOW DAYS

It is our policy for Compass to follow the school cancellation decisions of the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union. Listen for radio announcements placed on local stations for cancellations for Windham Northeast (WTSA, Q106, WFCR, WKNE). You can also check www.overnet.com or www.wtsa.net for school cancellations.

THE LEARNING PROGRAM AT COMPASS

Two Semester Schedule: Fall Semester features “Core Studies” when students build the foundations for more interdisciplinary, elective work later in the year. To allow detailed attention to the traditional disciplines of English, Social Studies, and Science, the high school will have three hour-long classes, one in Science, one in a “Social Studies” focused Humanities course, and another in an “English” focused Humanities course. Middle school, with control over their own schedule, will designate time for Humanities and Science in the longer periods before and after lunch. The second semester will follow a four block schedule, allowing for more in depth courses and electives that touch upon multiple disciplines.

Main Lesson: The main lesson blocks are the heart of the academic program at Compass. In the first semester, ninth grade students will be enrolled in a foundational Science course, an “English” course focused on Writing, and a “Social Studies” course focused on Civics and the Constitution. 10th-12th graders will be enrolled in core Science, a “Social Studies” focused Humanities course,

and an “English” focused Humanities course. In the second semester, each student will be enrolled in one Humanities and one Science and Technology Main Lesson block. Middle school is organized around two more extended periods for Humanities and Science throughout the year.

Main lesson time is designed to have students learn the essential concepts and skills in the traditional academic subject areas by investigating real world examples and engaging in "hands-on, minds-on" application of learning. Through the organization of Main Lesson, Compass seeks to develop independent learners able to pose questions, solve problems, and apply the tools and ideas of a variety of disciplines to understand and make a difference in the world around them. A balance of "teacher directed" and teacher supported "student project" time is structured to help students develop as independent learners. As a general guideline, the percentage of time for student project time will increase with increasing maturity and age of the students.

Main lesson is intended to engage students in applying multiple disciplines to the exploration of ideas. When appropriate, Main Lesson teachers will coordinate activities to further reinforce these connections between subject areas of study. Student learning in Main lesson will be demonstrated with a variety of evidence including projects, exams, presentations, reflective writing, homework assignments, and in-class discussions.

Mathematics: While math is incorporated within main lesson study at various times, developing math skills involves a degree of concentrated study. Each student will be enrolled in a math class that meets daily for 50 minutes to support each student in their developing comfort and skill with mathematical problem solving, computation, reasoning, thinking, and communication.

Spanish: The Compass School highly values development of second language skills in all our students. In addition to improving skills in both the foreign language and English, exposure to foreign language learning opens doors for our students to other cultures and perspectives. Our Spanish courses are designed to provide students an enjoyable and safe introduction to foreign language and cultures and to help each student build proficiency over time. By focusing on Spanish at Compass, we are able to incorporate Spanish into various areas of the school program, including trips, all school meetings, and guest speakers where, at times, Spanish is the primary language of use. All Compass students are required to be proficient at the level of two years of high school study before being exempt from foreign language study.

Exploratories: Exploratories are intended to develop well-rounded individuals by exposing students to the wealth of learning beyond traditional academic core subjects. Students are required to successfully complete exploratory courses in physical education and the arts. Two days each week are dedicated to “Intensives”—two day offerings in Art, Music, Physical Activity, Academics, and Service with the third day organized around more diverse options that allow students to try out new activities and expand their horizons.

Exploratory offerings are wide ranging and may include photography, computer technology, cooking, video production, holistic health, creative writing, woodworking, jewelry making, gardening and other appropriate topics suggested by students and faculty. The exploratory program will be discussed in advisory so students understand the program, are aware of requirements, and make positive choices.

Students are required to participate in exploratory activities three afternoons each week. Each student must minimally receive 2 exploratory credits in each of the areas of physical education, visual and performing arts, for a total of 12 credits, in the course of the school year. In meeting these minimum requirements, an exploratory "credit" is considered meeting once per week for one eight-week exploratory period.

It is our hope that students will go far beyond these minimums in exploring the wide range of experiences that make our lives whole and rewarding. Students engaged in similar activities

outside the school program can apply for credit in the exploratory requirement. There is a process for students to propose and lead individual or group exploratories or to do exploratory activities outside school. Students are encouraged to propose and organize courses of their own by submitting a proposal sheet to the Exploratory Coordinator (form available in appendix).

Exploratories are a privilege offered to students. Students whose behavior disrupts the positive tone of exploratory will be required to go home early and will not receive credit for that exploratory.

Physical Fitness and Sports:

Physical activity is an essential part of health and wellness. All students are expected to participate in some form of physical activity throughout the year. Through exploratory time, students have the opportunity to engage in both competitive and non-competitive athletic activities. Non-competitive offerings include yoga, winter survival, mountain biking, hiking, Frisbee, ball games, winter sports and challenge course. Compass also has competitive sports teams in soccer, basketball, and ultimate frisbee. Students also may be able to join with other local schools for competitive individual sports such as track and field.

We encourage all students to participate on our sports teams. The purposes of our competitive sports teams are to help students develop athletic skill, improve physical well being and coordination, learn the value of teamwork, goal setting, and dedication to work, become more sportsmanlike in victory and defeat, and last but not least, have fun along with peers and faculty.

We try to maintain a balance between being competitive in interschool games and encouraging widespread participation of all team members in competitive games. While we don't guarantee equal game time for each student, we try our best to involve each individual fully in all aspects of the team and to find a place in which each student contributes to the team and can also achieve personal success.

While we aim to perform our best in interschool competition and we certainly enjoy winning, the overriding goal for the sports program is to have students learn to strive for their personal best as individuals and as a team. While we expect to learn to win and lose graciously, we won't measure our success by our won-loss record. We will, however, push our students to aim for personal greatness, team development, and continual growth.

The weekly schedule is adjusted in Winter to accommodate winter sports at local ski and skating areas. All students are required to participate in this program and be engaged in an outdoor activity at this time. Details of the program will appear in the newsletter in December. There is a minimal fee for Winter Sports charged by ski areas.

Visual Art Philosophy: An understanding for the arts encourages appreciation for self, peers, and culture. The arts are an important element in American and all cultures throughout history. At Compass, all students are expected to complete at least two credits of art exploratories throughout the year. Exploratory offerings include drawing, painting, animation, photography, stained glass, sculpture, chorus, and a variety of other music and performing arts offerings.

The art program exposes students to a variety of media and techniques. This includes 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional art. Through these classes we introduce students to various historical and contemporary works that educate and influence the students work. Basic skills, composition, design, and critique methods are taught to all students. The opportunity to focus in depth on a medium of choice can be arranged between students and staff. Students are assessed on participation, not perceived ability.

The arts are purposively incorporated throughout the academic program. It is common in Main Lesson for students to use the arts to explore ideas, develop understandings, and communicate their learning. Some units, such as Art for Social Change, are designed around specific art outcomes. In other units of study, students are required to use the arts as one means of

communication. Moreover, students are encouraged to use the arts for individual assignments as an alternative means of sharing their learning. The arts are also central options in Winter Term and Project Week, when students can choose to dedicate intensive time to applying the arts to real world situations. Through the diverse integration of arts in exploratories, academic courses, and in real world contexts, Compass students develop a strong appreciation of and skill in the arts.

Advisory: Advisory allows students and teachers to develop close and long-term relationships that help support each student in his or her learning and living at Compass. Advisory groups are organized to have one teacher meet 3 times per week with a small group of students over the course of the year.

Advisory groups discuss issues from within and outside school pertinent to students and teachers and serve as a primary vehicle for student governance and representation. Advisory activities might include group building activities and challenges, physical activity, community service projects, or working with students' portfolios. Each advisory group also takes responsibility for building clean-up and helps with the school lunch program as well. Advisory activities evolve over the course of the year and can take many directions as the tenor of the group dictates. The advisor acts as an advocate for the student, and is the primary person parents can contact to address general issues and concerns that they might have concerning their son or daughter. In addition to meeting regularly with all advisees, advisors are available to students or parents for conferencing or voicing concerns. Conferences are scheduled with all parents in October and March. Conferences with staff members also can be scheduled before or after school by parents, teachers, or students at any time. Usually, it is the practice to hold conferences with the student's active participation and involvement in the conversation.

All School Meetings: An important element of the Compass School community is All School Meetings. Scheduled twice weekly, on Mondays and Thursdays, as well as other times when appropriate, these meetings are a chance for the whole community to come together, celebrate accomplishments, address challenges, set common direction, and be together in a common space. Students will be encouraged to take increasing responsibility for all school meetings in helping expand our horizons, inspire quality work, elevate school spirit, and contribute to the continuing development of a positive school community.

Wednesday Schedule: The Wednesday schedule differs from the rest of the week. On Wednesday, students have the regular schedule for Math and Spanish and Advisory. Grade based Seminar follows Advisory, where each class works on grade specific goals. Senior Seminar focuses on College and Senior Project Planning, Juniors work on planning the international trip and beginning the college research process, 9th and 10th graders are engaged with Leadership Development, and Middle Schoolers focus on community building. After lunch is "Work Time" with Supervised Study Support for most students, time for meetings of Student Council, Student Judiciary, and Technology Club, or for 11th and 12th graders in good academic standing to pursue independent internships or service. On some Wednesdays, the afternoon is dedicated to special school events that might include guest speakers, portfolio worktime, school governance town meeting, or all school cleaning.

Community Service: Contributing to the community is central to the Compass mission and incorporated through the school program. There are many ways Compass students are involved with community based learning, from field based studies to Winter Term to a variety of trips.

In addition to these diverse experiences and the dedicated time of Community Service Winter Term, all students are expected to participate in at least 12 hours of community service

throughout the year. This may occur through exploratory offerings with the school, Wednesday clubs, or independent service students complete outside the school.

Health and Culture Week: Health Week is an intensive period of time dedicated to general issues of health and wellness of individuals and the community. Organized thematically and encompassing a wide range of activities from presentations to hands-on activities, the Compass community works together to support healthy lifestyles for all students. Some topics that may be addressed are nutrition, safety, first aid, mental health, consumer health, human growth and development, human sexuality, issues of substance use, diversity, environmental sustainability, and healthy living on a personal, community, and global level. The focus of our work is raising awareness and helping students develop the ability to make informed, responsible, and healthy choices.

Community Service Winter Term: As part of our belief in connecting students to the community, and in an effort to apply academic learning in the "real world," Compass students participate in a "Winter term" in February dedicated to Community Service Learning. This break in the regular schedule allows students to work in across grade level teams to use their academic skills to address real community needs. We solicit "problem statements" from community partners that define a particular need for which they seek a solution. A team of students, working with a teacher, determine a plan to study this problem and produce a report, solution, or service to address the community need. This has proven a great opportunity to allow students to be involved in real learning for the real world and to be of direct service to our community. We encourage anyone who knows of any community based needs to discuss them with the director to see if they are appropriate for our Community Service Learning "Winterm."

Project Week: Project Week is the culminating event for the Compass school year. This is the time where students are asked to synthesize their learning throughout the year in self-directed, student or faculty initiated projects under faculty supervision. These projects offer students an energizing structure for learning in which students can demonstrate command of knowledge and skills of their courses from throughout the year. Students are asked to develop projects that relate to course learning goals while allowing each student to pursue areas of particular interest. For example, a 9th grader may choose to demonstrate her understanding of US history and environmental science and the skill of being a clear and effective communicator by developing a web site detailing the debate over oil drilling in the Alaskan wilderness or creating a mural using art to share the diverse issues underlying this debate. Project Week concludes with a community celebration of learning. Students who fail to satisfactorily complete these project exhibitions will be asked to demonstrate their learning more satisfactorily before being promoted to the next grade.

Mountain Day: An annual tradition at Compass is Mountain Day, usually scheduled for the first Friday in October. All students and faculty, along with any parents who wish to join us, together climb a local mountain. The purpose of Mountain day is to enjoy nature and the outdoors, engage in a physical challenge, and develop into a stronger community.

College Day: To help all students see themselves as college students and to help them begin to develop criteria for choosing an appropriate school, we take the whole school to visit colleges once each year. College Day incorporates visiting at least two colleges, taking a school tour, and experiencing some of the many possibilities offered in higher education institutions.

ASSESSMENT, GRADING, AND REPORTING

Assessment at Compass is meant to involve on-going feedback to students and parents on student learning at the school. While much of this feedback is communicated in the course of the school day formally and informally, more formal reporting on each student's progress occurs two times during the year following scheduled semesters. On these occasions, teachers complete a detailed report form with narrative that addresses key learning areas. This report card format is organized around the five learning realms, with each teacher selecting indicators that they have focused on each in each semester. This formal feedback is not intended to compare or rank students but instead is meant to identify areas of individual strength and areas for further attention, and to encourage students to grow as learners. While more detailed feedback occurs on an on-going basis in the course of the school day, these report cards serve as a snapshot on student achievement and growth at regular intervals. At the end of the year, students receive overall grades in each learning realm for each class, reflecting competency in that realm over the course of the year. An example of the report card is available on the Compass website (www.compass-school.org).

It is our hope that the report form serves less as a final judgment on student learning than as a vehicle to open up thinking and conversation about each child's progress. Parents are urged to bring their questions about reports to the teachers either by phone, email, or by scheduling a conference.

Grading may be used by teachers for individual assignments as one means of giving feedback that is both short and direct. These grades indicate whether assignments are completed satisfactorily and allow teachers to specify areas for commendation and improvement. These grades on individual assignments serve as a recording and reporting device and are not meant to be cumulatively averaged as we are more interested in overall student achievement and growth at year end (or even graduation) and not the average of ability over time.

Report Cards

The report card form outlines the learning goals for each student. These are derived from the Compass School Graduation Portfolio Requirements and the Vermont State Framework of Standards. The report form lists these learning goals under 5 Realms of Learning.

Evaluative categories used on the report card are:

Outstanding, representing work well above expectations;

Excellent, for work above expectations;

Good, for meeting expectations;

Fair, below expectations; and

Not acceptable, for work that fails to meet expectations.

The category of Outstanding is used very selectively reflecting not only work of the highest quality, but also a level of consistency that is very demanding.

A more detailed description of each outcome area follows.

Compass School Outcome Areas

The Five Learning Realms are:

- 1) **KNOWLEDGE**
- 2) **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**
- 3) **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**
- 4) **THINKING AND REASONING**
- 5) **COMMUNICATION**

1) KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge and Understanding: Has depth and breadth of factual knowledge, understands major concepts in a subject area and uses these to organize information.

Application of knowledge in use: Ability to apply knowledge in a variety of situations, access and transfer of knowledge to other circumstances.

Making Connections: Draws connections between information and ideas, connects disparate events or ideas into understandings to draw new insights, can place relationships and connections into a systemic whole.

2) PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Respect for self and the learning process: Has a sense of self-worth, acts appropriately in class, expresses learning needs, follows through on learning commitments.

Personal insight: Self knowledge, finding interests and talents, aware of preferred learning styles and personal strengths and weaknesses.

Self-direction: Goal setting, self-responsibility, taking ownership and initiative, being prepared and involved, independent learning, adaptability, growth, effort.

Self-nurturance: Health and well being, physically active, makes healthy choices, advocate for self.

Character development: Positive attitude, integrity, honesty, perseverance, courage, sense of purpose, trustworthy.

Organization: Keeping track of things, being prepared, understanding the interdependence of time, space, materials, and tasks, optimizing time and resources, setting priorities, managing materials.

Homework record: Promptness and responsibility keeping up with homework assignments.

3) COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Social skills: Considerate, understanding, empathetic, appropriate humor, supportive.

Collaboration: Works well with others, values diversity and difference, contributes to group vision, understands group dynamics and roles.

Respect for others and the environment: Safe, supportive, responsible for the well being of others and one's surroundings.

Democratic participation: Involvement, interest in common ground and common good, follows democratic process, accepting of agreed upon decisions.

Community Service: Acts in interest of community needs in school and beyond, respectful of those being served, willingness to be of service.

Leadership: Takes initiative, positively challenges self and others, constructively confronts problems, synthesizes disparate ideas, builds connections between people and tasks, articulates vision.

Attendance: A record of class attendance and tardiness.

4) THINKING AND REASONING

Critical thinking and logic: Synthesizes information and ideas, distinguishes fact and opinion, takes the total into account, seeks reasons, open minded, deduction and induction, identifies assumptions.

Questioning and Inquiry: Seeks to determine relationships, causality, relevance, credibility, perspective, and quality.

Problem Solving and Decision Making: Identifies and frames problems, generates options and solution strategies, evaluates and tests ideas, chooses an option well suited to the task or problem, justifies choices, accesses appropriate resources.

Creative Thinking and Expression: Seeks the original, integrates and expands ideas, takes appropriate risks, thinks "outside the box," flexibility.

Information handling: Gathers, organizes, analyzes, and presents information from a variety of sources (including human, electronic, and print).

Numeracy: Ability to use numbers "fluently" for a variety of purposes.

5) COMMUNICATION

Writing: Ability to express ideas in a variety of written genres, write with purpose and clarity, follows grammatical and spelling conventions, employs voice and tone appropriate to audience, organizes and supports ideas

Reading: Comprehension, selects appropriate and varied material, uses a variety of strategies to aid understanding, ability to follow plot and character development, able to draw out themes from text

Verbal expression: Speaks with preparation and "off the cuff," employs voice and tone appropriate to audience, clarity and poise, responds appropriately to others, communicates intended message

Listening: Listens and observes with respect and understanding, asks clarifying questions, ability to understand and restate ideas

Presenting in a variety of formats: Uses graphics, art, music, and other media to communicate ideas, engage audiences, and adds clarity and life to communication

6) OTHER LEARNING GOALS (developed by students, parents, or teachers)

GRADUATION EXPECTATIONS

Graduation requirements include acceptable demonstration of competence in the Fields of Knowledge and Vital Results of the Vermont Framework of Standards through class work or independent study. It is expected that the integrated course structure of The Compass School day and traditional “credit requirements” of area public and independent high schools will be equivalent. A transcript for each student is created that includes credits (see below) in addition to the student portfolio to be included with applications to colleges and training programs.

Subject Area	Credits Required	(1 credit = 1 year)
Humanities Block		
English	4	
Social Studies	4	
Science/Tech Block		
Science (w/lab)	4	
Technology	1	
Mathematics	3	
(completion of Algebra II & Geometry required)		
Foreign Language	3	
(In same language and successfully passing level 2 competency exam)		
The Arts (.5 per year)	2	
Physical Activity (.25 per year)	1	
Health (.25 per year)	1	
Other Requirements		
Senior Project and Graduation Portfolio	1.5	
Community Service and Winter Term, Project Weeks, and/or Independent Study	1.5	
Total required:	26	

Community Service: Minimum of 12 hours of Community Service Activities each year

Health: Acceptable Participation in Health Week Activities each year

Portfolio Requirements: Successful completion of 10th and 12th grade portfolios

Senior Project: Successful completion and presentation

PORTFOLIOS

A central part of the promotion process at Compass revolves around student portfolios. Throughout the year, with the support of the advisor, each student collects work representing achievement in each learning realm. At the end of 8th, 10th, and 12th grades, each student presents his or her portfolio at a roundtable, where it is determined if the student is ready for promotion to the next grade level. In addition to the collected work, students write reflective letters related to each learning realm and present their work to the roundtable committee.

Graduation Portfolio Expectations

As students prepare for graduation at the Compass School, they work intensively to prepare a portfolio of their work that will represent their mastery and performance in each of the Compass learning realms and in each core discipline areas. This portfolio will be evaluated by a graduation committee composed of teachers from different subjects and grade levels, parent(s), outside examiner(s), and a student peer. The committee members examine all of the entries and hear the students' oral presentation of their work to determine if a student is ready to graduate.

The Graduation Portfolio Exhibition represents a student's hard work and accomplishments in the 11th and 12th grades. The exhibition will consist of a comprehensive reflective portfolio of work, reflective letters for each learning realm, and a roundtable presentation. This exhibition will serve as a teaching/learning tool that will provide students with the opportunity to observe growth, to evaluate work, and to reflect upon one's Compass learning experiences and Compass Learning Realms. The graduation portfolio is a powerful celebration of a student's accomplishments throughout his/her Compass School experience. The Graduation Portfolio Exhibition is a requirement for graduation.

The following is an outline of the process for the Graduation Exhibition. It consists of five phases:

- I. Collection- the first step in creating your portfolio**
- II. Selection- choosing what you will include in your final portfolio**
- III. Reflection- demonstrating understanding of yourself as a learner**
- IV. Presentation- presenting your portfolio and making connections between your past, present, and future as a learner**
- V. Decision- reflection and response of roundtable committee on readiness to graduate**

From the work a student collects, s/he selects pieces that demonstrate mastery in the Compass School Learning Realms. Students must have at least six (6) pieces of work for **each** learning realm. In the area of knowledge, students must demonstrate mastery in each of the four core discipline areas. Students will have eight (8) sets of work total, four in the area of knowledge for each discipline and one each for the other four realms. These work pieces must be chosen from all of the Core Discipline Areas and at least two (2) Enrichment Areas. It is recommended that students include more than just their "best work" and choose pieces that show growth over time or overcoming challenge.

Using the works collected for the realms listed above, a student will look for at least 4 pieces of work (a set) that help answer the following questions within each realm:

1. How have I demonstrated mastery in each of these realms?
2. What indicators within this realm do I feel are areas of strength?
3. What indicators within this realm do I have to improve upon?
4. How have I grown in this realm over the past two-four years?

Part 1-Work Reflections: (8 narratives)

* As part of the Graduation Portfolio Exhibition, students are required to write 8 reflective narratives (4 in the realm of knowledge and one in each other realm) in which s/he must discuss his/her work as it relates to each of the Compass Learning Realms.

Part 2-Reflection Letter to Roundtable

Another piece of reflective writing is the Letter to the Roundtable. This is intended to be a written overview of the 11th and 12th grade years at Compass School, and presents one's most important or meaningful work and experiences. Teachers and advisors assist in the formatting of the letter outline, drafts and final copy.

IV. Presentation: You will present yourself as a multidimensional learner to a Roundtable consisting of your advisor, a staff member, a peer advocate, your parents, and up to three outside community members. Your presentation focuses on demonstrating to them your knowledge of yourself both past and present, your accomplishments, and your thoughts or plans for the future.

V. Decision: Roundtable Response:

After your roundtable presentation, the roundtable committee meets to determine readiness to graduate. There are three possible outcomes: Pass, Pass with Conditions, and Need to Present Again. The committee will give specific feedback on strengths and areas for improvement to support the student in successfully completing this requirement.

Deadlines

Flag days are intended to be a checkpoint, at which time advisors can determine if students are making reasonable progress on their Division III Exhibition. If a student has not completed the indicated work by the flag day, advisors should meet with the student to make a plan and date by which the work will be completed. In addition, advisors should call home and notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) that they are falling behind in their work.

- 1st Flag: Two sets of work with reflective letters – January 15
- 2nd Flag: Second two sets of work with reflective letters– March 15
- 3rd Flag: Third two sets of work with reflective letters–April 15
- 4th Flag: Final two sets of work with reflective letter—May 15
- 5th Flag: Rough draft of **Letter to the Roundtable** is completed by May 18
- 6th Flag: Completed **Portfolio** and **Letter to the Roundtable** turned in by May 20
- 7th Flag: Roundtable Scheduled May 25-27

Note: "Completed" means that you have met all the criteria to pass. A student being flagged does not prohibit a student from passing; however, if a passing portfolio and letter are not turned in by June 2nd, the student may have their roundtable rescheduled during the summer. Students are required to successfully pass the exhibition to graduate.

Portfolio items are evaluated according to criteria for the portfolio process and rubrics in the learning realms. When students have completed the portfolio, they have learned to inquire, critique, analyze, present, and defend their ideas. They have also learned to manage long-range tasks that require intention, planning, perseverance, initiative, reflection, and revision. In short, they are ready for the world outside of school.

Grades 8 and 10 Portfolios: A similar portfolio exhibition process is in place for promotion from Grades 8 and 10. Detailed explanations and guidelines for each division portfolio process are posted on the Compass website.

SENIOR PROJECT

An important part of senior year is the Senior Project, scheduled for the period between New Year's and Winter Term in February. The senior project is a chance for students to demonstrate their learning skills and interests by pursuing an extensive learning project of their own design. Each student must undertake a significant study of their choosing, writing a formal proposal before December that outlines the topic of study and the methodology. Each student is required to present his or her learning to the community and complete a written component of some type. The details of this will be developed during the year, with support from senior seminar.

THE COMPASS SCHOOL LEARNING POLICY

The primary purpose of Compass School is student learning. Actions that distract from student learning will not be tolerated. In order to have an optimal educational environment, it is an expectation of the Compass Community that Compass School students put forth their best effort in their school work and agree to respect all members of the Compass community at all times. Prior to admission, all students have signed The Admission Agreement, a contractual commitment in four areas:

1. Respect for self, others, the environment and the learning process: Every word and action of the Compass Students should be considerate of people and things. This means polite language, a helpful attitude, and regard for property (your property, the school's property and others' property.)
2. A positive attitude toward learning: A positive attitude means trying new things, setting high expectations for yourself, and becoming involved in your studies. This may not always come easily. Compass School students must be willing to make the extra effort that this requires.
3. Full and active participation in school: You must be actively present in mind, body and spirit, and ready to learn and share what you are learning with others.
4. Being prepared for class: Being prepared for class means being there on time, being ready to start, having everything you need with you, and completing all your required school work. You can only take advantage of what The Compass School has to offer if you are consistently prepared for class in all these ways.

In addition, students are expected to follow Compass School Guidelines reiterating their commitment to the Compass School community. When it is determined that a student is not meeting their contracted agreements in the behavioral or academic areas, the following procedures are set forth to address such concerns.

Violations of the Compass Learning Policy will be dealt with on a case by case basis by the student's teacher(s), advisor, and the school administration. Possible interventions include meeting with the student, parent contact, formal SST meeting, referral to the student judiciary committee, development of a behavioral or academic contract, suspension or probationary status.

Suspension Procedure

In the event of suspension in response to violations of the learning policy, the student will be suspended for an amount of time determined by the SST while the SST develops a formal contract to address the student's issues. Interventions may include counseling, in-school modification of the student's program, weekly evaluation of the student's progress, and other measures deemed appropriate by the team. The SST will meet periodically to modify the program and monitor out of school interventions. If problem behaviors persist, the student will meet with a Probation committee.

Final Probation

The probation committee will be created from the following individuals: the student, his or her parent/guardian(s), the director, a representative of the board, a teacher, a member of the student judiciary committee, a student advocate chosen by the student in trouble, and the student's advisor. The probation committee meeting will result in a final contract for the student stipulating expectations and consequences. The committee will prepare a report with recommendations regarding the student's status to present to the Board. The student will be suspended until the student and a parent attend a hearing with members of the Compass School Board to discuss the report and the student's commitment to attending Compass School. The Board may ask the student to withdraw as the result of that meeting or may place the student on final probation. Continued violations of the Learning Policy will result in the student's withdrawal from Compass School.

STUDENT SUSPENSIONS & EXPULSIONS

It is the policy of Compass School that:

The Compass School Director and Teachers shall be responsible for carrying out discipline procedures conforming to the following guidelines. Suspension or expulsion of students shall follow the following process requirements.

A student who poses a continuing danger to persons or property or any threat of disrupting the academic process of the school shall be immediately removed from the school or to a place within the school determined by the director or teachers to be sufficiently secured to permit the academic process of the school to continue. The parent or guardian of a student who is to be removed from school will be immediately notified. If the parent or guardian cannot be located, the student will be detained at school for the remainder of the school day. No student will be removed from school for more than the remainder of a school day unless the student and his or her parents/guardians are given an opportunity for an informal hearing with the director. When immediate removal of a student is necessary prior to a hearing, the hearing shall be held as soon as possible following the removal. The School reserves the right to contact authorities if necessary.

The director may suspend a student from school for a period of (10) days or less. Prior to the informal hearing, the student and his or her parent/guardian must be given notice of the charges, an explanation of the evidence against the student, an opportunity for the student to tell his or her side of the story. A decision in writing will be sent to the parent/guardian informing them of the conclusions of the hearing. Students suspended will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to complete required academic assignments and to benefit from counseling or related activities at their own expense, designed to bring about an improvement in their behavior.

The Director may suspend a student for more than ten (10) days but for a fixed period of time for misconduct when the misconduct makes the continued presence of the student harmful to the welfare of the school. The Director may recommend for expulsion any student whose misconduct makes the continued presence of the student harmful to the welfare of the school. A student may be expelled only after a majority vote of the Compass School Board supporting the recommendation of the Director.

A pupil who has a disability and is eligible of special education services and who poses a danger to persons or property or any ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process of the school will be suspended for no more than ten (10) cumulative days until a manifestation determination is conducted and an evaluation is completed by the student's IEP team as to whether there is a relationship between the students misconduct and his or her disability. The evaluation will be provided by the LEA. Expulsion from school may result from the evaluation.

With regard to offenses involving the use and possession of drugs and alcohol, the special disciplinary procedures applicable to disabled students outlined above need not be followed for students who are disabled solely by virtue of their current use of drugs and/or alcohol.

ACADEMIC HONORS AND PROBATION

In an effort to make clear the learning expectations at Compass and to help structure the learning environment so all students can make reasonable progress towards grade promotion and graduation, the school is adopting a policy of Academic Honors and Probation. This policy is intended to communicate to students and families when a student's performance falls below expectations and to provide a variety of structures to help the student improve his or her work. Likewise, we hope the honors recognition helps provide a goal for students to honor those who show consistently strong achievement.

Academic Probation

The first time in a school year a student falls into the probationary process, the student will be under Academic Probation for the next semester. If no progress is made by mid semester progress reports, there will be an SST meeting to discuss the student's continuing status at Compass. At this time, it will be determined if the student will remain in the school for the remainder of the year and if the student will return for the next year, as well as other conditions for the student's continuation at school.

A student can be placed on academic probation for:

- Greater than 15% of grades below "Good", or
- 3 "Unacceptables" in one class, or
- 5 "Fairs" and "Unacceptables" in one class

Consequences:

1. Academic warning: the first time a student is on probationary status, the student goes to study hall exploratory for the following quarter and is required to attend Wednesday afternoon supervised study support, as well as other conditions determined by the school.

2. If the student remains on probationary status into mid-term in the second semester, the student is under academic probation. This will require an SST meeting to discuss the student's continuation at Compass for the remainder of the year and the following year. If the student remains at Compass, the student will be in study hall exploratory and may be assigned any of the following consequences:
 - * Midterm reports and check-in
 - * Lunch or exploratory study hall
 - * Daily check in system
 - * Loss of non-academic computer privileges
 - * Assignment book signings
 - * Weekly contact with parents
 - * Extra help
 - * Required tutoring
 - * Write letter of commitment
 - * Meeting with board and/or teachers
 - * Required round table (on non-roundtable years)

4. If a student is under probation at the end of the year, continuation at Compass will be determined on a case by case basis

Academic Honors

To be eligible for Academic Honors, a student must have:

- * No “Not Acceptables”
- * No more than 5% of grades as “Fair”
- * More than half of all grades as “Excellent” or “Outstanding”

High Honors

The High Honors option involves two parts: 1) More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of grades being “Excellent” or “Outstanding” AND 2) The equivalent of 20 hours of extended work in the semester. This extended work might be extra reading, writing for publication, tutoring another student, conducting a research project outside class, outside service, planning and teaching a workshop (i.e. Culture Days), or other educational experiences that extend a student’s learning. This work must be arranged with and approved by the advisor by mid-semester to be sure it is suitably challenging and worthy of high honors.

High honors proposal forms can be found in the appendix.

ABSENTEE POLICY

Absence Policy

Regular attendance by all students is a well established, long standing state policy (VEL 1121). The rationale for requiring regular attendance is that student participation in all regularly scheduled school activities is essential for the student to receive the maximum benefits of a complete educational program.

The school cannot teach students who are absent. The complete educational process requires guided practice, continuity, classroom participation and varied learning experiences. Frequent classroom absences irretrievably disrupt the educational process and, in many cases, lessen the student’s opportunity for academic success.

It is recognized that no policy, no matter how well intentioned or conceived, can anticipate all circumstances. This policy is in no way intended to create hardships for serious, well intentioned students or their families or to be a burden for students who have legitimate illnesses or family emergencies that cause prolonged absences.

Compass School, in seeking to offer a structure to support the regular attendance of each of its students, applies the following procedures dealing with attendance:

General Procedures

Absence: All student absences require a phone call from a parent or guardian or a written excuse to be presented to the office manager upon the day of return to school following an absence. Excuses are required for such occasions as personal illness, family emergency, legal obligation, and religious observance.

Unexcused absences: Absences for which a parent is not informed (i.e. skipping school) or for which a written excuse is not submitted is considered unexcused. The first unexcused absence will result in a phone call to parents from the advisor. A second unexcused absence will result in an SST meeting.

Tardies/check-outs: Tardies and leaving school early result in missed instructional time and are subject to the same guidelines as absences. Written excuses from a parent or guardian must be presented for arrivals more than 15 minutes after the start of school as well as those who want to leave early. Numerous tardies, even less than 15 minutes late, may result in an SST meeting. Missing the same class repeatedly will also be considered under this absence policy.

Excessive Absenteeism: Excessive Absenteeism is defined as the accumulation of more than 6 full-day absences in one semester or 10 in any two consecutive semesters. This provision is not

intended to give license to the number of absences that may be taken. In all courses the grade and credits earned reflect daily participation as well as the other academic requirements.

When a student reaches 3 absences, direct contact with the parent or guardian will be made by the advisor.

When a student reaches 5 absences in one semester or 9 in two semesters, the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian may be scheduled for an SST meeting.

If a student is absent more than 6 times in one semester or 10 times in two consecutive semesters, they face possible loss of academic credit in the affected course or courses. They will receive written notification to that effect and may appeal that decision as indicated in the appeal process. Credit may be restored if compelling circumstances are presented to and approved by the board. Students will be expected to make up this credit for grade promotion by summer independent study or repeating the grade or class.

If absenteeism reaches a total of 20 in the course of the year, we may decide to refer the case to agencies outside the school. Parents will be notified by the school of this decision.

Appeals Process

1. A written request for an appeal may be presented to the Director within five school days of the receipt of notification of loss of credit. The Director will bring that request to the Board. The board will act on the request and notify the parent or guardian, in writing, of their decision.

TARDY POLICY

After three tardies within a semester, parents will be contacted to discuss the problem. After six tardies, the advisor will call a meeting between parents and administration to create a plan.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Work Completion Policy

Being prepared for class, including doing homework, is a most basic expectation for success in school. To help students dedicate the time to their work, we provide the following structure to help students stay up to date on their work:

1. All teachers will have clear work completion policies for their classes.
2. Late or incomplete work will result in lower grades. Homework has its own individual line on the report card for every class. Each teacher will also have individual policies for scoring late work and how this affects grades for each assignment.
3. At the teacher's discretion, students with incomplete work will be assigned to lunchtime, Wednesday, or afterschool study hall.
4. When a pattern of late or incomplete work is evident, parents will be contacted. If problems completing work continue, an SST meeting will be arranged to discuss an action plan to resolve the problem.
5. Problems with work completion will be reported on midterm progress reports.
6. Late work will not be accepted after the end of the semester. In extenuating cases, a student may petition the teacher for an extension.
7. Incomplete work may result in not passing a class for the semester and possibly losing credit for the overall year in that discipline. In such cases, an SST will be convened to develop action steps in response to the loss of academic credit.

STUDY HALL

If a student does not satisfactorily complete work for class, the student will be assigned to lunch time, exploratory, or after school study hall. Students who miss an assigned study hall will be referred to the teacher from whose class the missing work came for further action which can

include additional study halls, lower grades or loss of credit, parent contact, and/or academic warning.

There is also a study skills exploratory for students who need or want additional support in their learning. Students can elect this on Wednesday afternoons or during exploratory time, and students who are performing below expectations can be referred to this exploratory by a teacher. Attendance at this study skills exploratory will be required until student work meets expectations.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The Compass School admits students with special needs and is certified for Special Education in the area of specific learning disabilities by the State of Vermont Department of Education. Acceptance and continued education are conditional on the school's ability to provide an appropriate program within the framework of the school's resources and the value of the Compass School education to these students.

A licensed special educator is on the school staff to provide support services for students with special needs and to advise staff regarding programming to support these students. Students with identified special needs are expected to receive support services within the school. The cost of special education services beyond the programs funded by our regular tuition is the responsibility of the parent. We expect families to make arrangements with their local school districts to secure funding for the provision of special education services.

THE REFERRAL PROCESS

If parent or teachers have concerns about a student, a parent/teacher conference should be arranged. If necessary, the Student Support Team (SST) can also be called together to determine further action at school and make any necessary referrals to outside agencies.

TEXTBOOK POLICY

Text books, library books and other school materials are the property of the school. Students will be charged for damaged, lost, or not returned materials at the end of the school year.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records are kept in the office and maintained by the Office Manager. These records are available to teachers. When a student transfers to another school, the complete educational records follow the student, provided all payments to the school are up to date. Parents may request a photocopy of records at the cost of photocopying. The school will provide information to parents and/or legal guardians regarding attendance and achievement during and following the dates of enrollment. We will not deny information to one parent on the request of the other. Release of student records to outside parties can only be done with expressed approval of a parent or guardian.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

It is a priority of the Compass School that students be willing to put in their "best effort" and agree to respect all members of the Compass community at all times. It is also our intent that the school reflects the demographics of our communities. Students will be selected for whom the Compass School appears to be the best placement, and to establish balance in the classes and the overall school population. Priority in admission will be given to siblings of current or former students of the Compass School in the years to follow.

Application to the Compass School shall be open to students of all academic levels. The Compass School retains the right to admit students upon recommendation of the admissions committee. Admissions will be based on all application materials received and will be on a space-available basis. The Compass School shall not discriminate against any applicant on the basis of

race, religion, gender or national origin. An effort will be made to inform the various sending schools and the public at large of the admissions procedure so all students who are interested might apply.

TUITION AND FEES

Parents are financially responsible for tuition at all times regardless of whether their child is from a tuition-paying town or a non-tuition-paying town. Tuition will be billed to the individual towns as a convenience to Compass School families. By enrolling at the Compass School, families are obligated for the full year tuition regardless of circumstances that might arise during the school year.

ENROLLMENT: New students applying to Compass prior to March 5 will be notified of acceptance by March 30.

RE-ENROLLMENT: A statement of intent form will be issued to families for re-enrollment for the coming school year by February 15 and need to be returned by March 5 with a deposit in order to guarantee a place in the school. Returning students have priority over new student enrollment until March 5, after that time, admission will be on a space available basis.

FINANCIAL AID: The Compass School is committed to enrolling a diverse student body that reflects our community. A scholarship/financial aid program is provided through fund-raising and grant writing. We expect that families support the student by paying at least one-half the tuition and contribute to the school through a contribution of work/service that supports the school whenever possible.

Any family who would like to apply for financial aid needs to indicate this desire to the Director in writing and complete and mail the Private School Aid Service paperwork in order to establish financial need by February 15. These applications will be evaluated by the Board Financial Aid committee to determine awards within the funds available, based on the demonstrated financial need and other factors. Families will be notified by April 1 when the complete application is on file at Compass by February 15. Applications received after February 15 cannot be guaranteed support, but every effort will be made to work with families to facilitate their student's attendance at Compass.

Financial aid awards are subject to adequate progress. Failure to meet expectations during the school year may result in loss of financial aid.

Tuition Delinquency Policy

Any family failing to pay tuition according to the agreement that they have made with Compass School or who have not made alternative arrangements will be informed that their child/children will not be re/admitted to School. Full payment obligations must be made by August 1 or parents will need to register with FACTS to establish a monthly plan. Any payment more than 2 months late will be considered delinquent. An interest charge for delinquent accounts will be assessed at a rate of 1.5% of the remaining balance per month from the due date. Accounts that require the use of a collection agency for payments unpaid after April 20 will also be assessed any collection costs and attorney fees.

All families must be current in their payment of tuition:

By August 20th: If not, students will not be admitted on the first day of school.

By December 20th: If not, students will not be re-admitted on the first day of class in January and will not receive a report card.

By May 20th: If not, students will not receive report cards.

TUITION REFUND INSURANCE:

MANDATORY PARTICIPATION: 2% of Tuition Fee - Billed separately and payable within 14 days from date of invoice. Compass School commits a high percentage of its budget by June of the school year. Enrollment and staffing play a key role in establishing the budget curriculum and must, therefore, remain solvent. To do so, we must have a plan in place that guarantees tuition payment of the “*academic year*” (actual calendar days of the school year) regardless of your payment plan. Full tuition payment is expected whether or not a student is withdrawn or dismissed (installment payments do not constitute pro-rated contracts). To lessen parental/school financial hardship and maintain the integrity of the school, Compass School is providing a Tuition Refund Plan.

After researching a third party insurer and finding it to be more costly, Compass School has decided to maintain a Self Insured Mandatory Tuition Plan at 2% of the Tuition Rate payable within 14 days of invoicing. These terms are set because your tuition insurance becomes active once a student has attended more than the first 15 consecutive days of the academic year.

You have made a substantial investment in education. The school has made a substantial investment in creating a budget to meet student needs. This protects all payment plans, monthly, full year payments in advance and town paid tuitions. Parents are liable for their child’s town paid tuition if for any reason the town refuses payment.

The Tuition Refund Plan will allow a 50% tuition return of the students unused days for the school calendar year under the following circumstances:

Accident of Illness of Student	Documented Job Loss of Tuition Payer
Death of Tuition Payer	Job transfer more than 100 miles
Documented Financial Reversal of Tuition Payer	
Disciplinary Action	Academic Dismissal

Not Covered Under The Plan--pregnancy and /or childbirth; use of any drug, narcotic or alcoholism; self inflicted injury or sickness; failure to attend classes for any reason other than injury or sickness.

Tuition Refund Schedule for Regular Tuition Students

Enrollment, as specified within this Enrollment Contract, may be cancelled by the parents or guardians in writing, without penalty prior to June 15. If enrollment is cancelled between June 15 and August 1, the deposit is non-refundable. Withdrawal between August 1 and October 31 means 50% of the annual charges are due and as of November 1 there is no tuition refund if a student is withdrawn after that date. This contract shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

THE COMPASS SCHOOL BOARD

Structure: The board establishes a sound organizational structure and creates an environment that will permit all students to attain the Compass School mission. The board employs a director, faculty and staff. Working with the director, faculty, staff, students and families the board adopts missions and goals in harmony with its vision through a strategic planning process, develops and approves policies, formulates budgets, and sets standards for students and staff commensurate with the mission and philosophy of the school.

Accountability: The board oversees the continuous assessment of all conditions affecting education at Compass School and ensures that the school is accountable for results in student

learning. The board monitors student achievement and program direction, and ensures that all functions follow the mission and philosophy of the school.

Advocacy: The board serves as an advocate on behalf of students and the school. This includes advocacy for needed resources, such as facilities and funds. It also includes advocacy to state and local agencies and private groups whose efforts could help the school achieve its vision.

Philosophy

The Compass School is a middle school and high school, focusing on academic goals, democracy, community and personal growth. It encourages the building of community on all levels, from the classroom to the larger world beyond. Students at Compass experience living and making decisions in a democratic environment as they move into the society at large. The Compass School provides opportunities for students, families, and staff to participate in decision-making at the school, learning respect for others and their ideas. The Compass School values individual achievement and gives continuity and consistency to the educational process. The high expectations shared by the Compass community challenges each student to be responsible for achieving his or her goals.

Board Members as of 6/10

Steve Holmes

Eric Rhomberg

Sue Guarino

Tom Lowell

Nancy Kovaleff

Matt Peake, President

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement is critical for the success of each student and the success of the school. At Compass, the quality of programming we can offer depends on parent participation and volunteerism. We expect that each family contributes at least 10 hours each year to the school.

There are numerous formal and informal opportunities for parents to help out at Compass. The Board and committee structure offers a formal venue for parent involvement in the many decisions that affect the school. Each of you is invited to join one of these committees.

Less "structured" but equally vital ways to contribute include: substitute teaching, teaching exploratories, coaching sports, chaperoning trips and dances, meeting with prospective students and families, assisting in the ski program, helping in the library, helping with special classroom projects, creating costumes for plays, joining in fundraising, assisting with construction projects, volunteering on community workdays, plowing snow, and a wealth of other logistical and educational needs required to make the school a great learning environment for all. We hope every parent can find a place to contribute to the education of their child and the operations of the school.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

School Council is intended to serve as an important forum for student voice in school governance and policy making. School council is a representative body constituted of elected student members and at least one teacher. Membership consists of at least one representative from each advisory. It is hoped that this group can act as in advisory capacity to the director, as a venue for student concerns, a place to receive, create, discuss, and vote on proposals from the student body, and as a student leadership team looking out for the health and well being of the school and students. School council has fiduciary responsibility, allocating student activity funds based on

requests from students or faculty. Students needing financial support for school related activities should submit a student activities fund request form to the council. Details of how the council operates are articulated in the Compass Constitution.

STUDENT JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

The student judiciary committee is an adjudicatory body made up primarily of students elected as at large representatives, with at least one faculty representative, that acts to respond to concerns about student behaviors in the school. The charge of this committee is to help students self regulate behavior in the school and serve as peer mediators to address conflicts or problems. Student Judiciary can work on issues directed to them by the director or teachers or on issues students identify themselves and submit on judiciary referral forms available on the student bulletin board. This committee works in concert with the director to handle disciplinary issues in the school.

Judiciary role in the school (as approved by Judiciary 2002-2003):

- To make the school feel like a safer place for other students
- To provide a way of solving problems between peers and peer or other groups
- To get people together to solve issues
- To work together as a community
- To solve problems within our community so that we all get along
- To review and evaluate rules in the school and make sure they are constitutional
- To create policies based on the need of the school and in conjunction with the Student Council
- To enforce school policies

Our goal:

1. To practice restorative justice, as practiced by the state of Vermont, versus retributive justice as much as possible.

In the Vermont state model, the cornerstone of restorative justice is the harmed person. In regular courts that use the retributive system, the victim and offender are usually not allowed to speak to each other, which is what the two parties really need. The offender is punished as if the victim doesn't exist. In most cases, the victim wants to express themselves, and the offender needs to hear it. This could be in person, video, audio, letter, etc.

If the victim does not want contact with the offender, the offender may instead attend a Victim Impact Panel, where a group of people who were affected by given crime tell offender what it's like to be a victim.

Once everyone has expressed themselves and tension is relieved, a Restorative contract is signed by all parties.

The idea behind restorative justice is that people will do less harm in a community if they feel connected to that community. The goal is to raise the offender's consciousness about how the offense affects the community.

Reparative board agreements all include the following two things:

1. Make amends to victim:

- a. Apologies given all the time: written document may or may not be given to the victim, depended on whether the victim wants it.
- b. Reparative arrangements made to address the damage.

2. Service to community: This should have relevance to the case. The student's advisor oversees the community service and reports completion to the Judiciary Committee.

THE COMPASS SCHOOL CONSTITUTION (Ratified Fall 2001)

Preamble

We, the members of The Compass School community, in order to form an outstanding learning environment, hereby write this Constitution to establish procedures by which all members of the community can have voice and a clear and known process to follow to share in the policies and processes of the school. As a whole, we seek to maintain the balance between order and freedom and grant each individual with their own respect, rights, and responsibilities, in order to attain this exceptional environment we wish for the Compass School.

Legislative Branch

1. Membership:

- a. One representative elected from each grade and three elected at-large from the School.
- b. Elections must be held before the close of October at a date determined by the council. The student council from the previous year remains in office until this election is held.
- c. Term length: One year. At mid-year, in the last week of February, council members who want to step down have that opportunity then and only then. A new election will be held for that position in advisory or all School depending on the seat.

2. Legislative Process:

- a. A bill may be proposed by any of the following procedures:
 1. a petition signed by $\frac{1}{2}$ or more of the School body,
 2. an advisory representative from his/her advisory with the signatures of $\frac{2}{3}$ or more of the advisory members.
 3. The student council if there is interest within it (of more than $\frac{1}{2}$ its membership)
 4. Faculty senate can bring a bill to student council with a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of the faculty.
- b. Once Student Council receives an eligible bill, they take a poll (through advisories) of what people in the School want.
- c. After the Student Council receives poll results, they vote on the bill, taking in and considering the results of the poll. A $\frac{2}{3}$ majority from the Student Council is needed to pass the bill on to the faculty council for their consideration and vote.
- d. Any bill passing out of Student Council will be brought to faculty senate and then to the board by the director and/or a student representative and/or a faculty representative.
- e. The board, after consideration of the votes of student council and the faculty senate, can pass or veto it.
- f. If a bill passed by student council is denied by the board, it can be brought for reconsideration to the board if:
 1. 90% of any constituent body in the School votes for appeal (i.e. students, teachers, students and teachers, student council)

3. Impeachment

- A. Reasons for Impeachment: If a member of the Student Council fails to attend meetings regularly, or commits a major violation of School expectations, or is repeatedly rude, disrespectful, or disruptive in council, or is abusive of their position or uncommitted to the welfare of the School, that person may be impeached.
- B. Impeachment Process: A Student Council member can be impeached by a 75% vote of either the Student Council or their constituency (advisory group for advisory reps, all School for all School reps). With a vote of 75%, the case is sent to judiciary for a final decision.

Judicial Branch

The Student Judiciary Committee is an adjudicatory body made up primarily of students, with at least one faculty representative, that acts to respond to concerns about student behaviors in the school. The charge of this committee is to help students self regulate behavior in the school and serve as peer mediators to address conflicts or problems. Student Judiciary can work on issues directed to them by the director or teachers or on issues students identify themselves.

1. Membership

- a. There are 9 student judiciary members. These are elected at large from the school.
- b. Elections must be held before the close of October at a date determined by the judiciary committee. The Judiciary Committee from the previous year remains in office until this election is held.
- c. New members are voted into a minimum of three available seats. Seats become available through students deciding to step down or through graduation from Compass School. If three seats are not available, a democratic all-school election will be held to choose the six members that will remain. Any school member can be nominated for one of the three available seats, including former judiciary members.
- d. Term length: Continuous while enrolled at Compass. At mid-year, in the last week of February, judiciary members who want to step down have that opportunity then and only then. A new school wide election will be held for that position.

2. Impeachment:

- a. Reasons for Impeachment: If a member of the Judiciary Committee fails to attend meetings regularly, or commits a major violation of school expectations, or is repeatedly rude, disrespectful, or disruptive in council, or is abusive of their position or uncommitted to the welfare of the school, that person may be impeached.
- b. Impeachment process: A judiciary member can be impeached by a 75% vote of either the Judiciary Committee or the school community. With a vote of 75%, the case is sent to judiciary for a final decision.

3. Judicial Process:

1. A person, or group of people, brings a case to the Judiciary Committee by filling out a Judiciary Referral Form
2. People who bring a case before judiciary must be available during the hearing.
3. The Judiciary Committee decides whether the case is indeed a matter for judiciary (see case guidelines) or if it should be dealt with in another manner (i.e. with a staff member, in advisory, etc.)
4. If the case does concern the Judiciary Committee, then judicial members meet as a group to discuss the case and talk with all parties involved in, and affected by, the case.
5. After hearing the input of those involved, the Judiciary Committee decides on a course of action to rectify the situation. This action may result in the enactment of a new policy.
6. The parties must follow the process recommended by the Judiciary Committee.
7. If one or more of the parties demonstrates willing participation in this process and is not satisfied with the process or the verdict, they can bring the case to Student Council, which can then abide by the judiciary decision or send it back to the Judiciary Committee to reassess.

Case guidelines:

1. Cases should relate to the school guidelines as outlined in the handbook.
2. Cases should be those that involve student vs. student, student vs. school property, or student vs. community.
3. If a case involves a teacher vs. a student, teachers and staff members should explore procedures such as improvement forms and parental notification before referring to the judiciary committee.

COMPASS NEWSLETTER

Our main line of communication to parents is the newsletter, which is brought home by students, emailed to families, and posted on the Compass website. Current events and activities, meetings, and schedule changes are made in the newsletter. **It is imperative you read the newsletter weekly to keep abreast of all important school information.** If you have any items to submit to the newsletter, please contact Janice. Please be sure to read the newsletter every Wednesday and read this regularly to keep up with school events.

LIBRARY

Books are to be used and read! At the same time, the library is a resource for all students. No strict limits are imposed on the number of books a student may sign out and no fines are charged for overdue books. As we are an entirely volunteer run library, we are dependent on an honor system for the sign out and timely return in good condition of all materials borrowed. A charge will be made for lost or damaged materials. Please optimize this resource by acting responsibly with library materials.

TRIPS

Learning in the community beyond the classroom walls is an important part of the Compass curriculum. Throughout the year, students in all grades can expect to take a number of trips connected to both classroom studies and exploratory activities. Overnight trips may also be planned. These trips rely on parent support, both in chaperoning and fundraising. Every parent will be expected to help in some way.

School trips taken during school days contribute to curriculum goals, and will be planned and led by the school staff. Parents are welcome and encouraged to chaperone trips. We are unable to reimburse chaperones unless prior arrangements have been made with the trip coordinator.

CHAPERONING

We ask parents who accept the responsibility of chaperoning a trip to review the following guidelines for assisting on school trips. These guidelines have been developed to share common expectations with you and to help make trips run smoothly.

1. When traveling in private vehicles, all students must be wearing a seat belt. Drivers should feel free to maintain a reasonable noise level in your vehicle.
2. Please review the Compass School Learning Policy. Students are expected to adhere to these guidelines at all times. In other words, students are expected to behave courteously at all times. No inappropriate language or behavior will be tolerated. You should feel comfortable addressing any student's behavior you feel is inappropriate.
3. Once back at school, stay with your group until you can turn them over to a teacher or their parents. Students are expected to help clean up the vehicle in which they ride.
4. You are asked not to deviate from the planned transportation route or program.
5. All parents are reminded that they must abstain from using any alcohol or tobacco products while on school trips.
6. Should there be an accident while driving students on a school trip in your own automobile, the parent's auto insurance would provide primary coverage and the school's insurance secondary coverage. Parents who help us by driving students must carry \$300,000 liability coverage. In the event of an accident on a school trip, attend to the immediate needs of individuals involved and contact the school as soon as possible.
7. Chaperones must have a valid driver's license and Proof of Auto Insurance prior to a trip.

DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP

When dropping off or picking up students, please drive slowly and with caution. From the main entrance, drive in a counter clockwise direction placing the passenger door facing the front door of the school affords the safest loading and unloading of passengers. For parking, please park facing the school and leave the area directly in front of the school free. Students are expected to be off school grounds by 4:15 on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and at 2:30 on Wednesday and Friday (unless they have arranged to stay for Wed./Fri. afternoon study hall). If students are still at school 15 minutes after these times, they will be taken to the Rockingham Library and left there for pick-up.

STUDENT CAR POLICY

Students with driving licenses are allowed to drive to and from school with parental permission. All students are expected to be at school by the beginning of classes at 8:25 and remain at school until closing. Once a student drives on campus in the morning, he or she is considered at school and should not drive their car off school grounds until the school day ends. As such, no students are permitted to drive “off-campus” during the school day. If there are extenuating circumstances, students may be allowed to drive off school grounds during the school day only with specific permission from a parent and the school director. Students are not allowed to transport other students without expressed permission from both the parent(s) of the driver and the transported student. These permissions, whether specific or general, should be submitted to Janice and will be kept on file at school. Students should park in the front parking lot. Student cars are off limits during the school day. Students who violate this policy, or drive in an unsafe manner, may lose driving privileges.

Consequences for breaking policy. 1st offense: warning; 2nd offense: loss of driving privileges for 1 week. 3rd offense: Lose driving privileges for month. Also, students driving unsafely will follow the same process or go to judiciary.

OFF CAMPUS POLICY

For safety reasons, students must not leave school grounds without adult, school administered supervision. Leaving school grounds without adult supervision may result in suspension. The one exception to this policy is the lunch policy below.

Off Campus Lunch Policy

For students in 11th or 12th grade not on academic probation or warning: Students must have an off-campus permission form signed by their parents and on file in the office. In addition, each student leaving must have permission on file to drive or be able to go with whoever is driving. Students must sign in and out in the office, list where they are going, and present their note so that the school will know where they are.

If a student who leaves school for lunch is late to class or fails to check in or check out or brings food to class, then that student will have a judiciary case which may result in having this privilege revoked for the rest of the year.

VISITOR POLICY

Compass welcomes visitors to the school. Out of respect for the educational environment of the school, we limit visitors to no more than two from any one group at a time, except with prior approval from the director. All visitors will be expected to sign in at the office upon arrival and complete a visitation form before leaving the school.

CONTACTING SCHOOL

Please call the teacher when you have a question about anything in the classroom or the school program. Also call if you want to check on something your child has told you that seem different from your expectations. Teachers need to know if there are ongoing problems with homework, or when a parent feels he or she is doing the "teaching" at home. Let the teacher know when there is a disruption at home (such as a parent on a trip, a family member who is sick, a lost pet, etc.). This information allows teachers to offer timely support. Parents who cannot reach a teacher directly are encouraged to call the school during the day and leave a message or contact the teacher through email (teachers@compass-school.org).

It is appropriate to direct general academic or social concerns to the student's advisor and specific course concerns to the teacher of that course. If parents need further support beyond the teacher or advisor, a conversation with the director should follow. If this does not adequately address the concern, a conversation among the teacher, advisor, parent, and director, as necessary will be arranged.

Please call the office between 8:30 and 9:00 when your child is going to be absent or late. This communication is important; it ensures that no child will be "lost" between leaving home and arriving at school. Let the office know when your child is sick and especially when your child has been diagnosed as having something contagious, such as chicken pox, strep throat, or head lice, which other children might have been exposed to. Should your child need to know about a change in pick up plans at the end of the school day, please call the office before 2:30.

TELEPHONE USE

In the interest of maintaining focus during the school day, student use of the telephone is limited. Students may not use phones while classes are in session, unless asked to make a call by a teacher or staff member. Cell phones, pagers, etc. must be turned off during class time. Class time includes all classes, advisory, exploratories, school meetings, and other school activities. Phone use is limited to during lunch, break (2:10-2:30), and after school. Phones may not be used to order food to be delivered to school.

A phone for student use exists in the front hallway. Students may use this phone only during designated times. This phone may not be used for incoming calls. If you need to reach your child, please call the main office.

LAPTOP COMPUTER PROGRAM

Computers offer a powerful learning tool for our students—both for accessing and processing information. Compass believes that laptop computers provide students and families a unique opportunity to encourage "anytime, anywhere" learning.

A centrally located wireless transmitter allows access to our high speed Internet connection and computer network from all classrooms within the school and on the grounds. Usage is controlled by teachers. Laptop computers are intended to enhance the educational programs at Compass and are to be used for educational purposes. There is a computer access fee for students who will be using the technology resources of the school. The Computer Technology Appropriate Use Policy details policies related to appropriate use of this valuable resource.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY APPROPRIATE USE POLICY

This use policy shall serve as a guideline for the use of computers and the Internet at the Compass School and may be included reference by other documents and agreements. It is not intended to be all-inclusive. The purpose is not to define every action as permissible or not, but rather to establish a framework for appropriate use. The overriding principle that should be observed is respect for people and property. Computers that have been leased, rented, loaned or otherwise

provided to students or staff must be used in a respectful and appropriate fashion, as these guidelines will demonstrate.

Definitions:

"Users" shall refer to any user, whether a student, staff member, parent, guest or any other person using the computers or accessing files or information through the computers or network.

"School" shall refer to the Compass School, its teachers, staff and board members.

"Network" refers the devices or servers, whether wired or wireless, which connect computers to other computers, servers or the Internet within the school boundaries.

"Internet" refers to any network or networks outside the boundaries of the school, whether used for email, the World Wide Web (WWW) or any other kind or type of service or data.

Policies:

*Games are permitted on student laptops and can be played during non-class time, as long as they are not rated Adult. Some Mature games may be allowed, but are subject to review by teachers. If a teacher questions the appropriateness of a game rated "M" being played by a student, the student will need to cease playing that game until receiving approval from the Tech Club. Downloads, games and other software may not be installed on any computer owned by the school unless approved by a teacher or staff member. This does not apply to student laptops under lease.

*Sound must be turned off, except when it is being used as part of a class.

*Computers or other recording devices may not be used to make recordings without the consent of all of those who are being recorded.

*The school recommends that disks be shared very cautiously. Shared disks can spread harmful viruses.

*The Internet is to be used for scholarly research and as a means of obtaining needed information. Students are not to join chats or social network sites at school unless they have a teacher's permission to do so as a legitimate class project. Chats offer opportunities to develop relationships with people through the Internet, however, students should realize that there are certain safety measures they should consider when communicating in chat rooms. Frequently, it is impossible to really know with whom you are communicating, therefore, one should be very cautious about giving out personal information (name, address, phone #, etc.).

*Instant messaging and other forms of on-line chat are not permitted during class time. Violations of this policy are subject to consequences determined by the teacher, including, but not limited to confiscation of the computer for that class period or all day.

*Information stored on or passing through the computers or the connected network is not private and may be monitored for acceptable use for academic or network administration purposes, including, but not limited to: email, Internet use, text, graphics, code and use.

*Passwords and their security are the responsibility of the user (student, staff or guest) and as such, should not be shared or divulged to others.

*Actions performed while logged in as a user by password shall be attributed to the user and may result in loss of use or access and other disciplinary action as may be deemed appropriate under the school policy or code.

*Students are to respect the need for security and confidentiality and are to make no efforts to bypass security systems and gain access to information that they do not have a right to see. Likewise, the school will have information on the server that is not open to the public.

*Students are not to make any effort to bypass security systems and/or gain access to this information.

*Network email and Internet access is a privilege that may be terminated at any time, for any reason.

*The school does not warrant any computer or the use of the network or the Internet suitable or appropriate for any particular use.

*Any teacher, staff, network administrator or board member may restrict use or limit access based on pedagogical or network concerns. This includes but is not limited to access to web sites, installation or use of programs, use of the network and use of the Internet.

*Offensive language or obscenities are not permitted at any time.

*Conduct which, if communicated through other means, would be considered to be a violation of school policies or federal or state laws, such as harassment, substance abuse or threats, are not permitted on the school computers, the Internet or network.

*Compliance with copyright laws is required. Scanning or otherwise duplicating and re-distributing copyrighted materials without the permission of the author are not permitted.

*School owned computers and the school network or any computer connected to the school network shall not be used for commercial purposes.

*The Internet is an uncontrolled, open place. There are illegal activities and sites that are inappropriate for children which may be encountered. Users (students or others) are advised not to access such activities or sites.

*The school shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by any user through the use of the computers or the network; for inaccurate information obtained through the network or the Internet; lost work or products.

*It is prohibited for students to "order on-line" or otherwise transact business, purchase or sell products-whether by credit, debit, barter, exchange, cash or e-cash-using school computers, networks or the Internet, including to but not limited to e-commerce and auctions, unless such use is specifically requested and supervised by a teacher or staff member and that person is present.

*Students may not access their personal subscriber on-line services using school phones or lines.

*Users shall comply with the rules and regulations of any accessed or connected network. This shall apply to the Terms and Conditions of Use for SoVerNet or any other network or provider used or connected to.

*Federal and State laws define what activities are not legal with respect to the use of computers, networks and the Internet. Compass School will cooperate with authorities as required by law when conducting investigations relating to illegal activities.

*Users shall read and abide by the etiquette documents distributed, from time to time, to guide users with email and the use of the Internet, including but not limited to the World Wide Web, Newsgroups, USENET, List Servers and FTP servers.

*The Compass School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, or national or ethnic origin.

MEDICAL

A typical number of absences for a generally healthy child is three to five days per year. Although illness can be prevented with good nutrition and adequate sleep, genuine sick days are hard to avoid. Students who miss more than five days of school very clearly risk being at a serious disadvantage in the learning program. We ask parents to avoid the scheduling of trips and appointments during school time and to work the school calendar in the planning of family trips. Routine visits to the dentist, doctor, or orthodontist should be scheduled after school. Where possible, please avoid scheduling that may cause your child to miss school activities.

When a child is absent due to sickness, we ask that parents take responsibility for informing the school and arranging for homework assignments if the child is well enough to do school work.

1. Do not send your child to school if:

- a. he or she has a fever (anything above normal at 7:30 a.m. is likely to increase as the day progresses);
- b. he or she has vomited the previous night;
- c. your child has had a fever in the last 24 hours.
- d. nits or lice are present.

We realize that it is difficult for families to arrange for a sick child to be cared for, but we feel very strongly that children who are ill should not be in school. We would like to ask that parents call the office between 8:00 and 9:00 if they are keeping a child home.

In the event of an emergency requiring more than the usual first aid treatment, parents will be notified immediately. If necessary, an emergency medical treatment/ambulance will be called and the child will be transported to Springfield Hospital. It is important that you sign and return the Student Information and Permission Form that you receive when you enroll your child. Unless we have this form signed by you, your child cannot be treated at the hospital until you arrive.

If a child has a special medical need, it is important that the school be provided with full details and instructions regarding these needs. We will administer an oral antidote to a child with a bee sting allergy in the event of a bee sting. We ask parents to provide the school with a clearly labeled kit that we can keep in the first aid chest.

We discourage children from bringing medications to school. If, however, a child is on a medication schedule that requires administration during the day, the medication should be brought to the main office with a note from the parents regarding the time and amount to be given. State law requires a written note from the prescribing physician in the school office before medication can be given at school. We do ask parents, if at all possible, to apply salves and give medications before and after school.

It is the policy of the school to require that all newly enrolled children have a physical examination. We also ask that all other students return a Physician's Report of Health signed by their physician each year. We ask that this form, which does not require a physical exam, also be returned to the office by the first day of school.

A record of inoculations must also be presented. A child should be immunized appropriately for his or her age in accordance with the Vermont Department of Health's recommended schedule against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, rubella and mumps. State law requires that all students should have received a second dose of live measles vaccine or a MMR booster before beginning school in September. All students must have received at least their initial dose in a series of three Hepatitis B vaccinations prior to the beginning of the school year. This does not necessarily require a physical exam, but should be noted on the physician's form. This form must be received in the office before students begin school. No child shall be required to have any such immunizations if documentation is provided that immunization is medically contraindicated, or that parents object for religious or other reasons.

Head Lice: Head lice are not an uncommon problem and not cause for undue alarm. This is something that happens and has nothing to do with poor hygiene or living conditions. We recommend that children's scalps be checked regularly for lice or nits (eggs). The lice and the eggs they lay are usually found in the warmer parts of the head, closer to the neck, under pony tails and barrettes, near the ears. The nits are small things hanging onto the hair shaft approximately one quarter inch from the skull. We ask that families inform the Compass School administration if an infection is found, so that we know if there is more than an isolated case here. This information would be kept confidential. An infected child would simply need to undergo the recommended over-the-counter treatment before returning to school. More information can be found at the Vermont Department of Health: <http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/lice/headlice.aspx>

PDA POLICY (passed Spring 2004)

We see a difference between casual demonstrations of affection and contact of a sexual nature. As a student body, we would like to see certain limitations placed on physical contact that will eliminate our discomfort at witnessing displays of a sexual nature.

- No kissing allowed
- No embracing blocking the flow of traffic
- No pelvic contact

Consequences: Teacher issued improvement forms. If you get three improvement forms, the offending student can pick between an SST meeting or a presentation on an appropriate topic picked at random.

WEAPONS POLICY

It is the policy of The Compass School Board that any student who brings a weapon to school shall be immediately suspended until there is an opportunity for a hearing before members of The Compass School Board. The Board may expel any student who brings a weapon to school. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, knives, explosives, sharp or solid objects or any other materials that may be used in a manner that may be threatening or endangering to others.

However, the recommendation for expulsion may be modified on a case by case basis. Modifications may be granted in circumstances such as but not limited to:

1. The student is unaware that he or she has brought a weapon to school.
2. The student did not intend to use the weapon to threaten or endanger others.
3. The student is disabled and the misconduct is related to the disability.
4. The student does not present an ongoing threat to others and an expulsion would not serve the best interest of the student or the school.

It is the policy of The Compass School Board that any student who brings a weapon to school may be referred to a law enforcement agency. In addition to any action the law enforcement agency may take, the incident may be reported to the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services.

TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND OTHER ILLEGAL DRUGS POLICY

The Compass School Policy prohibits use or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs on school property, at school functions or on trips off campus.

Procedure in event of violation of Policy:

1st Offense: Immediate suspension and student is in a status of "Final Probation"

Hold parent conference and develop a contract with the Student Support Team to address the behavior. The contract may include the following:

*Suspension (length determined by SST, 1-5 days).

*An evaluation with diagnosis and recommendations by a licensed professional with a report sent to Team and Parent.

*Personal Community service activity to be determined by the Team and may include appropriate local community service and/or service to the school community.

Student and Parent will be required to attend a hearing with members of the Board of the Compass School before returning to school and will present the contract developed by the Team that shall outline the student's commitment and progress in implementing the contract. The contract is with the Compass School community and the community will support the student's plan as appropriate.

2nd Offense: A second incident may result in the student's expulsion from the Compass School. The Compass Board will conduct a hearing and take action based on the hearing and recommendations from the SST.

*SST consists of the student, the parent, advisory teacher and school director and/or outside professional consultants or staff and students as needed. SST will meet regularly to monitor status of any student on Final Probation.

POLICY ON PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

I. Purposes

Compass School is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. This policy addresses incident(s) and/or conduct that occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity, or incident(s) and/or conduct that does not occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity but where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated.

Harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. It is the policy of Compass School to prohibit the unlawful harassment of students based on race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity, to the extent required by law. In addition, retaliation is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. Consistent with these purposes, annually,¹ each school shall select two or more designated employees to receive complaints and shall publicize their availability in any publication of the Compass School that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.²

It is the intent of Compass School to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with student rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The purpose of this harassment policy is to prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that is likely to substantially disrupt the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources, or create a hostile learning environment.

Compass School shall promptly and effectively address all complaints of harassment in accordance with the procedures established by this policy. In cases where harassment is substantiated, the school shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline. Such serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a person for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more of the school's other disciplinary policies or codes of conduct.

II. Definitions

A. **"Harassment"** means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race,

¹ See 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1).

² See Appendix A.

creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity³ that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Harassment includes conduct as defined above and may also constitute one or more of the following:

(1) Sexual harassment,⁴ which means conduct that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur:

- (i) submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education, academic status or progress; or
- (ii) submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student

(2) Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to cultural customs.

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

- B. **“Complaint”** means an oral or written report by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of harassment.
- C. **“Complainant”** means a student who has filed an oral or written complaint with a school employee or a student who is the target of alleged harassment in a report made by another person.
- D. **“Designated employee”** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of harassment pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1).
- E. **“Employee”** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the Compass School, an agent of the school, a school board member/member of the board of trustees, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, “agent of the school” includes supervisory union staff.

³ Effective July 1, 2007, 1 V.S.A. §144 defines “gender identity” as “an individual’s actual or perceived gender identity, or gender-related characteristics intrinsically related to an individual’s gender or gender-identity, regardless of the individual’s assigned sex at birth.”

⁴ This statutory definition of sexual harassment describes only the “quid pro quo” form of sexual harassment that can occur between an adult and student. However, sexual harassment may also include student to student conduct as well as conduct that creates a hostile environment.

- F. **“Notice”** means a written complaint or oral information that harassment may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to the harassment, another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred.⁵
- G. **“Retaliation”** is any adverse action by any person against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student in the form of further harassment, intimidation, and reprisal.
- H. **“School administrator”** means a superintendent, principal/head of school/technical center director or his/her designee.

III. Reporting Student Harassment

- A. **Student reporting**: Any student who believes that s/he has been harassed under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute harassment, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any other school employee.
- B. **School employee reporting**: Any school employee who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute harassment shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and immediately report it to a designated employee. Any school employee who overhears or directly receives information about conduct that might constitute harassment shall immediately report the information to a designated employee. If one of the designated employees is the person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the complaint shall be immediately filed with the other designated employee or the school administrator.
- C. **Other reporting**: Any other person who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute student harassment under this policy should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee.
- D. **Documentation of the report**: If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing in a harassment complaint form, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, and the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses.
- E. **False Complaint**: Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion with regard to students, or up to and including discharge with regard to employees. There shall be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of harassment when the person has a good faith belief that harassment occurred or is occurring.

⁵ See 16 V.S.A. §14(c)(3).

IV. Procedures Following a Report

- A. Notification:⁶ Upon receipt of a complaint of harassment the designated employee shall immediately inform the school administrator of the complaint. In addition, the designated employee shall immediately provide a copy of this harassment policy to the complainant and accused individual. If either the complainant or the accused individual is under the age of 18, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be: 1.) promptly notified that a complaint of harassment has been filed and provided with a copy of this policy; 2.) notified if an alternative dispute resolution method will be offered and, if it occurs, of the outcome of any such attempt; and 3.) notified in writing of the results of the complaint investigation. All notification letters shall be subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information. A school administrator may seek waiver of confidentiality rights of the accused in order to inform the complainant of any disciplinary action taken in cases where the school determined that harassment or other misconduct occurred.
- B. Investigation:⁷ Unless special circumstances are present and documented, such as reports to the Department for Children and Families (“DCF”) or the police, the school administrator shall, no later than one school day after the filing of a complaint with a designated employee, initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning him/herself or a designated employee as the investigator. No person who is the subject of a complaint shall conduct such an investigation.

No later than five school days from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator shall submit a written initial determination to the school administrator. The report shall include a statement of the findings of the investigator as to whether the allegations have been substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes harassment. When the initial determination concludes that an accused student has engaged in harassment, the school administrator shall use his or her discretion to decide the appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action. In cases where the investigation has identified other conduct that may constitute a violation of other school disciplinary policies or codes of conduct, the designated employee shall report such conduct to the school administrator for action in accordance with relevant school policies.

All levels of internal review⁸ of the investigator’s initial determination, and the issuance of a final decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the Compass School, be completed within 30 calendar days after the review is requested.

- C. Action on a substantiated complaint: If, after investigation, the school finds that the alleged conduct occurred and that it constitutes harassment, the school shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment and prevent any recurrence of harassment. Such action may include warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension, and/or expulsion of a student, and warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension and/or termination of an employee.

⁶ See 16 V.S.A. §14(a).

⁷ See 16 V.S.A. §565(b)(1)(E).

⁸ An “internal review” is any procedure provided by the school through policy or practice and is not the same as an “independent review” as described below.

- D. Alternative dispute resolution:⁹ At all stages of the investigation and determination process, school officials are encouraged to make available to complainants alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, for resolving complaints. The following should be considered before pursuing alternative dispute resolution methods: (1) the nature of the accusations, (2) the age of the complainant and the accused individual, (3) the agreement of the complainant, and (4) other relevant factors such as any disability of the target or accused individual, safety issues, the relationship between the target and accused individual, or any history of repeated misconduct/harassment by the accused individual. If an alternative dispute resolution is either not appropriate or is unsuccessful, the school administrator shall initiate or cause to be initiated an investigation of the allegations in accordance with the timelines established in this policy.
- E. Appeal: A person determined to be in violation of this policy and subjected to disciplinary action under it may appeal the determination and/or the disciplinary action(s) taken in the same manner as other disciplinary actions, in accordance with the District's/Independent School's discipline policy, applicable statutes, or collective bargaining agreements.
- F. Independent Review:¹⁰ A complainant may request an independent review if s/he: 1.) believes that the school did not correctly analyze the complaint and failed to conduct an investigation of the incident because the school believed the alleged conduct did not constitute possible harassment, 2.) is dissatisfied with the final determination following an investigation as to whether harassment occurred, or 3.) believes that although a final determination was made that harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem. The complainant shall make such a request in writing to the head of school. Upon such request, the head of school shall promptly initiate an independent review by a neutral person as described under 16 V.S.A. § 565(f), and shall cooperate with the independent reviewer so that s/he may proceed expeditiously. The review shall consist of an interview of the complainant and relevant school officials and a review of the written materials from the school's investigation. Upon completion of the independent review, the reviewer shall advise the complainant and school officials in writing: 1.) as to the sufficiency of the school's investigation, its determination, and/or the steps taken by the school to correct any harassment found to have occurred, and 2.) of recommendations of any steps the school might take to prevent further harassment from occurring. A copy of the independent review report shall be sent to the Commissioner. The reviewer shall advise the student of other remedies¹¹ that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the school for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records. The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the Compass School. The Compass School may request an independent review at any stage of the process.
- F. Retaliation: It is unlawful for any person to retaliate against a person who has filed a complaint of harassment or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to the harassment complaint. A person may violate this anti-retaliation provision regardless of whether the underlying complaint of harassment is substantiated.

⁹ See 16 V.S.A. §565(b)(1)(C).

¹⁰ See 16 V.S.A. §565(f).

¹¹ Such as those identified in Section VIII of this policy.

V. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- A. The privacy of the complainant, the accused individual, and the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the District's/Independent School's obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.
- B. The school administrator shall assure that a record of any complaint, its investigation and disposition, as well as any disciplinary or remedial action taken following the completion of the investigation, is maintained by the Compass School in a confidential file accessible only to authorized persons. All investigation records, including but not limited to, the complaint form, interview notes, additional evidence, and the investigative report, shall be kept for at least six years after the investigation is completed.

VI. Reporting to Other Agencies

When a complaint made pursuant to this policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. §4911, et seq. must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. §6901 et seq.

If a harassment complaint is made in a public school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds under the State Board of Education Rules for licensing action, the principal shall report the alleged conduct to the Superintendent and the Superintendent shall report the alleged conduct to the Commissioner. If a harassment complaint is made in an independent school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds under the State Board of Education rules for licensing action, the head of school is encouraged to report the alleged conduct to the Commissioner.

Nothing in this policy shall preclude anyone from reporting any incidents and/or conduct that may be considered a criminal act to law enforcement officials.

VII. Dissemination of Information, Training, and Data Reporting

- A. Dissemination of Information.¹² Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, the Compass School shall provide notice of this policy and procedures to students, custodial parents or guardians of students, and employees. Notice to students shall be in age-appropriate language and include examples of harassment. At a minimum, this notice shall appear in any publication of the Compass School that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for the Compass School.
- B. Training.¹³ The school administrator shall use her/his discretion in developing age-appropriate methods of discussing the meaning and substance of this policy with students to help prevent harassment. The school administrator shall implement training for school staff within the context of professional development to enable staff to recognize, prevent and respond to harassment.

¹² See 16 V.S.A. §565(d).

¹³ See 16 V.S.A. §565(d).

- C. Data Gathering. Public school districts shall provide the Vermont Department of Education with data requested by the Commissioner.

VIII. Alternative Complaint Process

In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a harassment complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a harassment complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the addresses noted below:

Vermont Human Rights Commission
14-16 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)
(877) 294-9200 (tty)
(802) 828-2481 (fax)
Email: human.rights@state.vt.us

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
33 Arch Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02110-1491
(617) 289-0111 (voice)
(877) 521-2172 (tdd)
(617) 289-0150 (fax)
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Legal References:

Title V, Section B, 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794 et seq.;
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000d;
Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§1681 et seq.;
Family Education Rights Privacy Act; 20 U.S.C. 1232g;
Public Accommodations, 9 V.S.A. §§4500 et seq. ;
Education, Classifications and Definitions, 16 V.S.A. §11a (26);
Education, Harassment, Notice and Response, 16 V.S.A. §14;
Education, 16 V.S.A. §140(a)(1);
Education, 16 V.S.A. §166(e);
Education, Harassment and Hazing Prevention Policy, 16 V.S.A. §565;
Education, Discipline, 16 V.S.A. §1161a;
Education, Suspension or Expulsion of Pupils, 16 V.S.A. §1162;
Child Abuse, 33 V.S.A. §§4911 et seq.;
Adult Protective Services, 33 V.S.A. §6901 et seq., all as they may be amended from time to time.

Washington v. Pierce, 179 VT 318 (2005)

APPENDIX A

Designated Employees

The following employees of the **Compass** School have been designated by the Compass School to receive harassment complaints pursuant to this policy and 16 V.S.A. §565(c)(1):

Name: **Rick Gordon**

Title: **Director**

Contact information: Compass School, POB 177, Westminster Station, Vt 05159

802-463-2525 rick@compass-school.org

Name: **Janice Wojcik**

Title: **Administrative Director**

Contact information: Compass School, POB 177, Westminster Station, Vt 05159

802-463-2525 janice@compass-school.org

HAZING POLICY

It is the policy of the Compass School that it provides a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment. Hazing has no place in the school and will not be tolerated. Accordingly, the school adopts the following policy and procedures to prohibit hazing and will ensure the enforcement thereof.

Definitions

"Hazing" means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the School; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of, humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student. "Hazing" also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off school grounds.

Notification of Hazing Policy

Annually, The Compass School Student Handbook shall be presented to students prior to the commencement of school and shall contain: a copy of the hazing policy and a listing of those persons whom the Board has designated to receive reports of hazing. The school also shall effectively inform students about the substance of this hazing policy and its procedures by the beginning of school in September.

Annually custodial parents and guardians of students shall be provided a copy of this hazing policy prior to the commencement of school. Annually, staff members shall be provided with a copy of this hazing policy prior to the opening of school. All Exploratory teachers shall be provided a copy of this policy upon employment by the school.

Reporting of Hazing

Students who have reason to believe that an incident of hazing might or did occur shall report such belief to any adult involved with the activity or Compass School teacher. Staff

members who have received such a report from a student or who otherwise have reason to believe that an incident of hazing might or did occur shall report such belief to the director of the school. The report may be in writing or orally. If the report is made orally, the receiver shall make a written record of the report. It shall be a violation of this policy for a person to retaliate against a student or other person for reporting a suspected incident of hazing or cooperating in any investigation or disciplinary proceeding regarding an incident of hazing.

It is possible that an incident of hazing might also fall within the definition of abuse, neglect, or exploitation as those terms are defined in 33 V.S.A. §4912(2) and 33 V.S.A. §6902(1), (7) and (9). To the extent a staff member is a mandatory reporter of suspected child abuse or neglect or abuse of disabled adults, reporting a suspected incident of hazing to the director does not relieve the reporter of any obligations additionally to report such suspicions to the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services as set forth in 33 V.S.A. §4914 or to the Commissioner of the Department of Aging and Disabilities as set forth in 33 V.S.A. §6904.

Investigation of Reports of Hazing

The director, upon receipt of a report of hazing, promptly shall cause an investigation to commence. The investigation shall be timely and thorough and the findings and conclusions of the investigation shall be reduced to writing. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the investigation shall be concluded within ten school days.

Disciplinary Action

If the investigation concludes a student committed an act of hazing or otherwise violated this policy, that student shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension or expulsion from activities or from school. Any disciplinary action against a student shall be subject to the procedures set forth in The Compass School Student Handbook. It is not a defense in a disciplinary proceeding under this policy that a person against whom the hazing was directed consented or acquiesced in the hazing activity.

Nothing in this policy shall limit or preclude the school from disciplining a student or other person affiliated with the school under any other school policy as well as under the terms of this policy

Training of Staff

The director shall ensure that each staff member including exploratory teachers, receive training in preventing, recognizing and responding to hazing.

Reporting Incident, of Hazing to Law Enforcement Official

All staff members are subject to confidentiality requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Accordingly, information deriving from student records which is personally identifiable, may not be disclosed without parental consent unless it meets one or more of the exceptions specified in 34 C.F.R Part 99. Certain of these exceptions, depending upon whether the circumstances meet the conditions set forth in those exceptions, may permit the reporting of hazing to law enforcement officials.

Those relevant exceptions are:

- (1) Where there is a health or safety emergency,
- (2) Where the information has been subpoenaed; or
- (3) Where the records in question are created and maintained by a law enforcement unit established by the school.

Coalition of Essential Schools: The Common Principles

(For more information, see www.essentialschools.org)

1. The school should focus on helping young people learn to use their minds well. Schools should not be "comprehensive" if such a claim is made at the expense of the school's central intellectual purpose.
2. The school's goals should be simple: that each student master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. While these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program's design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that the students need, rather than by "subjects" as conventionally defined. The aphorism "less is more" should dominate: curricular decisions should be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort to merely cover content.
3. The school's goals should apply to all students, while the means to these goals will vary as those students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group or class of students.
4. Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. Efforts should be directed toward a goal that no teacher have direct responsibility for more than 80 students in the high school and middle school and no more than 20 in the elementary school. To capitalize on this personalization, decisions about the details of the course of study, the use of students' and teachers' time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.
5. The governing practical metaphor of the school should be student-as-worker, rather than the more familiar metaphor of teacher-as-deliverer-of-instructional-services. Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching, to provoke students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.
6. Teaching and learning should be documented and assessed with tools based on student performance of real tasks. Students not yet at appropriate levels of competence should be provided intensive support and resources to assist them quickly to meet those standards. Multiple forms of evidence, ranging from ongoing observation of the learner to completion of specific projects, should be used to better understand the learner's strengths and needs, and to plan for further assistance. Students should have opportunities to exhibit their expertise before family and community. The diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation - an "Exhibition." As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school's program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of credits earned" by "time spent" in class. The emphasis is on the students' demonstration that they can do important things.
7. The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of unanxious expectation ("I won't threaten you but I expect much of you"), of trust (until abused) and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school's particular students and teachers should be emphasized. Parents should be key collaborators and vital members of the school community.
8. The principal and teachers should perceive themselves as generalists first (teachers and scholars in general education) and specialists second (experts in but one particular discipline). Staff should

expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and a sense of commitment to the entire school.

9. Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include, in addition to total student loads per teacher of 80 or fewer pupils on the high school and middle school levels and 20 or fewer on the elementary level, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff, and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than 10 percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided students in many traditional schools.

10. The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity.

APPENDIX
High Honors Proposal Form

What will you **title** your outside academic addition?

Example: *Works by Jane Austin and How they Differ?*

Photos of the Exner Block- Shape and Shadow

What **academic subject** does your study enhance?

Example- *My study on Jane Austin will extend my humanities by looking closely at this classic author.*

My photography work expands my art credits in exploratories.

Are you working with an outside organization or individual?

If yes, with whom?

Where will your additional twenty **hours** be completed?

Who will **sign** you off on these hours?

Example: *My guitar teacher Bryan will sign me off.*

My mom will support my reading.

Julia will grade my paper.

How will you **present** your learning to the community?

Examples: *I will hang my photos in the big room.*

I will do an oral presentation at all school

I will write a ten page paper and hand it in to Julia, Rick and Eric for comments.

Senior Year Alternative Learning Plans

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians of the upcoming Senior class:

In approaching the senior year, we encourage students to pursue a class or academic opportunity outside of Compass but at the same time need to assure you meet all Compass expectations in working towards grade promotion and graduation. If you are considering alternative options, you need to follow the process below, filling out the General Independent Study Form as well.

Some of the most common options are:

- 1) **An accredited academic course with an instructor:** There are some obvious alternative options, like taking classes offered at C.C.V., Tech Center in Springfield, or taking an approved academic on-line class through a certified program. To apply, complete Form A. You will still need a Compass staff to check in with about the progress of the course, and to communicate transcript grades. In order to qualify, you need to complete the independent study form attached.

- 2) **Approved Academic Independent Study:**
An independent study requires an exceptionally high level of planning, commitment, and responsibility. In practice, it is much more demanding than being in a class planned and organized by a teacher. Plans must be submitted and approved by the school's academic committee, including the Director. If this involves being away from Compass, a plan must be detailed for meeting all Compass graduation expectations, a detailed plan your work, and clear goals for the entire year.. Please fill out Form B.

If you are interested, you need to fill out the appropriate form by **August 15th**. You can send the form to the Compass School office c/o your advisor. If you are interested, begin the discussions now and make plans! For each course taken, you should fill out a separate sheet.

FORM A: Senior Alternative Academic Course Proposal

Student's Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Course name and description:

Name of institution and course instructor:

Contact information of institution or instructor:

Time and days for attending:

How will this affect your Compass schedule and if you missing time at school, how will you satisfy Compass School graduation requirements you will be missing?

Student signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

****“I have discussed this project with my child. I approve of my child’s project, including any off-campus travel and work described above.”**

Director Approval: _____ Date _____

Form B

Independent Study Proposal Form

Independent study requires an exceptionally high level of planning, commitment, and responsibility. In practice, it is much more demanding and difficult than being in a class planned and organized by a Compass teacher. Independent study must be connected to an organized program or teacher outside the school. To help in your planning, we ask that you complete the following planning form with a high degree of quality and specificity. Feel free to use other paper if needed.

Why are you applying for independent study (IS)?

Title of IS Course(s) Proposed:

Overview of IS Course (Goals, topics, activities):

How will this affect your Compass schedule and if you are dropping a course here, how will you satisfy Compass school graduation requirements?

Who will be supervising and assessing this work, and granting credit?

What is the schedule for this course?

Where will you be doing the work for this course?

What resources or support from Compass do you need for this IS?

What evidence of your learning do you expect to get from this course to add to your portfolio?

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Supervising Teacher Signature

Director Signature

Student's Name: _____

Date: _____

Coach name and contact information: _____

To the student: Write up a typed proposal using this outline:

Give a description of your independent class.

What are your learning goals for the first, second, and third trimesters? (Three separate answers).

How will you be spending your 5 hours per week (equivalent to the time you would be spending on Spanish in-class and on homework)?

Will you be at Compass during block 1 Spanish time? (You may not be in the Big Room. If so, we will designate you to a room, or area in the school.)

Create your first trimester report card (using Compass School Report Card) using a blank Compass School template that includes all five realms. Write a detailed course description, and choose from 10-15 indicators that are relevant to your class, and describe the evidence for each of those indicators. Model this based on past report cards from your teachers. Note: Include on your report card a check box for your coach which will permit you to continue working with them the following trimester. (Done each trimester). When you are ready to embark on this, email or contact your advisor requesting to send you a report card template via email, so you can craft it on the computer neatly.

Write up a week-by-week timeline for what you hope to accomplish this trimester. (Done each trimester).

Create a week by week check in sheet that confirms you've met with you coach at least once a week, and allows your coach to evaluate the gains in your progress for that week.

II. After completion of the proposal, have your coach read and approve with a signature your entire proposal, including report card template and timeline. Give them the "Coach Information" sheet, and discuss the responsibilities (weekly signature and report card evaluation) with them so they know what to expect.. Finally, you will then be ready to give the proposal to your advisor for review of approval.

Student signature _____ date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ date _____

**"I have discussed this independent study with my child. I approve of my child's proposal and will support them in this process.

Coach signature _____ date _____

**I have read the Coach information sheet and I agree to the following responsibilities.

“Coach” Information and Responsibility Sheet:

Dear Coach,

Thank you for agreeing to work with a Senior Compass student with their independent study course. The following letter is to clarify your responsibilities before you agree to sign their contract.

First, it is important to read the contract that the student has written in detail to know the goals and details of the study, and how you are to guide them in that process.

Second, please look at the report card created by the student. You will be the one to grade this report card at the end of the trimester (by November 1). When you are ready for that, there will be instructions provided on the Compass method of grading.

Third, you will be responsible for meeting with the student once a week to make certain that there has been evidence of 5 hours worth of progress in the work they’ve produced, or gains they’ve made. It will be during this check-in that students can get feedback, guidance or suggestions from you. They will have a log which records these sign-offs, and will share them with their Compass advisor.

If you have questions now, or anytime along the way, please note the contact information below of the two senior advisors: (The student should inform you of who their advisor is).

Compass School—(802) 463-2525

Alexandra@compass-school.org

Louise@compass-school.org

Independent Study Proposal Form

Independent study requires an exceptionally high level of planning, commitment, and responsibility. In practice, it is much more demanding and difficult than being in a class planned and organized by a Compass teacher. Independent study must be connected to an organized program or teacher outside the school. To help in your planning, we ask that you complete the following planning form with a high degree of quality and specificity. Feel free to use other paper if needed.

Why are you applying for independent study (IS)?

Title of IS Course Proposed:

Overview of IS Course (Goals, topics, activities):

How will this affect your Compass schedule and if you are dropping a course here, how will you satisfy Compass school graduation requirements?

Who will be supervising and assessing this work, and granting credit?

What is the schedule for this course?

Where will you be doing the work for this course?

What resources or support from Compass do you need for this IS?

What evidence of your learning do you expect to get from this course to add to your portfolio?

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Supervising Teacher Signature

Director Signature

THE COMPASS SCHOOL
Exploratory or Intensive
Independent Proposal Form



NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Circle one:

Proposed Exploratory

Independent Exploratory

Intensive w/ Outside Leader

Name of class: _____

Brief description: _____

If an Intensive describe how you will meet the exhibition requirement for an intensive. _____

Circle one:

Physical Fitness

Art

Other

Name of adult supervisor: _____

Phone number (if not a staff member): _____

(You must have spoken to him/her, fully informed them of all responsibilities, and received their consent.)

Days this class would meet (circle days):

Monday

Tuesday

Thursday

Who will be in charge of each item...

_____ **create curriculum**

_____ **clean up**

_____ **attendance**

_____ **grade- pass/fail**

_____ **supplies**

_____ **keep students engaged**

_____ **make sure always covered**

Signature of student:_____

Signature of Parent/Guardian_____ (**You must have permission from a parent/guardian**)

Signature of adult leader:_____

Hand in to Louise or Ron for approval.

*- Post class success- were the above responsibilities met?

Comments from student :

Signature of student:_____

Comments from leader:

Signature of adult leader:_____

Grades were handed in to Louise or Alexandra.

Project Week Contract

Date_____

Name:

Advisor:

Group Projects (for 2007): Put a "1" by your first choice and a "2" by your second choice.

____Landscape Art

____Money and Finances

____Art

____Canoe Trip

____Filmmaking

____Rock Climbing

...And just so you know there will be some fun offerings for afternoon activities.

.....(you don't need to sign up for these yet.)

Individual Project: The key to this project is to show **MASTERY**. In what knowledge area will you show mastery? How will you show this?

What do you hope to learn by doing this project?:

Description of your project (Describe everything that you plan to do.):

Describe the research component of your project, including how you will exhibit your research:

Describe the written component of your project:

Describe plans for your final exhibition:

For Job Shadow / Off-Campus Work:

Name of site supervisor: _____

phone _____ email _____

Daily Plans for the Project Time:

Day/Date	Plans, including travel plans (where I'm going; who's driving - be specific!)

Signed: **Student _____ date _____

**Coach _____ date _____

**"I agree to work with this student as described above. Student has given me the Information for Site Supervisor's sheet."

Site supervisor _____ date _____

**"I have discussed this project with my child. I approve of my child's project, including any off-campus travel and work described above." Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Judiciary Referral Form

Your Name(s): _____

Date: _____

Fully describe the situation that you want to bring to Judiciary. Include the names of all those involved. Tell exactly what happened.

Are you directly involved in the case, or is this an issue involving others that you would like to see addressed?

In what ways have you already tried to rectify the situation, and what were the results?

Do the people involved know that you want to bring this issue to judiciary?

If you are directly involved, would you be willing to meet with these people in the presence of the Judiciary?

What would you like to see happen as an outcome of this case?



2010-2011 Compass School Calendar

Weekly Schedule: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 8:25 am-4:00pm; Wednesday and Friday 8:25 am-2:15pm

August 23	Teachers and Staff Return
August 28	Community Volunteer Work Day 2:00-5:00 p.m. – Please come help! **New family orientation meeting preceding Work Day at 1:00p.m.
September 1	School begins – 8:30a.m.-2:15p.m. All Week
September 6	Labor Day- No School
September 7	1 st Quarter Exploratories Begin – School ends at 4 p.m. on M, Tu, Th
September 29	No School: Teacher In-service
October 1	Friday Trip—Mountain Day – 8a.m.-4p.m. school day
October 7-8	Middle School Overnight
October 15	1 st Quarter Exploratories end
October 18-20	Health Week
October 18-20	Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences 2:15-4:00
October 21-22	NO SCHOOL – Statewide Teacher In-Service Days
October 25	2 nd Quarter Exploratories Begin
November 22-26	NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Vacation
December 13-15	Presentations of Learning 7 th and 8 th grade
December 16	2 nd Quarter Exploratories End
December 17	Giving Day (8:30a.m.-2:15p.m. school day)
Dec. 20- Jan. 2	NO SCHOOL - December Holiday Vacation
January 3	2 nd Semester begins, 3 rd Quarter Exploratories begin
January 10-30	Senior Project Research Time
January 6	Winter Sports Begins
January 7, 14	2:30-4 Student Check-ins
January 17	NO SCHOOL - Martin Luther King Day
January 24	NO SCHOOL- Teacher In-Service
February 7-18	Winter Term – (2:15p.m. dismissal)
February 21-25	NO SCHOOL - Winter Vacation
February 28	Teacher In-service
March 1	NO SCHOOL – Town Meeting Day
March 22	3 rd Quarter Exploratories End
March 25	Spring Carnival and Evening Arts Show
March 17,18, 24,25	Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences (after school)
March 28	No School—Teacher In-Service Day
March 29	4 th Quarter Exploratories begin
April 18-22	NO SCHOOL - April Vacation
May 4-6	7 th -8 th and 9 th -11 th Spring Trips

May 9	NO SCHOOL - Teacher In-Service
May 17	7 th Annual Student Film Festival
May 23-27	Senior Graduation Roundtables scheduled in afternoon-evening slots
May 24	4 th Quarter Exploratories end (2:15p.m. dismissal for remainder of the year)
May 26-27	Exam days for High School
May 30	NO SCHOOL Memorial Day
May 31-June 8	Project Week – all independent project students return on the 7 th
June 4	Graduation
June 8	Project Week Exhibition and End of Year Celebration— 12:30-8:00p.m. school day
June 9	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL
June 10-17	Teachers' Meetings

SNOW DAYS: Compass follows WNESU (Windham Northeast Supervisory Union) cancellations. Please listen to the radio or check www.wtsa.net or www.sover.net for closing information.