



Mills River
Seventh-day Adventist School
Handbook

“Turning Students into Spiritual Leaders”

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EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

We, as Seventh-day Adventists, believe in the education of the whole person. Education is not limited to the mere development of the intellect. Furthermore, this educational process is a continuing experience throughout the life of the individual. The home, the school, the church and the community participate in this process of education.

The primary goal of our school is to prepare students for useful work on earth and a home in heaven by teaching them to accept Christ as their personal Savior, to allow the Holy Spirit to transform their lives, and to fulfill Christ's commission of preaching the gospel to the entire world.

Our objectives of Adventist Christian education are:

- To provide each student with opportunities for high scholastic achievement.
- To encourage each student to recognize and appreciate God as the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of all life; Teaching and demonstrating that the Christian life is the happiest way of life; showing love, concern, and compassion for all people, and persuading students that the best way to lead is by example.
- To remember that our bodies are the temples of God and learn to live healthy lives.

ADMISSIONS

This school is open to all persons who possess a good moral character and demonstrate both reverence and a willingness to wholeheartedly observe all the regulations of the school. Membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not required, but it is understood that everyone who is accepted thereby pledges to observe the regulations of the school and respect the standards and ideals of the denomination.

Seventh-day Adventist schools have not been established for the purpose of offering special education; therefore they are unable to accept students who have serious physical, scholastic, or behavioral problems.

Trial Status

We wish each student to have a successful experience at Mills River Seventh-day Adventist School. Therefore, we are careful with whom we accept into our student body. Each new student will be placed on trial status for the first nine weeks they are in attendance. At the conclusion of the nine-week period the student will be placed on regular status unless parents are otherwise notified. If a student needs to stay on a trial status the parents will be notified and an action

plan will be drawn up to clarify and correct any problem. If the necessary adjustments have not been made, the parent will be asked to withdraw their child. Mills River Seventh-day Adventist School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Furthermore, this institution does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and athletic or extra-curricular programs. In order to ensure the best educational environment, prospective students may be screened through testing, recommendation forms, and staff evaluations. The criteria includes student conduct, motivation, scholastics, and parental support.

Students entering kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before August 15, and students entering first grade must be 6 years old. All kindergarten students must be toilet trained. Requests for exceptions to this policy must be given to the principal and submitted to the Education Department of the Carolina Conference for an evaluation of both scholastic capabilities and developmental maturity. The student will be accepted only by permission from the Education Department.

APPLICATION

All pupils enrolling at Mills River Seventh-day Adventist School for the first time must furnish:

- a. completed application form with application fee
- b. computer internet use contract
- c. photo authorization / handbook agreement
- d. emergency consent to treat
- e. financial agreement
- f. approved drivers (one per family)
- g. cell phone agreement /lunch sharing agreement (upper grades)
- h. volunteer signup
- i. volunteer driver questionnaire
- j. medication information
- k. current record of up-to-date immunizations
- l. homeschool student insurance (homeschool students only)
- m. student recommendation form
- n. record request with previous school's address and phone number
- o. current physical examination performed by a licensed physician (by September 15)
- p. copy of birth certificate
- q. copy of social security card

Grade placement for students transferring from home schools may be dependent upon the results of a standardized placement test as well as subsequent review by the staff. Final placement will be determined within one month of entrance. Students whose records are not received within two weeks of entrance will be subject to the grade placement policy stated above.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

An earnest effort has been put forth to keep the cost of attendance as low as possible so that all may have the opportunity of a Christian education.

- 1. Financial Responsibility:** The individual who signs the Financial Agreement at registration is the person responsible for all financial obligations.
- 2. Entrance Fee Policy:** The entrance fee and first month's tuition are due at registration. To register for the new school year, your account needs to be current with the school. The registration fee is non-refundable.
- 3. Scholarships:** Each additional student in the same immediate family will receive a sibling scholarship.
- 4. Tuition Payment Policy:** The entrance fee and first month's tuition are due at registration, and 9 monthly payments thereafter are due by the 10th of the month from September through May for a total of 10 monthly tuition payments.
- 5. Satisfactory Arrangements:** Student accounts must be kept current in order to continue to attend Mills River Seventh-day Adventist School. If you are unable to pay your account balance in full by the 10th of each month (August - May) satisfactory arrangements must be made by the 10th. Your payment plan will be taken to the School Board to be reviewed. Accounts that fall behind more than a month may result in your child being removed from classes until a payment arrangement is resolved.
- 6. Worthy Student Financial Aid:** You may apply to the local church board for financial aid. Aid may or may not be given based on each individual case and availability of funds.
- 7. Return Check Fees:** There will be a \$35 service charge on all returned checks. Financial Forms will be included with Registration Packets each year with updated tuition, registration fees and payment information.

RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTS

Final report cards and school records will not be released until the school bill is paid or satisfactory arrangements have been made.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The school administration maintains strict confidentiality of student academic records, discipline issues, or of financial records in the following manner:

- All student records are kept in locked files.
- Discipline issues are reported to the parents of the involved students only and not to the general student body or to other parents.
- If and when it becomes necessary to take such issues beyond the teacher, principal, and parent, it is handled by the School Board.

SCHOOL HOURS

Monday – Thursday 8:15 A.M.- 3:15 P.M.

Friday – 8:15 A.M. – 2:15 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

Students at Mills River Seventh-day Adventist School are to be present and on time for all classes, activities, and appointments. Regular attendance develops patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life.

Parents or legal guardians have the responsibility for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily. Numerous studies link attendance with student achievement, therefore increased student attendance will result in improved student achievement.

Absences: If a student misses more than 15% of a class (i.e., six days per nine week period) the teacher will determine how or *if* the missed work may be completed. The classroom teacher will also determine time constraints for making up work for excused or unexcused absences.

Procedure to have absences/tardinesses recorded as excused: If a student has been absent/tardy, to excuse those absences/tardinesses, he/she must bring a valid written note *upon return* to school giving the reason for absence and signed by the student's parent or guardian. If a signed note is not received, the absence/tardy will be recorded as unexcused.

Five (5) unexcused tardinesses -A letter to alert parents will be sent by administration.

Seven (7) unexcused tardinesses - A meeting with the principal, teacher, and parents will be scheduled.

Ten (10) unexcused tardinesses - Parents will be required to come before the Mills River SDA School Board with a plan of action.

Excused Absences or Tardinesses:

The following reasons for pupil absences, tardiness, and early departure shall be considered by this policy to be excused:

- Personal illness, doctor/dentist, physical therapy and/or hospital appointment
- Extended illness (three consecutive days or more) or chronic health condition as documented by a parent's or physician's note. Illness less than five consecutive days with a note from parent or chronic health condition more than five days documented by a physician's note.
- Out of town family illness (on case by case basis)
- Death in the immediate family
- In-school disciplinary actions
- Religious observance (Holidays only)
- Required court appearance with note from court
- Military obligations
- School-sponsored trips, activities, or athletic events

(All medical excuses written by the doctor shall be submitted within **48 hours** of the student's return to school in order to be considered an excused absence. Otherwise they will remain unexcused absences).

There will be a \$5 charge for each unexcused absence after 3 unexcused absences. There will be a \$2 charge for each tardy after 5 unexcused tardy occurrences.

Student Release during School Hours

Dismissal during school hours must be authorized by office personnel. The following procedure will help guarantee accountability of all students during the regular school hours:

1. If for some reason a child must leave school early, the student must bring a note from parents indicating such action.
2. Upon arrival at school, the note should be given to the teacher so he/she is aware of the departure.
3. Parents must report to the teacher to remove their child from school.

Notification of Excessive Absences

The State of North Carolina requires that every student in the state between the ages of seven (or younger if enrolled) and sixteen years attend school. The Compulsory Attendance Law requires that the school notify parents of excessive absences under the following conditions:

1. After six unexcused absences, the principal shall notify the parent/guardian of the student's excessive number of unlawful absences from school. The notification to the parent shall be by mail and shall state that the

parent/guardian may be in violation of the North Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the attendance policies (G.S. 115 C-378).

2. If a student has ten accumulated unlawful absences in a school term, the student's parent/guardian shall be notified by certified mail of the student's excessive number of unlawful absences. If the principal determines that the parent/guardian has not made a good effort to comply with the law, he/she will notify the proper authorities

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

No before or after school care will be provided at the school. No student should arrive at school before 7:45 a.m. unless specific arrangements have been made. At the end of the school day, parents are requested to wait outside of the classroom until the teacher opens the door for dismissal. All students remaining after 3:45 P.M., or 2:45 P.M. on Fridays, will be charged \$1.00 per minute per student until picked up. This will not be the case if previous and satisfactory arrangements are made ahead of time.

WEATHER BULLETINS

In case of snow or ice, the teacher(s) will inform parents of school cancellations or delayed starting time via group text / phone call.

HEALTH Hygiene

Personal hygiene is necessary for a student's total well-being. Important homework includes daily bathing, clean clothes, well-groomed hair, clean fingernails, brushed teeth, and a good breakfast. Each child should have between eight and ten hours of sleep nightly in order to do his best work.

Breakfast

Students who skip breakfast tend to experience a lack of concentration long before lunchtime arrives. Your student(s) need this important learning tool in a timely fashion so they can be finished before arriving at school.

Diet

Since we believe and teach that our bodies are the temples of God, we feel we are responsible to care for them in the best possible way. We *require* that all caffeine beverages and unclean meats be excluded from lunches. (As stated in Leviticus 11, unclean meats include: pepperoni, ham, pork, bacon, shellfish of any kind, or fish without fins and scales.) We *request* that no soft drinks at all be sent to school. By minimizing products that contain large amounts of sugar, including soft drinks, you may greatly increase the concentration level of your student in the classroom. Except in case of emergency, students will not share lunches in the lower grades. Upper grades will share only by written permission.

Medications

The following policy has been developed to ensure safe storage and distribution of medication during school and aftercare hours:

- Students will not be allowed to keep medications of any type, including over-the-counter medications, in their desk, locker, or book bag.
- All medications must be in their original container with a childproof cap. Parents are responsible for ensuring that medication is not expired.
- A signed consent form will be required in order for any medication to be taken or administered. ***This form must be signed by the parent stating the days and dosage the medication is to be taken.***
- Medications will be logged on the consent form as soon as they are taken, and the staff member will sign for each dose. A copy will be provided to the parents at the end of the day. The original form will be retained in the school office.
- For a medication which must be given on a daily, continuous basis, the parent must complete a **Daily Medication Log** which states the name of the medication, time to be given and amount. Each day the medication is given the staff responsible will sign their name with the time and dosage as specified on the medication log. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide notification if the administration parameters change. It is also the responsibility of the parent to be aware and provide medication refills when needed. Any equipment or other necessary items to administer the medication must be provided by the parent.
- Emergency epi-pens and inhalers will be readily available to any staff member to use as quickly as possible.
- We ask that parents request that their children's physician prescribe medications that do not require doses during school hours whenever possible.

Illness

Parents of any student with a fever, with pinkeye, or with lice will be called to pick up the student. The student must be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school. A temperature of 100 degrees shall constitute a fever. In the case of pinkeye or strep, the student may return twenty-four hours after the first dose of antibiotics or as allowed by physician.

At any time during the school year the principal or teachers may inspect any student for head lice. If nits or lice are identified during inspection the student will be removed from the classroom and their parents or guardian will be called to come to the school to pick up the student. Instructions will be given to the parent before the student leaves the building. There is no specific exclusion time from school for head lice. Some parents are able to accomplish the treatment in one day. It should not take more than a few days. Exclusion for lice should not be used to miss school for an extended period of time.

After the student has been cleared to return to class the principal will continue to check for nits because of the risk of re-infestation if the student's environment was not properly treated. The student will be checked as often as deemed necessary by the principal.

Allergies

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to notify the school of any known allergies.

STATEMENT OF ASBESTOS

No ACBM (asbestos-containing building materials) was used in the original construction of the school building. No modifications have been made since the original construction that used ACBM.

Parents, teachers, and other building occupants are hereby notified that the accredited inspector's statement of no ACBM is on file in the school office. This statement is available for inspection as required per Sections 763.84© and 763(g)(4) of the AHERA regulations.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

Student accident insurance is considered secondary-coverage as it provides for minimal payments only after the family insurance coverage is expended, or if there is no other primary insurance coverage. Coverage is for most inconsequential injuries incurred while in attendance at school. It does not cover medical expenses incurred by causes other than accidents and is insufficient for major accident expenses. These situations must be paid by the parents or sponsors and/or the family's insurance policy. A student accident report must be filed when the accident occurs to receive benefits.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum at all levels reflects the philosophy and objectives of Seventh-day Adventist education. It incorporates an awareness of the principles of human growth and development, encouraging, guiding and sustaining the students as they seek to understand themselves and to relate to their fellow human beings and to their Creator. The textbooks and course material used throughout the school are in compliance with the recommendations of the Office of Education for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which is the central coordination office for all schools operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Church throughout the world.

Subjects offered at Mills River Seventh-day Adventist School include: Bible, reading, math, language arts, the sciences, social studies/history, art, music, choir, physical education, computer skills, guitar, bells, and Spanish.

Progress Reports

The school year is divided into four quarters or grading periods. Two quarters make up one semester. Progress reports will be issued at the end of each quarter. Grades will be reported in the following manner:

Kindergarten

I – Independent
P- Progressing
NT – Needs Time

Grades 1-2

E - Excellent
S - Satisfactory
N - Needs improvement

Grades 3-8

A - 90%-100%
B - 80%-89%
C - 70%-79%
D - 60%-69%
F - 0%-59%

Incomplete Assignments

If a student is unable to complete his/her assignments by the end of the grading period, the teacher has the option to give him/her an incomplete. This incomplete must be cleared within two weeks after the end of the grading period, or the incomplete assignments will be given a failing grade. Other options and/or alternatives will be according to teacher discretion.

RETENTION

The teacher(s) of Mills River Seventh-day Adventist School are committed to working with each student individually, as much as possible, to ensure that the student understands and masters new concepts as they are presented. Due to the diversity of cognitive abilities and learning styles, however, some students are slower than others in their academic progress. When students fall behind one grade level or more, a meeting may be called to discuss possible home and/or school interventions. If, after various interventions are tried, the student continues to lag behind academically, it may be necessary to retain the student. This decision is made by consensus of the classroom teacher(s), the parents, and the principal.

The following will be considered for retention:

- students in first grade who have not mastered minimum reading or math requirements
- students who have accumulated excessive absences

- students who have demonstrated a decided lack of effort and have failing grades.

In certain instances where a student demonstrates severe deficits academically, emotionally, and/or behaviorally, it may be recommended that the parents arrange for a psycho-educational assessment by a certified school psychologist at the local public school district or a private certified psychologist to determine if there are serious physical, learning, emotional, and/or behavioral disabilities which may affect the student's ability to learn.

FIELD TRIPS / CLASS TRIPS

Field and class trips are an integral part of the educational experience at Mills River SDA School. *Students are required to participate in these trips.* For some trips, a fee is assessed. The school will endeavor to keep costs to a minimum and will give as much advance notice as possible. **Mills River SDA School Standards of Conduct and Dress will be observed during these trips and the school t-shirt is required for all field trips.**

Prior to participating in a trip, the faculty must have written permission from the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) on the form provided by the Mills River SDA School. Parents providing transportation for field trips are asked to provide proof of liability insurance, and to assure correct use of seatbelts as required by North Carolina law.

Siblings on the class trip will be at the principal's discretion.

GUM POLICY

Gum chewing is not allowed on the school premises at any time. Noncompliance will result in a disciplinary action.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

During the course of the school year, disagreements may arise that if not handled in a responsible and respectable way, have the potential of becoming issues that affect the entire school family. Critical, sarcastic, judgmental, and negative remarks made about the school, teaching staff, students, or other persons associated with the school or church can cause even greater difficulties and may hinder resolutions to the problem. Hurt feelings, lost friendships, and damaged reputations are not a positive Christian witness to the community and should not find a place in God's family.

It is the responsibility of all who are a part of the school or church to use effective communication and earnest prayer in dealing with all misunderstandings and/or disagreements. In the event that a concern is not being resolved as a parent, student or staff member feels it should be, you are encouraged to follow the steps in Matthew 18, which may include the following: principal, teacher, school board chairman or pastor.

STUDENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. When there is a conflict in the classroom the teacher will bring students together to discuss what has happened and ways that this could be avoided in the future. This could be done by conversation or written accounts that are shared with the other student involved. The teacher will coach the students on ways to arrive at a better outcome in the future. If there is a history of the students' having difficulty with their relationship, then verbal or written reports will be conveyed to the parents of these students and the principal.
2. If repeated incidents occur within a short period of time, the teacher will begin to bring students together on a regular basis to talk and allow each one to have a voice. She will seek to find out if there is anything that needs to be addressed to make the relationship improve. Student and /or teacher documentation will be sent to the parents of these students and the principal.
3. The principal/ teacher have the option of meeting with both families separately to try to come to a solution.
4. When multiple attempts have been tried to resolve relational conflicts and are not successful, parents of both children will be asked by the principal to meet together with school personnel to resolve the situation.
5. Unresolved issues will be addressed at board level.

DRESS CODE

Parental help in monitoring student dress BEFORE arrival at school is anticipated.

While dress is ultimately an individual matter, good sense and good taste require that certain standards be taken into consideration. Parents and/or students may not always agree with the standards of the school, but cooperation in this matter is necessary if a student is to remain in school.

A student's appearance should not draw attention to themselves, but humbly point to Christ. All student attire should be clean, neat, modest and attractive. Slacks or jeans should not be faded, frayed, in disrepair, overly tight or baggy. Camouflage material/design is unacceptable attire for school or school sponsored outings. Pants and tops must meet in all positions and the midriff (front and back) is to be covered at all times. Low necklines are not acceptable. Shirts must not have stenciled/photographed pictures/words and should have a collar. Tank tops/sleeveless shirts are not allowed. Shoes with closed toes and socks are required school dress. Appropriate shoes are required for students to ensure safe participation in various activities, both indoors and outdoors, during P.E. class.

Skirts and dresses should be properly fitted and shall come to the top of the knee when sitting. If the skirt has a slit, it may not be longer than two inches. Shorts are allowed only during the months of August, September, April and May. **Spandex or**

exercise pants are not allowed. The bottom of the shorts must come to the top of the knee.

Parents will be called if the student does not meet the dress code.

Students will be provided with a school shirt to be worn for school outings. On Fridays, students that had perfect attendance and no tardiness during the current week may use the pass given by the teacher to wear school approved t-shirts. These will include school t-shirts, pathfinder t-shirts, Mills River Valley Race t-shirts, Fletcher track and field t-shirts, and other t-shirts connected to the school approved by the principal.

Jewelry, such as arm or wrist bracelets, finger or toe rings, any type of body pierced jewelry, necklaces or pendants, is not permitted. This also includes armbands of any kind (unless worn strictly for medical purposes).

Cosmetics for the purpose of hiding blemishes are acceptable if they are natural in appearance. Unacceptable cosmetics include, but are not limited to: unnaturally colored hair, unnaturally appearing make-up, or body art of any type.

Guys are to have short hair that is not over their ears or below the collar.

Exceptions to the dress code are permissible as announced by the teacher for special functions.

The methods of enforcement of these policies will be at the discretion of the administration.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

All patrons of the school, parents of children attending and members of the church are members of the Home and School Association. They are urged to assist in the programs of the school, the Association, and other functions sponsored for the betterment of relations between the home and the school.

VISITORS

Parents are always welcome at school and they are encouraged to visit the classroom. All visits must be previously arranged with the classroom teacher.

ELECTRONICS POLICY

The following electronic items should be left at home and are not allowed on school grounds:

- Electronic gaming devices
- IPODS, MP3 Players, DVD or CD Players or any other music device
- Any other electronic item that a staff member considers to be disruptive All staff members have the right to confiscate any electronic item. Any confiscated items will be returned to a parent. If there is a legitimate need to have one of the items listed above at school, this will need to be approved by administration prior to bringing the item onto school grounds.

CELL PHONES

Students with cell phones must abide by the following procedures:

1. Parents must sign an agreement with the school's cell phone policy and that gives permission for their student to have a cell phone.
2. Students with a cell phone must turn it in to their teacher daily. The teacher will keep the phone during the day and give it back to the student upon dismissal.
3. Cell phone violations: Consequence of cell phone violation is as follows: (This is for approved cell phones as signed by parent.)
 - A. The first infraction will be a warning to the student.
 - B. The second infraction the phone will be returned to the parent and the student will not be allowed to bring it to school for a period of one week.
 - C. The third infraction the student will not be allowed to bring a cell phone to school for the remainder of the school year.
4. Cell phones **must** also be given to the teacher on field trip days and will be returned at the end of the school day.

These rules are needed to ensure the learning environment is protected from disruption, and for the privacy of other students.

COMPUTER USE AGREEMENT

All families must obtain an ***Acceptable Use Policy*** from the office, read it, sign it, and return it before the student is allowed to use any technology on the school grounds.

DISCIPLINE

The Mills River SDA School is dedicated to the task of not only teaching students how to become productive adults, but also how to live in Christ and for Christ in today's world. Emphasis is placed on self-discipline and self-respect as well as respect for God, authority and others. In order to strive to reach the goals of our school, the behaviors listed in the **School Rules** (following) will not be permitted.

The goal of the Mills River SDA School is to educate each child to the best of his ability. To reach this goal, it is necessary that the school function within a disruption-free, safe environment. The major means by which the school can provide this type of environment is to minimize the causes of misbehavior and work to prevent its occurrence. Teachers will strive to solve their own classroom discipline problems in their own manner, using their own methods, which may include time-outs, behavior contracts, keeping students for their own after-school detention, parental phone calls and conferences, writing of papers, etc.

The Mills River SDA school board reserves the right to make policy additions, deletions, and/or modifications during the school term that are deemed appropriate for a more effective school program and learning environment.

In certain cases involving student discipline, the following may apply:

1. The principal/head teacher reserves the right to immediately suspend any student who he/she feels is threatening the health and welfare of fellow students and/or teachers.
2. Such an emergency suspension will be in effect until a school board meeting is called to attempt a resolution.
3. Lack of parental cooperation may result in suspension or expulsion.
4. The teacher reserves the right to speak with the parent if need be, along with another adult present, about said suspension.

Classes are not to be disrupted by parents wishing to speak with the teacher/principal regarding student progress, discipline problems, etc. Parents must make an appointment to speak with the teacher/principal in private.

At no time should a confrontation between a parent and teacher, or another parent, be witnessed by any student.

It is the intent of the school board and staff/faculty to provide a safe and enriching school environment that teaches young people how to interact with others and to resolve differences, challenges and conflicts in a positive way. Therefore, if all options have been exhausted in resolving a situation, and continual discord and negative comments are still being made by those involved, then a meeting of the school board will be held to determine if the parents and student(s) involved should be requested to find an alternate educational program.

SCHOOL RULES

This list of behaviors and actions are minimum guidelines for a smoothly operating school year. The list is non all-inclusive and other behaviors will be handled as they occur. Methods of handling unacceptable behaviors in addition to the disciplinary code will be utilized as they are thought to be needed.

Inappropriate classroom behavior will not be tolerated, and includes the following: #

Hitting, kicking, slapping, punching, biting, pinching, throwing objects, taunting, name-calling, bullying, inappropriate touching, or harassment of another student.

Use of alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, and/or harmful inhalants.

Possession of guns, knives, sharp objects, matches, lighters, explosives, and/or other dangerous materials. Includes toys or facsimiles of any weapon.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICIES Bullying

Bullying is a **repeated** verbal, psychological, or physical act of aggression toward another individual. We say that a student is even being bullied or picked on when another student says or draws nasty or unpleasant things on paper, or makes repeated negative contact or comments toward or about another student. Bullying also occurs when a student is ignored or avoided by other students with hurtful intentions. Bullying is inappropriate behavior, and will NOT be tolerated under any circumstances.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined by the following phrases:

Unwarranted advances.

Graphic pictures drawn and/or displayed of a sexual nature.

Inappropriate gestures and/or jokes.

Touching oneself inappropriately in front of others.

Spreading inappropriate rumors about another student.

Touching another student in an inappropriate way.

These types of behaviors are illegal and will NOT be tolerated within our school.

Any student or staff found to be participating in this type of behavior would be

suspended until the School Board can decide on an appropriate disciplinary action.

Students and parents are encouraged to report all types of sexual harassment to the teacher, school board chair or pastor.

Threats

Please note that all information received by the school administration and/or staff regarding a student(s) who threatens (even casually or in jest) a teacher, staff member, or another student with personal injury or death, or who threatens major property damage, will be treated in a serious manner by the school administration, school board, and the Carolina Conference Education Office. When it is confirmed that any such action was intended or has taken place, the student(s) will be immediately removed from the school until further notice by the school board and/or conference education office.

CUSTODY OF CHILDREN

It is the policy of Mills River SDA School to respect the rights of all parents as they relate to visiting a child or picking a child up from school. If the custody/visitation rights of a parent have been terminated by court order, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide Mills River SDA School with a copy of the court order. Additionally, Mills River SDA School requests that parents not involve the faculty and staff in any custody proceedings. As representatives of the school, teachers or staff will not involve themselves in any court proceedings involving students of the school without prior consent of the school board or a mandate of the court.

STATEMENT ON HUMAN SEXUALITY AND IDENTITY

Mills River SDA School is a grades K4 – 8th educational institution that is owned and operated by the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which is a part of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church. As such, we adhere and agree to the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its interpretation and understanding of the scriptures. Therefore, we strive to conduct educational ministry within the world, maintaining our commitment to God as our Creator and Savior, and to fulfill the gospel commission of sharing Jesus Christ and His love with the world. With this foundation, we offer the following:

First, as a Seventh-day Adventist educational institution we neither condone nor promote any behavior outside of the Adventist biblical beliefs. Mills River SDA School's policy on human sexuality and identity are based on the North American Division Statement on Human Sexuality. This statement is based on Seventh-day Adventist understanding of scripture.

Second, our teachings on human sexuality and identity throughout the curriculum are aligned with Seventh-day Adventist biblical beliefs.

As a part of our commitment to Seventh-day Adventist education we have adopted the following guidelines to assist our students, parents, staff, and all other stakeholders:

1. Physical contact between students that would normally be viewed as overly affectionate in nature is not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, extended

touching, touching in sexual areas, long hugs, hand holding, kissing, and sexual intimacy.

2. Students will neither promote nor advocate a lifestyle while enrolled in Mills River SDA School that is not in accordance with the following:
 - a. “Adventist educational institutions do not condone gay, lesbian, or bisexual sexual practice or the promotion of sexual behavior outside of our biblical beliefs.” (NAD Statements on Human Sexuality, p 3)
 - b. Discussions of acceptance of gay, lesbian, transgender, or bisexual practice.
3. Students must state their birth gender on an application for school:
 - a. The birth gender stated must be accurate
 - b. The birth gender determines restroom use, sports team choices, uniform choices, pronouns used, and any other issue as stated in the student handbook concerning sex.
4. Only one student at a time may be in school restroom facilities. While on field trips students must use bathrooms separately. Overnight field trips will be subject to approval.
5. A student will be addressed and use their legal name and pronoun.

Mills River SDA School is called to love all people. In this sin-filled world, our goal is to create an environment where all people love and respect each other.

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” Colossian 3:12-14

HANDBOOK

This handbook is published under the authorization of the school board of Mills River Seventh-day Adventist School. Should subjective interpretations of school policy be necessary, the teacher may make that interpretation. If that interpretation is questioned or disputed by a student, parent or guardian, the principal may give the interpretation. The school board reserves the right to make final interpretations of school policy and to edit policy when and where necessary. The school reserves the right to make clear any interpretation of policy written or implied and is not subject to legal interpretation of wording or intention. The school board reserves the right to change and/or add to any policy or regulation contained in this book. As these changes are made, parents will be notified through the school parent letter. We encourage parents to read carefully all regulations. Great responsibility rests upon our parents in carrying out the Christian principles upon which our school operates.

A FINAL NOTE

Here are a few suggestions which will help your child succeed in his/her education experience.

1. Daily prayer and family worship
2. Regular and punctual attendance
3. 8 to 10 hours of sleep every night
4. A good breakfast, part of a nutritionally sound diet
5. Daily cleanliness of both body and clothes
6. Proper dental care, eye care, and other efforts to minimize any physical defects
7. Consistent responsibility for homework
8. A balanced schedule that minimizes screen time, includes participation in school programs, promotes exercise, and other wholesome activities
9. Positive attitude toward church and school
10. Regular parent-teacher conferences.