

JOHN LYMAN SCHOOL  
Regional School District 13  
P.O. Box 446  
106 Way Road  
Middlefield, Connecticut 06455

THOMAS D. FORD, Principal

Telephone (860) 349-7240  
FAX (860) 349-7242

August 2015

Welcome to John Lyman School!

John Lyman School is a child-centered community of learners that is dedicated to fostering a lifelong love of learning through active exploration of all curricular areas. The Integrated Day Program provides a supportive, stimulating environment in which students learn to take responsibility for decision-making as well as for their own learning and behavior. As a Higher Order Thinking (H.O.T.) School, John Lyman fosters an arts-integrated approach to learning in a democratic setting that celebrates the voice of every child. We strongly believe that the arts can support and enhance all subject areas and help to create more meaningful learning opportunities for our students.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with the information you need to know about John Lyman School and Regional School District 13. Please note the district mission statement that guides Region 13 in our efforts to provide a first rate education for your child. Also included in the handbook are school hours, dismissal and cancellation procedures, lunch costs, and a variety of other pertinent information. You will notice that our school rules are aligned with the district's Core Ethical Values. In addition, I would ask that you take the time to review the addendum at the end of the handbook. It contains the Board of Education policies that we must share with you. It is important that students and their families become familiar with these policies.

At John Lyman, it is our belief that education is a partnership between home and school, and we hope that you will become active members of the Lyman community. We take great pride in our caring and dedicated staff. The Lyman staff always puts kids first, and we are committed to helping your child succeed academically and socially. Our teachers work hard to foster open communication and to keep you informed about your child's progress. Likewise, we hope you will contact us when you have questions or concerns. Please do not hesitate to call or schedule an appointment with me at any time.

On behalf of the John Lyman staff, we are very excited about the upcoming school year. We look forward to working with you to ensure an outstanding educational experience for your child. I know that 2015-2016 will be a great year!

Sincerely,

Thomas D. Ford

## REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 13 MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Regional School District 13, a community that celebrates learning, honors tradition and embraces change, is to ensure that all students will be engaged and ethical lifelong learners and citizens who will thrive, excel and contribute in an ever-changing, interdependent world by providing challenging, diverse, and nurturing experiences that empower each student to succeed through meaningful partnership with family and community.

## JOHN LYMAN SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a wholistic and integrated view of learning which actively involves each child in the pursuit of academic excellence through decision-making and problem solving.

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

#### Regional School District 13

The Board of Education of Regional District 13 presently consists of ten members, four representatives from Middlefield, and six from Durham.

Kerrie Flanagan, Chairperson

Merrill Adams	Norm Hicks
Nancy Boyle	Dr. Anthony Onofreo
Robert Fulton	Jeremy Renninghoff
Dr. Victor Friedrich	Francis Willett
Raffaella Fronc	

Dr. Kathryn Veronesi                      Superintendent of Schools

Ronald Melnik                              Business Manager

Amy Emory                                  Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Dr. Linda Berry                              Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

The Board of Education meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. Meeting locations rotate among schools. The Board welcomes members of the public and the school community to attend and sets aside time at the beginning of the meeting to hear any concerns or suggestions. The agenda for each meeting is posted prior to the meeting at John Lyman School, and at both the Middlefield and Durham Town Halls. The agenda can also be obtained from any of the Board members or the Central Office.

### Connecticut General Statutes Section 4-114a

It is the policy of the Connecticut State Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, sex, mental disability, or physical disability in any of its educational programs, activities or employment policies.

Grievances regarding Title VI (Race, Color, National Origin) and Section 505 (Handicapped) should be addressed to Rosemary Allen, Central Office, 349-7200.

Grievances regarding Title IX (Sex Equity) should be addressed to Amy Emory, Central Office, 349-7208.

## JOHN LYMAN SCHOOL STAFF SY 2015-2016

### Principal

Thomas Ford

### Secretary

Darlene Allen

### Kindergarten

Sharon Berndt  
Kristen Blake  
Kerry Chernovetz

### Grade 1-2

Julie Abbott  
Kristen Ciccone  
Margo Novak

Carole Sibiskie  
Valerie Swiantek

### Grade 3-4

Sarah Greco  
Nancy Kozlik  
Phil Moriarty

Angela Polansky  
Amy Sorensen

### Special Education and Pupil Services

Danielle Hay	School Psychologist
Linda Frazer-Sierra	Social Worker
Melissa Hoon	Social Worker
Katie Bodak	Special Education
Melissa Whitney	Special Education
Erin Gonzales	Literacy Tutor
Tara Heikkila	Remedial Services, Math
Christine Davis	Remedial Services, Reading
Melissa Marteka	Remedial Services, Reading
Jeanne Vicchitto	Remedial Services, Math
Amanda Dobler	Speech Pathologist
Carla Muskatallo	Occupational Therapist
Karen Charpentier	Nurse

### Discipline Based Teachers

John Forline	Art
Carrie Howes	Art
Jennifer Holland	P.E./Health
Todd Salva	P.E.
Anne Doyle	Library/Media
Jenny Lussier	Library/Media
Lorrie Martin	Outdoor Education
Michael Meurs	Music
Cheryl Wiener	Instrumental Music

### Support Staff

Karen Balavender	Teacher Assistant
Laura DiBenedetto	Teacher Assistant
Mary Johnson	Teacher Assistant
Kate McLaughlin	Teacher Assistant
Linda Pettit	Teacher Assistant
Tracey Pollitt	Teacher Assistant
Susan Francis	Teacher Assistant
Derek Harris	Custodian
Jim Maletta	Head Custodian
Robin Anderson	Food Service
Chris Halligan	Food Service

## REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 13's CORE ETHICAL VALUES

As a school community, we are committed to growing in good citizenship and personal integrity; thus, we are continually asking ourselves:

Am I showing **RESPECT** for

- myself
- the worth and rights of others
- the views of others
- personal, school and community property
- the environment

Am I accepting **RESPONSIBILITY** for

- my own actions and words
- my own welfare and the welfare of others
- my personal growth and learning
- making ethical choices

Am I practicing **HONESTY**

- with myself
- with others
- in my work

Am I showing **KINDNESS** by

- treating others the way I would want to be treated
- promoting the well-being of others
- being patient with myself and others
- acting with compassion

Am I showing **COURAGE** by

- standing up for moral principles
- persisting in the face of adversity
- being willing to accept challenges
- being true to myself

**Respect, responsibility, honesty, kindness, and courage** are the Core Ethical Values we strive to embrace and practice in Regional School District 13.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

As a student in Regional School District 13, I...

1. treat others with courtesy, respect, fairness, and kindness.
2. am honest with other people and in my work.
3. obey teachers and other school staff members.
4. follow all school and classroom rules.
5. accept consequences for not doing what I should.
6. take care of my property, the property of others, and school property.
7. work, play, and move safely and appropriately.
8. cooperate when I work and play.
9. participate in my education to the best of my ability.

Being a good citizen means showing respect and being responsible. As a student, this means that I accept the consequences whenever I do not follow the rules. My behavior should not be disruptive to the school community whether I am in class, at recess, on the bus, on a field trip, or a part of any other school activity.

## **CODE OF DISCIPLINE**

As we look at our Code of Conduct, let us remember that it represents behaviors that we expect from all of the students in Region 13. Every school in the district has established rules that are created as a result of this code. Consequences for infractions of school and classroom rules are usually age appropriate as established by each school. These are presented in the school handbook. When board policies or state laws are violated, consequences are more serious and are uniform throughout the district regardless of the age of the student.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### ASSEMBLY

Each week, all students get together to sing, share projects and special interests and enjoy a sense of community. Parents are always welcome to attend. Assemblies are held on Fridays at 2:20pm.

### BUS INFORMATION

#### ---- BUS RULES

1. Sit in your seat at all times.
2. Keep head, hands and feet to yourself and inside the bus.
3. Follow the Core Ethical Values and school rules.
4. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
5. Be respectful and kind; use only good language.
6. Keep the bus clean; do not mark or damage the bus.
7. Listen to and follow the driver's directions.

Note: The bus driver and/or may assign seats as necessary.

Rules will be clearly posted on all buses.

The consequences for breaking bus rules are as follows:

1. The driver is required to report the violation in writing to the principal on the day of the offense if possible.
2. The principal shall notify the parent in writing of the violation(s), and a notification will be given to the school board.
3. Any child who continues to misbehave will not be allowed to ride the bus. It will be up to the parents to get the child to school. This arrangement will hold until the parent can assure good behavior on the part of the pupil.
4. In cases of serious misbehavior, the principal may withdraw bus privileges without repetition of incidents.

#### ---- BUS CHANGES/STOPS

If a student is to be picked up at school, he/she must have a note. The same applies if a child is to be dropped off at a different bus stop. All changes must be approved by the Principal's office.

#### ---- BUS COMPANY INFORMATION

Dattco Bus Company  
Telephone: (860) 349-8479

Parents with any valid concerns regarding the bus company and/or bus drivers, may contact **Sue Gaudreau** at the **Central Office (860) 349-7200**. Your concerns will be recorded and appropriate actions will be taken.

### CALL BACK SYSTEM

1. If your child is to be absent on a given day, please **call the school nurse (349-7416)** between 8:20 and 8:50am. **Please do not call the school office.**
2. If a child is absent whose parent has not called, the nurse will call the home to verify the absence.
3. If the school cannot reach you at home, the nurse will call your work number.
4. Should the nurse fail to reach you at work, she will call the emergency numbers you have provided to seek an explanation of your child's whereabouts. While this may at times be a very involved and somewhat inconvenient process for you, it is designed with your child's safety in mind.

### CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Beginning in early May, grade level teachers and resource staff begin to meet together weekly to begin to organize classes. Many factors are taken into account when determining where children are best placed. Balance between boys and girls, grade levels, academic and social development stages are all considered.

In addition, some children have a particularly dominant learning style preference that may be better suited to one classroom organization and/or teaching style than another. Potential interactions of individuals with other students already assigned to a classroom contribute another piece to the decision.

We also understand that parents may have information that will be helpful in determining appropriate placement. While we will not accept requests for specific teachers, parents are invited to write a letter to the principal in the spring sharing insights about their child. In this way, parents have the opportunity and responsibility to share situations that would be detrimental so that we can make the best placement for all.

As you can see, many factors and a great deal of shared decision making are taken into consideration before placement of each child is made. Our goal is to provide each child with a positive learning environment within a well-balanced classroom that might be negatively impacted by changes made after classes are established.

### **DISMISSAL**

Continuing in our effort to ensure a safe and comfortable learning environment, our dismissal procedure will be in effect beginning on the first day of school. School officials must ensure that no unauthorized person ever takes a child from school. Students may only be released to a parent or a person designated by the parent to pick a youngster up from school. Please see below for the parent pick-up procedures.

- If you are planning on picking up your child, you need to send a written note to school that day indicating the first and last name of the person picking up at end of the day.
- A written note is preferred, but if you need to call to the school to indicate that your child will be picked up, please do so as early in the day as possible and before 3:00 p.m. This will help us to avoid confusion for your child at a very busy time of the day.
- Please understand that if John Lyman staff members are unfamiliar with the adult who is picking up your child, they will ask for identification to ensure that your child is going home with the correct person.
- End-of-day pick up will take place in the cafeteria. Parents/adults who are picking up will buzz in at the main entrance and proceed directly to the cafeteria.
- Parents/adults who pick up on a regular basis can submit a form indicating who will be picking up and on what days. The form will go home on the first day of school. We ask that you notify the office immediately if those arrangements change.
- If for some reason you have not informed the school that you are picking up your child, you will need to inform the main office before proceeding to the cafeteria. However, we kindly ask that you avoid last minute changes.
- Upon arrival to the cafeteria, parents/adults will get and sign dismissal cards from a John Lyman staff member.
- Students who are being picked up will be called down to the cafeteria.
- John Lyman staff members will dismiss students individually to parents/adults after collecting the dismissal cards.
- Parents/adults and students will exit through the cafeteria door opposite the stage.
- All early dismissals, including those that are health related, will happen through the main office. Students will be called down to the main office to be dismissed.
- Please note that any other changes to your child's regular dismissal need to be communicated in writing or through a phone call to the main office.

*Once again, we respectfully request that you avoid last minute calls to request dismissal changes. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.*

### **DROP-OFF**

- No cars are allowed to park in the bus circle at any time.
- When dropping off during designated times, cars should drive straight ahead to the stop sign.
- Drop-off should only occur in the designated area next to the sidewalk between 8:30 and 8:50 a.m. Please pull forward to the front of the yellow striped area as space becomes open.

- Students can only be dropped off in the designated area when a Lyman staff member is present. If dropping off after 8:50 a.m., parents need to park and escort the child into the building. The child will need to be signed-in in the main office.
- A child should never be dropped off if a Lyman staff member is not present or allowed to walk in any of the parking areas unless accompanied by an adult.
- There is no parking at any time in the yellow striped area.
- Cars should never be double-parked in the drop-off area.

## **FAMILY SHARES**

“Family Share” is held periodically at John Lyman School. These events are opportunities for your child to invite you to the classroom and share work in progress as well as materials being used in the classroom. It is not a parent/teacher conference time, but rather an opportunity for parents to be better informed, by their child, about what is taking place in their child's classroom.

Because not all families are able to attend **Family Share Night** on Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm (at which sign-ups for fall and spring conferences take place), the first Family Share morning of the school year is scheduled for Friday, October 16<sup>th</sup> from 7:30-8:30am. The remaining dates are listed on the Calendar of Events located on our website. Please park in the large lot to the left as you enter the school grounds.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

All John Lyman School field trips must adhere to Board of Education policies. In addition to the procedures and policies (#6153) spelled out in the policy portion of the handbook, the following practices must be observed.

- Every child must have a signed permission slip for the field trip.
- **Field trips begin and end at the school.**
- **All students must ride the bus transportation provided to and from the field trip.**
- Siblings are not allowed to travel on field trips, either in cars or on the bus.
- Parents, without their children, may carpool only if there are not enough seats on the bus.
- Field Trips are wonderful extensions of the classroom experience that integrate learning in various areas of the curriculum. They are, as well, a great responsibility. For this reason, there can be **NO EXCEPTIONS** to these practices.

## **---- CHAPERONES**

There are often several opportunities during the year for parents to serve as chaperones on field trips. Classroom teachers appreciate and count on parents as chaperones to supervise students during travel to and from as well as at the field trip destinations. Guidelines for chaperones are:

- Please be alert for potentially dangerous situations and disruptive or inappropriate behavior. We depend on you to be proactive and intervene **before** there is a major problem or ask us for help if you're not sure what to do.
- Always let us know if anyone gets hurt or feels sick and be sure we are informed of any problems that occur.
- As a chaperone, you need to accompany and be responsible for the children in your group at all times.
- Alcoholic beverages are **never** to be consumed on field trips.



## **HOMEWORK**

John Lyman School believes that homework provides an important link between the school and home. It is a necessary part of the learning process. The purpose of homework is to reinforce learning that has taken place at school, practice skills, extend knowledge, or work on projects that cannot be done in class. Homework should be developmentally appropriate and geared to individual student growth.

### **---- RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Teachers are expected to:**

- make clear the worth and purpose of homework to students and parents.
- make assignment developmentally and educationally appropriate.
- make assignments meaningful and pertinent to the curriculum.
- review, evaluate, and/or extend assignments as is appropriate to the content and purpose.
- provide parents with general information and evaluation of their child's progress in meeting his or her responsibilities in regard to homework completion.
- share any concerns with student and parents.

#### **Students are expected to:**

- listen carefully to all directions about assignments and ask for clarification if necessary.
- complete assignments independently to the best of his or her ability.
- return assignments to school on time.
- accept responsibility for the completion of all assignments to the best of their ability.
- seek help when difficulties arise.
- take the initiative to make up work missed.

#### **Parents are expected to:**

- help their child to choose an appropriate place to study.
- help their child with time management.
- assist with homework only as is appropriate to the assignment, and/or developmental level of their child.
- support their child's completion of homework.
- give feedback to the classroom teacher as is appropriate.

#### **School administrators are expected to:**

- review periodically a sampling of completed and evaluated student assignments from all teachers, to ensure the successful implementation of this policy.

### **---- CONTENT**

Homework, when given, will be based on individual needs. The kind of homework assigned, and the purpose of an activity required, has a direct relationship to the nature of the content and the age, maturity and educational needs of the student. All assignments should contribute to the learning process. Whenever possible, homework should stimulate critical and creative thinking. Homework should be varied in subject areas and encompass both long and short-term assignments.

The Integrated Day Program at John Lyman School is committed to helping students acquire lifelong learning skills. Helping students to develop a love of reading is key to this goal. With this in mind, as a school community we encourage parents to provide frequent reading opportunities for their children in addition to specific homework assignments. This can take on many formats including:

- parent reading to the child.
- child reading to a parent.
- child reading to another family member.
- child reading silently to herself or himself.

### **---- TIME AND FREQUENCY GUIDELINES**

Students progress and work at different rates of speed. Therefore, it is difficult to assess the amount of time, which should be devoted to completing homework. The following are meant to be guidelines only:

#### **Grades one and two:**

- Students in grades one and two will usually have homework assignments that will require between 10 and 20 minutes to complete.
- The frequency of these assignments will be left to the teacher's discretion usually not to exceed three times per week.

**Grades three and four:**

- Students in grades three and four will usually have homework assignments that will require between 20 and 40 minutes to complete.
- The frequency of these assignments will be left to the teacher's discretion usually not to exceed 3-5 times per week.
- Occasionally, homework assignments for the 4th graders will require 45 minutes to complete in order to prepare students for transition to 5th grade.

**HOT SCHOOLS**

John Lyman has been a H.O.T. School (Higher Order Thinking) since 1996. As such, we work with grants from the Connecticut State Office of the Arts, Department of Economic and Community Development which assists us in integrating the arts into all areas of the curriculum. A ten-day artist residency, a significant amount of professional development and participation in the HOT Schools Summer Institute are benefits of this partnership. Additional artist residencies, field trips and related activities are integrated closely with this year's curricula and are provided through the efforts of JLPA.

**INTEGRATED DAY PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Integrated Day Program at John Lyman School is a child-centered, developmental program. It provides a supportive and stimulating environment that encourages and guides the child in an investigative, active exploration of all curriculum areas. The I.D. program promotes a wholistic and integrated view of learning.

The teacher is a facilitator for open-ended discussions and activities. The child is an active, involved learner, decision maker, risk taker and problem solver, working with teacher and peers to meet his/her individual needs.

In the Integrated Day program teachers will plan instruction to ensure that children will:

- use their own experiences to actively construct new knowledge which connects to and extends what they can already understand and do.
- be problem solvers who can identify a problem and generate a variety of solutions.
- work both independently and cooperatively to accomplish goals.
- develop into flexible thinkers, able to adapt to a rapidly changing world.
- become effective communicators.
- develop a sense of competence in their ability to positively affect the world around them.
- learn responsibility and respect for themselves, their environment, and other people.
- develop an awareness of the inter-connectedness of all things.
- develop academic skills which will prepare students for life in the 21st century.

**LATE ARRIVAL**

Students should arrive at school between 8:30am and 8:45am to be in their classrooms ready for the start of the day at 8:50am. **If your child arrives at school after 8:50am, please sign him/her in at the main office.**

## LIBRARY PROGRAM

Beginning in September and continuing through early June, all students are permitted to borrow school library books. Children are asked to take proper care of the books, understanding that payment must be made in the case of loss or damage.

### TOWN LIBRARIES

Levi E. Coe Library, Middlefield (349-3857)

Monday - Thursday

10:00am - 7:00pm

Saturday, 10:00am - 2:00pm

Durham Public Library, Durham (349-9544)

Monday - Thursday

10:00am - 9:00pm

Friday and Saturday

10:00am - 5:00pm

All children are encouraged to register at the public library for their own free library card.

## LOST and FOUND

Lost and Found articles are located in a clear plastic tub across from the Parents' Place. Unclaimed articles are donated to charity periodically.

## LUNCH INFORMATION

A "Point of Sale" system is used in all Region 13 cafeterias. You may now pay for your child's lunch online with a credit card for as many days, weeks or months as you want. There is a small fee each time you purchase. You may also send your child with money to purchase lunches which the cafeteria manager will then log into the computer. By now you have received a letter with your child's Student ID # and directions about how this procedure works and you may have already put money into his/her account. Your child will have a student ID badge which will be used for cafeteria purchases and checking out library books.

Prices for lunch are \$3.25 for one lunch or \$16.25 for 5 lunches. Milk is \$.50 each or \$2.50 for 5 milks. Ice cream is also available for \$.50. Students may also purchase yogurt, water and juice.

Monthly menus are included in the last Electronic Wednesday Envelope of the month for the following month. The menu also appears on the school website at [www.rsd13ct.org/lyman](http://www.rsd13ct.org/lyman).

All on-site cafeteria purchases must be done *before* school in the morning. If a child is making a purchase at school he/she is to stop in the cafeteria office *on the way to the playground*.

Applications for free or reduced cost lunch are available online or in the school office throughout the school year.

Occasionally students forget their lunch or lunch money. They are allowed to borrow from the cafeteria but are expected to bring in the money on the next school day. **Students owing for 2 lunches will be given a notice to replace the borrowed money and will not be allowed to "charge" again until they have paid what they owe.**

A snack will be provided so that the child will not be hungry. **This will be enforced in 2015-2016.** If parents have questions about any aspect of this, they may contact Mr. Ford.

## **MEDICAL/EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Emergency information must be updated annually as well as any time the information (home phone, cell phone, e-mail, job, medical information, etc.) changes.

### **--- ILLNESS**

If a student should become ill during the school day, the school nurse will notify the parent to pick up the child.

State guidelines of first aid care for accidents are followed by nurses. If a serious accident occurs and parents or alternate persons cannot be reached, the student, accompanied by a John Lyman staff member, will be taken to Middlesex Memorial Hospital unless otherwise indicated on the emergency card.

### **--- ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS**

Children rarely need to take medications at school. However, should the need arise, you must be familiar with the school's procedures.

Before the school can administer any prescribed or over the counter medications (Tylenol, Tylenol substitutes, cold/cough medications, etc.) a medication form must be signed by both you and your child's physician. The forms are available at all district schools in the Health Room.

Medication should be delivered to the school **by the parent** in the original, labeled bottle with enough medication for the length of time the medication is required. **Do not** send the medication in with your child. All medications are kept secure in the nurse's office. A record of the times the school has administered the medication is kept in the student's health file.

**Children cannot self-administer any medication.** Additionally, children should not carry hand sanitizers. Parents are urged to help make the school a safe environment for your child. This is a state law and must be followed for the safety and protection of our children.

### **--- HEAD AND SCALP EXAMINATIONS**

Pediculosis (head lice) exams are given periodically throughout the school year. If a problem exists with any student, the parent will be notified by phone, the student excused and the treatment requirements provided. Head lice are transmitted through close personal contact. There is no immunity, therefore it is important to check your child periodically. Please encourage your child not to share hats, combs, or hair accessories. It is helpful if you notify the school if your child does have head lice.

### **--- INSURANCE**

Low cost medical term insurance is available for all students. The program is optional and the school is not directly involved. We distribute the information and collect the premiums at the beginning of each school year.

## **OUTSIDE RECESS**

Recess is held outside each day weather conditions permit. Please make sure your child is equipped with warm clothing for the playground. Only a doctor's note, for unusual circumstances, will excuse a child from outside recess.

## **PARTY INFORMATION**

You are encouraged to schedule parties on weekends, rather than after school, if all students in a class (i.e. all girls, all boys) are not invited. We also request that you neither pick up nor ask the party goers to ride the bus. To avoid hurt feelings, party invitations **will not** be distributed in school.

## **PETS**

Children frequently want to share their pets with their classmates. However, pets may **NOT** be brought into school during the school year. This practice has been in effect for several years for a variety of reasons. The number of students who have allergies to pets has increased significantly. In addition, there are students who are frightened by animals. Finally, pets are frequently frightened by the high-pitched voices of large groups of excited children in enclosed places!

If, due to a particular project or topic of study, a student has reason to share his/her pet, the child and parent must have permission from the teacher **AND principal**. In that situation, the parent would bring the pet to a designated area outside of the building where the class may go to see the animal.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

All children have P.E. one day a week. Sneakers or rubber-soled shoes **must** be worn. It is recommended that girls wear pants or shorts for P.E. and long hair should be tied back.

## **PLANNING AND PLACEMENT TEAM (PPT)**

The Planning and Placement Team is designed to provide a means of communication and decision-making at the school level concerning the effective use of resources within the school to help pupils with special needs. It is also responsible for follow-up and periodic review of all pupils in Special Education and Special Services programs. The team is composed of: Principal, Speech/Language Pathologist, Social Worker, Psychologist, Special Education teachers, classroom teacher and parent.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES**

Region 13 students are evaluated three times a year by teachers. These evaluations are reported to parents in late Fall and March by conference and written report and in June by a written report. The March conference for second through fourth graders is a family conference led by the student.

## **STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAM (SAT)**

Student Assistance Teams exist in each Region #13 school building. Each team is comprised of the building principal, counseling staff, special and regular education teachers, and other personnel as needed.

The team meets weekly to discuss individual youngsters who may be experiencing difficulties in one or more of the following areas: academic, social, emotional, behavioral, motor, or communication.

The team discusses the concern, creates a short-term action plan, assigns roles for team members, and determines a future date for a progress update. Action plans can be changed or refined as needed. This data becomes part of the pre-referral process in the event that a referral to special education is ultimately warranted.

Any parent who does not want his/her child to be eligible for this service should notify the principal in writing.

## **SCHOOL CANCELLATION, LATE OPENING, OR EARLY DISMISSAL**

In cases of storms or storm warnings, school will occasionally start late or be cancelled. When there is a late opening, the buses will be later than usual. Dismissal takes place at 1:30pm on shortened days. Regional District 13 will be using the **Everbridge Notification System** to let you know about school closings, delays and emergencies. When the District issues a message, the RSD13 Alerts Emergency Notification System will deliver the message to your home phone, cell phone, text message or email. You need to decide how you want to be contacted. If you put down more than one option, you will be contacted in the order you select. Please note that if you provide a home phone number you could receive a call as early as 4:45am for school closings or delays. Please think carefully about the options you select. The success of the service relies on you. Having your latest contact information is the only way to ensure that we can contact you in an emergency. To provide us with your information please go to <http://www.rsd13ct.org/Misc/Emergency-Notifications/index.html>. School closings and delays will still be listed on TV and on the radio

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

Full Day: 8:50 a.m. - 3:20pm

Early Dismissal: 8:50 am - 1:30pm

2 Hour Delayed Opening: 10:50am - 3:20pm

## **SCHOOL RULES**

Our school rules were developed by children and teachers at John Lyman School. In conjunction with the district's Strategic Plan, the school rules are aligned with the district's Core Ethical Values.

1. I will respect the property of others.
2. I will use proper language at all times.
3. I will not make extra clean-up for the custodial staff and the rest of the staff.
4. During snack and lunch, I will use good table manners.
5. I will share all school equipment.
6. I am responsible for everything I do and say, in school, on the playground and on the school bus.
7. I will use playground equipment safely.
8. I will line up quietly when it is time to enter the school building.
9. I will walk in the school hallways.
10. I will stay within the boundaries of the school playground.
11. I will only throw objects that were meant to be thrown, such as balls, beanbags, etc.
12. I will enter the school building only with the permission of the person on duty.
13. If allowed to play tag, I will only play 2 finger tag.
14. I understand that no fighting is allowed.
15. I will treat others as I wish to be treated.

Playground rules will be reviewed in the first week of school by staff who supervise the individual play areas.

## **TECHNOLOGY – STUDENT USE OF COMPUTERS AND THE INTERNET**

Lyman School is pleased to provide students access to computers and the Internet, believing in their value for educational purposes.

Students will have the opportunity to:

- Use technology in their learning
- Learn to use a wide range of technology tools
- Access Internet resources while conducting research
- Exchange information worldwide with other users

Students have the responsibility to:

- Adhere to the District Core Ethical Values and Code of Conduct on all uses of technology and the Internet
- Adhere to all school and district policies and state and federal laws
- Use school equipment carefully and respectfully
- Respect the work of others and observe copyrights
- Learn to use the network properly

- Use the Internet only under staff supervision
- Respect the privacy of others

Students may not:

- Use the equipment without staff permission and/or supervision
- Damage or disrupt equipment or the system
- Interfere with another's use of the equipment
- Modify, copy or delete another's data or files
- Load or install unauthorized games, software or other electronic media
- Waste paper by printing unnecessary pages
- Use obscene language or send offensive, threatening or harassing messages
- Allow offensive or damaging materials to enter the school network
- Use the network for non-school purposes
- Violate copyright laws
- Send, transmit, or otherwise disseminate proprietary data or other confidential information

Student use of technology will be curriculum related, teacher directed and adult supervised. Website navigation will be guided as much as possible by the use of specific bookmarks.

## **VISITORS**

All parents and visitors are welcome in the school. For the safety of the school community, visitors must stop at the office to sign in and get a badge **before** going to their destination.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

The school and JLPA welcome all volunteers to assist at various functions in many ways. Classroom teachers each set their own volunteer policies according to their needs, usually after the first few weeks of school. You will have an opportunity to sign up at Parent Information Night. If you wish to volunteer, contact a JLPA representative and/or your child's teacher. Everyone is required to sign in at the office and pick up the appropriate badge.

## **WINTER CLOTHING**

Students will be allowed to play in the snow if they come to school with **all four** of the following: **hat, mittens or gloves, boots, and snow pants.** Students without appropriate clothing must stay on the blacktop area during recess. At the beginning of the winter season, students may bring an extra pair of sneakers or slippers to keep in school.

**To: Parents, Guardians, Teachers & Staff**

From: Robert K. Francis, Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds

Date: August 2015

**Topic: Pest Management and Pesticide Application Program**

Regional School District #13 has developed policies and procedures for managing pest populations that pose a threat to people, property or the environment. The intent of this policy is to ensure the health and safety of students, teachers, staff and all others using District buildings and grounds. The goal of this pest management program is to manage pests in order to:

- Reduce any potential human health hazard and/or to protect against a significant threat to public safety;
- Prevent loss or damage to school structures or property;
- Prevent pests from spreading in the community or to plant and animal populations beyond the site;
- Enhance the quality of life and to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students, staff and others.

The District has developed an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program to manage structural and landscape pests and the toxic chemicals for their control in order to alleviate pest problems with the least possible hazard to people, property and the environment. IPM procedures will determine when to control pests and whether to use mechanical, physical, chemical, cultural or biological means. Chemical controls will be used as a last resort. No pesticide applications were applied during the past fiscal year (July 2014 – June 2015).

Legislation requires that all schools employ a certified pesticide applicator for any non-emergency use of pesticides in and around school buildings. Regional District #13 employs a professional licensed applicator to handle our General Pest Control Program. This company performs routine inspections, makes recommendations for corrective measures (such as repairs, filling cracks and mushy floors) and utilizes baits and traps to treat specific problems. The Integrated Pest Management Program expands and improves our current procedures while insuring the District meets all the requirements of this legislation.

The Integrated Pest Management Program uses a common sense approach by utilizing all methods of pest control to decrease the pests' access to food and their desirable habitat. The program requires: routine monitoring to identify potential problems; making recommendations for corrective measures; record keeping of inspections, sightings, recommendations and all applications made and the use of pesticides after all the available options are deemed unacceptable or not feasible starting with the least toxic. A copy of this IPM Program will be maintained at each school in the administrative office.

District 13 does not utilize any pesticides inside of any school buildings and has not at any time over the past fifteen (16) years. The District does not routinely apply any pesticides to our playing or ball fields. We do apply an organic fertilizer to all ball fields on a routine basis throughout the year.

In the event of an emergency situation that is deemed to pose a potential threat to human health, the application of a pesticide might be indicated. This will be done only after approval is received from CT DEP and all notifications required and might include; a notice sent home with the student, email, posting on the District website, phone calls or a posted notice at the site.

A copy of our Pest Control Management and Pesticide Applications Procedures, the IPM Program, related policies and procedures, sighting logs, monitoring reports, and pesticide application reports will be maintained in a binder at each school. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact Rob Francis at 860-349-7238.

August 2015



Dear Parents, Teachers and Staff:

The Regional School District # 13 school facilities have been inspected to determine the presence of asbestos and to evaluate the potential for human exposure to airborne fibers. As is the case for most schools, some asbestos-containing products were found in our school buildings.

An Asbestos Management Program has been developed to maintain these materials in a condition in which they do not pose a health hazard. As part of this program, asbestos-containing materials are inspected several times each year and the Asbestos Management Program is reevaluated every three years. **These materials do not pose any health hazard in their present condition.**

Anyone wishing to know more about the Asbestos Management Program or the asbestos-containing materials found in the Region #13 schools should call Rob Francis, Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds at (860) 349-7238 and ask to see the Asbestos Management Plan which is on file in the maintenance office and the main office of each school.

Sincerely,

Robert K. Francis  
Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds

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## **ADDENDUM**

This addendum to the Parent and Student Handbook contains several of Board of Education Policies with which you should be familiar. We have given you the complete policy to avoid any misunderstandings or misinformation about these serious issues.

It is very important that you read these policies carefully and discuss the significant and appropriate issues with your child. Depending upon your child's age, some policies may need to be briefly explained at a more simple level. This Fall, classroom teachers and administrators will also review, briefly, the major aspects of these policies as they relate to the development of classroom and school rules.

This addendum is a part of the official Parent and Student Handbook of each school. Thank you for your attention to these important policies. If you have any questions, please be certain to call the school.

### **Mandatory School Age**

The Connecticut General Assembly, in the 1998 session completed in May, passed a number of proposals affecting education and the operation of school districts. Most of these proposals are aimed at promoting early reading success and overall early literacy.

One proposal which directly involves parents of young children is concerned with the age of the child upon school entry. The mandatory school age has been lowered from age 7 to 5, with a parental option to have their child begin school at age 6 or 7. To exercise the option, the parent, or other person having control of the child, must personally appear at the school district office and sign an option form and the district must provide the parent, or other person, with information on the educational opportunities available in the district.

What this means for parents is that, if they choose not to have their child start school in the calendar year their child turns 5 (i.e. for this year, between January 1, 2005 and January 1, 2006), they must make an appointment at the Regional School District 13 Central Office and sign a form. Parents exercising the option to hold their child out for a year, and therefore needing to sign the option form, should call Rosemary Allen at 349-7200. Rosemary Allen will arrange an appointment at which time the option may be signed and information about educational opportunities available in the district will be shared.

## POLICIES

The Region School District 13 Public School District is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. The Region School District 13 Public School District expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by Region School District 13 Board of Education.

The Region School District 13 Public School District also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying is likewise prohibited.□□

Students who engage in bullying behavior shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with the Board's policies on student discipline, suspension and expulsion, and consistent with state and federal law.

"Bullying" means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:□□

- 1) causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;□□
- 2) places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;□□
- 3) creates a hostile environment at school for such student;□□
- 4) infringes on the rights of such student at school; or□□
- 5) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.□□

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.□

"Cyberbullying" means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.□□

To address concerns about bullying behavior, the Region School District 13 Public School District follows a prevention and intervention policy that includes the criteria listed below. Parents and/or students who have concerns regarding bullying behavior may report such concerns to Nancy Heckler, Principal. The prevention and intervention procedure:□□

- (1) Enables students to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees and requires students and the parents or guardians of students to be notified annually of the process by which students may make such reports;□□
- (2) enables the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying;□□
- (3) requires school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying to orally notify the safe school climate specialist, or another school administrator if the safe school climate specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report;□□
- (4) requires the safe school climate specialist or other appropriate school employee to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports made under this section;□□
- (5) requires the safe school climate specialist or other appropriate school employee to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;□□
- (6) includes a prevention and intervention strategy for school employees to deal with bullying;□□
- (7) provides for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying;□□

(8) requires notification to the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation;□□

(9) requires an invitation to the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed and to prevent further acts of bullying;□□

(10) establishes a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and makes such list available for public inspection, and annually report such number to the Department of Education and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;□□

(11) directs the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;□□

(12) prohibits discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;□□

(13) directs the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that address safety measures the school will take to protect such students against further acts of bullying;□□

(14) requires the principal of a school, or the principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such principal, or the principal's designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct;□□

(15) prohibits bullying (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the local or regional board of education, and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;□□

(16) requires, at the beginning of each school year, each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan; and □□

(17) requires that all school employees annually complete the training described in Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-220a.□□

Not later than January 1, 2012, the Region School District 13 Board of Education shall approve a Safe School Climate Plan and submit such plan to the Department of Education. Not later than thirty (30) calendar days after approval by the Board, the Board shall make such plan available on the school district's web site, the website of each school, and ensure that the Safe School Climate Plan is included in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

### **Complaint Resolution Procedure**

Connecticut State Department of Education  
Elementary and Secondary Education Act  
34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 299(10)(a)

#### **I. Filing of Complaint**

##### **A. Violation of Law**

A written complaint may be filed by an organization or individual with the Connecticut Commissioner of Education alleging that the state educational agency (SEA) or an agency or consortium of agencies is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to the following applicable programs:

1. Part A of Title I (Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies).
2. Part B, Subpart 1 of Title I (Reading First).
3. Part B, Subpart 3 of Title I (Even Start Family Literacy Programs).
4. Part D of Title I (Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk of Dropping Out).
5. Part A of Title II (Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund).
6. Part D of Title II (Enhancing Education Through Technology).
7. Part A of Title III (English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act).

8. Part B, Subpart 4 of Title III (Emergency Immigrant Education Program).
9. Part A of Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities).
10. Part A of Title V (Innovative Programs).

#### B. Review of an Appeal

A written complaint may be filed by an individual with the Connecticut Commissioner of Education appealing the decision of an agency or consortium of agencies based on prior written complaint presented by an individual to such agency or consortium of agencies.

#### C. Content of Complaint

The complaint shall be in writing, signed by the complainant and contain the following:

1. A statement that the SEA or an agency or consortium of agencies has violated a requirement of federal statutes or regulation regarding the applicable program, or in the case of an appeal, a statement of aggrievement with the decision rendered by the agency or consortium of agencies based on a prior written complaint.
2. A clear and concise description of the facts on which the statement is based and the specific alleged violation or aggrievement.
3. A description of prior efforts to resolve the complaint, including information demonstrating that the SEA, agency or consortium of agencies has taken action adverse to the complaint or has refused or failed to take action within a reasonable period of time.
4. Complainant's and respondent's name, address and telephone number.
5. Other materials or documents containing information which support or clarify the statement.

### II. Review of Complaint

#### A. Analysis

Within three business days of the receipt of the complaint, the Commissioner shall assign a review official. Within five business days of the assignment, the review official shall determine whether the complaint has been properly filed in accordance with Section I. If necessary, the review official shall interview the complainant.

#### B. Dismissal of Complaint

The review official may dismiss the complaint in writing stating an explanation for such action. The grounds for dismissal shall include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Failure to file a proper complaint pursuant to Section I.
2. The allegations fail to state a bona fide violation of federal statute or regulations by the SEA or an agency or consortium of agencies.
3. The allegations fail to state a bona fide aggrievement with the decision rendered by an agency or consortium of agencies based on prior written complaint.
4. The allegations were not caused by the actions or failure to act by the SEA, agency or consortium of agencies.

### III. Notification of Complaint and Investigation

If a complaint is not dismissed, the review official shall forward the complaint to the respondent immediately along with a copy of the Complaint Resolution Procedures.

### IV. Response to Complaint

Within 10 business days of the receipt of the complaint from the review official, the respondent shall file with the Commissioner a written response to the complaint.

#### A. Content of Response

The response shall address each and every allegation of the complaint and shall list the respondent's name, address and telephone number.

#### B. Interview

The review official or the respondent may request an interview to discuss the response and to resolve the dispute informally.

### V. Complaint Investigation

Upon completion of Section IV or the failure of the respondent to file a response, the review official shall conduct an investigation. All parties may be duly notified that an investigation has begun. At any time during the investigation, the review official shall attempt to resolve the dispute informally.

Within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the complaint, an investigation of the complaint shall be completed and a written report shall be mailed to both parties. Information shall be gathered in a timely manner, while minimizing any inconvenience or disruption to the complainant or respondent.

Concerning a review of an appeal of the decision of an agency or consortium of agencies, the review official may elect to disregard the procedures contained in this section using in lieu thereof the following abbreviated procedure:

1. Review all of the appropriate records and determine whether the decision of the agency or consortium of agencies shall be affirmed, reversed or modified.
2. Draft a letter of review of an appeal addressing, but not limited to, the issue in dispute, the facts found, the affirmation, reversal or modification of the lower decision and recommendation for improved practices, policies or procedures.

#### A. Data Collection

The complainant and respondent shall provide the review official with copies of all relevant records requested in writing. Telephone interviews of the complainant, respondent and others with knowledge of the allegations may be conducted.

Pursuant to 34 CFR 99-35(a) the review official, acting on behalf of the SEA, is authorized to have access to education records in connection with an evaluation of federal or state-supported education programs or for the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements which relate to those programs.

#### B. Independent On-Site Investigation

The review official may conduct an on-site visit to investigate the complaint if the official deems it necessary. Any on-site visit shall be coordinated with the respondent.

#### C. Complaint Investigation Report

The Complaint Investigation Report shall be completed by the review official and mailed to the parties within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the complaint by the SEA. The Commissioner may grant an extension for the completion of the report upon written request of the review official or respondent if exceptional circumstances exist with respect to the particular complaint. Such extension shall be in writing and shall be mailed to the parties.

The report shall contain the following contents:

1. Summary of all investigation activities including, but not limited to, date of receipt of complaint, allegations, parties interviewed, documents received and dates of on-site visits.
2. Specific allegation of the complaint, the findings of fact, conclusions and final decisions rendered regarding each allegation, including citation to applicable federal statute or regulation.
3. Specific corrective action plan that resolves the complaint or ensures future compliance of the respondent regarding the violation of federal statute or regulation.
4. Recommendations for improved practices, policies or procedures shall be offered when no violation of federal statute or regulation is found.

#### D. Corrective Action Plan

If the Complaint Investigation Report finds that the respondent is violating federal statute or regulations, the respondent shall be requested to submit a corrective action plan within a specified period of time as determined by the review official. Respondent may request technical assistance from the SEA in order to prepare a plan to achieve compliance.

### **VI. Review of Final Decision**

The complainant may file a written request with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education to review the final decision of the SEA.

All local educational agencies shall disseminate information about the complaint procedures to teachers, staff, parents and appropriate private school officials or representatives.

A private school official shall have the right to complain that a local educational agency did not engage in consultation that was meaningful and timely, or did not give due consideration to the views of the private school official.

### **Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)**

The PPRA affords parents as well as students who are 18 and emancipated minors ("eligible students") certain rights regarding the conduct of student surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

1. Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following subjects ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U. S. Department of Education (ED) –
  - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
  - Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
  - Sex behavior or attitudes;
  - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  - Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  - Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  - Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
  - Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –
  - Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  - Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and

- Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others, except to the extent notification of such activities is not required by law.
3. Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –
- Protected information surveys of students;
  - Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
  - Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

Parents/eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Any Emory, Pupil Personnel Director Regional District 13 P.O. Box 190 Durham, CT 06422	or	Family Policy Compliance Office Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-4605
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## STUDENTS 5113

### Student Attendance and Truancy

Regular and punctual student attendance in school is essential to the educational process. Connecticut state law places responsibility for assuring that students attend school with the parent or other person having control of the child. To assist parents and other persons in meeting this responsibility, the Board of Education, through its Superintendent, will adopt and maintain procedures to implement this policy.

#### I. Definitions:

1. **Absence** - any day during which a student is not considered "in attendance" at his/her assigned school, or on a school sponsored activity (e.g. field trip), for at least one half of the school day.
2. **Disciplinary absence** - Any absence as a result of school or District disciplinary action. Any student serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should be considered absent. Such absence is not considered excused or unexcused.
3. **Educational evaluation** - for purposes of this policy, an educational evaluation is an assessment of a student's educational development, which, based upon the student's presenting characteristics, would assess (as appropriate) the following areas: health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status and motor abilities.
4. **Excused absence** - a student is considered excused from school if the school has received written documentation describing the reason for the absence within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school, or if the child has been excluded from school in accordance with section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes (regarding communicable diseases), and the following criteria are met:
  - A. Any absence before the student's 10<sup>th</sup> absence, is considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate written documentation in accordance with this policy.
  - B. For the student's 10<sup>th</sup> absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are, with appropriate documentation in accordance with this regulation, considered excused only for the following reasons:
    - a. student illness (verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional);
    - b. religious holidays;
    - c. mandated court appearances (documentation required);
    - d. funeral or death in the family, or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
    - e. extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by the District administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance and this regulation;
    - f. lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends.
5. **In Attendance** - any day during which a student is not considered to be absent from his/her assigned school, or from an activity sponsored by the school (e.g. field trip), for at least one half of the school day.
6. **Student** - a student enrolled in Regional School District 13.

7. **Truant** - any student **five (5) to eighteen (18)** years of age, inclusive, who has **four (4)** unexcused absences from school in any one month or **ten (10)** unexcused absences from school in any school year.
8. **Unexcused absence** - any absence from a regularly scheduled school day for at least one half of the school day, which is not excused or considered a disciplinary absence.

The determination of whether an absence is excused will be made by the building principal or his/her designee. Parents or other persons having control of the child may appeal that decision to the Superintendent or his/her designee, whose decision shall be final.

## II. Written Documentation Requirements for Absences

1. Written documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absence within ten (10) school days of the student's return to school. An incidence of absence is considered consecutive days of absence.
2. The first nine (9) days of absence will be excused upon receipt of a signed note from the student's parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with the parent/guardian regarding the absence, or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional, as appropriate.
3. For the student's 10<sup>th</sup> absence, and all absences thereafter, documentation of the absence must be submitted in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 above, and must also include the reason for the absence and the following additional information:
  - A. Student illness:
    - a. signed note from a medical professional, who may be the school nurse, who has evaluated the student confirming the absence and giving an expected return date; or
    - b. signed note from school nurse who has spoken with the student's medical professional and confirmed the absence, including the date and location of the consultation.
  - B. Religious holidays: none.
  - C. Mandated court appearances:
    - (1) a police summons;
    - (2) a subpoena;
    - (3) a notice to appear;
    - (4) a signed note from a court official; or
    - (5) other official, written documentation of the legal requirement to appear in court.
  - D. Funeral or death in the family, or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family: written document must explain the nature of the emergency.
  - E. Extraordinary educational opportunity pre-approved by the District administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance and this policy: written pre-approval from the administration, in accordance with this regulation.
  - F. Lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends: none.
4. Neither e-mail nor text message shall serve to satisfy the requirement of written documentation. In rare and extraordinary circumstances, a building administrator may, in his/her own discretion, accept the delivery of written documentation through a scanned copy sent by e-mail.
5. Regional School District 13 reserves the right to randomly audit written documentation received, through telephone and other methods of communication, to determine its authenticity.
6. Any absence that is not documented in accordance with this regulation within ten (10) school days after the incidence of absence will be recorded as unexcused. If documentation is provided within ten (10) school days, but is incomplete, the building principal may, at his/her own discretion, grant up to a five (5) school day extension for provision of the completed documentation.

## III. Extraordinary Educational Opportunities

1. To qualify as an extraordinary educational opportunity, the opportunity must:
  - A. be educational in nature and must have a learning objective related to the student's course work or plan of study;
  - B. be an opportunity not ordinarily available for this exemption;
  - C. be grade and developmentally appropriate; and
  - D. include content that is highly relevant to the student; while some opportunities will be relevant to all students, others will contain very specific content that would limit their relevance to a smaller group of students.
2. Family vacations do not qualify as extraordinary educational opportunities.



3. All requests for approval of extraordinary educational opportunities must:
  - A. be submitted to the building principal in writing prior to the opportunity, but no later than ten (10) school days prior to the opportunity except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the building administrator;
  - B. contain the signatures of both the parent/guardian and the student;
  - C. include an outline of the learning objective of the opportunity and include detail as to how the objective is linked to the student's coursework or plan of study; and
  - D. include additional documentation, where available, about the opportunity.
4. The building principal shall provide a response in writing and include the following:
  - A. either approval or denial of the request;
  - B. brief reason for any denial;
  - C. any requirements placed upon the student as a condition of approval;
  - D. the specific days approved as excused absences for the opportunity;
  - E. the understanding that the building administrator may withdraw its approval if the opportunity is canceled or the student fails to meet the agreed-upon requirements of the approval.
5. All decisions of the building principal relating to extraordinary educational opportunities shall be final.
6. Students who are granted excusal from school to participate in extraordinary educational opportunities are expected to share their experiences with other students and/or school staff when they return.
7. Approval for an extraordinary educational opportunity is determined on a case-by-case basis and the analysis of individualized factors. An opportunity approved for one student may not be approved for another.

#### IV. Truancy Exceptions:

1. A student **five (5) or six (6) years of age** shall not be considered truant if the parent or person having control over such student has appeared personally at the school district office and exercised the option of not sending the child to school at five (5) or six (6) years of age.
2. A student **seventeen (17) years of age** shall not be considered truant if the parent or person having control over such student consents to such student's withdrawal from school. Such parent or person shall personally appear at the school district office and sign a withdrawal form indicating such consent. Such withdrawal form must include an attestation from a guidance counselor or school administrator from the school that the District provided the parent (or person having control of the child) with information on the educational options available in the school system and community.
3. If a parent or guardian of an expelled student chooses not to enroll the student in an alternative program, the student shall not be considered to be "truant."

#### V. Readmission to School Following Voluntary Withdrawal

1. Except as noted in paragraph 2 below, if a student voluntarily withdraws from school (in accordance with Section IV.2, above) and subsequently seeks readmission, the Board may deny school accommodations to the student for up to ninety (90) school days from the date of the student's withdrawal from school.
2. If a student who has voluntarily withdrawn from school (in accordance with Section IV.2, above) seeks readmission within ten (10) school days of his/her withdrawal, the Board shall provide school accommodations to the student not later than three (3) school days after the student requests readmission.

#### VI. Determinations of Whether a Student is "In Attendance":

1. A student serving an out of school suspension or expulsion shall be reported as absent unless he or she receives an alternative educational program for at least one half of the regular school day. In any event, the absence is considered a disciplinary absence, and will not be designated as excused or unexcused.
2. On early dismissal days and days shortened due to inclement weather, the regular school day for attendance purposes is considered to be the amount of instructional time offered to students on that day. For example, if school is open for four hours on a shortened day scheduled, a student must be present for a minimum of two hours in order to be considered "in attendance."
3. Students placed on homebound instruction due to illness or injury in accordance with applicable regulations and requirements are counted as being "in attendance" for every day that they receive instruction from any appropriately certified teacher for an amount of time deemed adequate by the administration so as to ensure that the student is able to successfully return to the regular classroom setting.

#### VII. Notification and Monitoring of Attendance

1. Notification

- A. Annually at the beginning of the school year and upon the enrollment of any child during the school year, the administration shall notify the parent or other person having control of the student enrolled in grades K - 8 in writing of the obligations pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-184 to assure that such a student attends school regularly or to show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the Durham/Middlefield Public Schools.
- B. Annually at the beginning of the school year and upon the enrollment of any child during the school year, the administration shall obtain from the parent or other person having control of the student in grades K-8 a telephone number or other means of contacting such parent or other person during the school day.

2. Monitoring

Each school shall implement a system of monitoring individual unexcused absences of students in grades K-8. Whenever such a student fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day, school personnel under the direction of the building principal **[or his/her designee]** shall make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or other person having control of such student by telephone and by mail of the student's absence, unless school personnel have received an indication that the parent or other person is aware of the student's absence. **[Reasonable efforts shall include two (2) attempts to reach the parent or other person at the telephone number provided by the parent or other person. Such attempts shall be recorded on a form provided by the Superintendent.]** Mailed notice of the student's absence shall include a warning that two unexcused absences from school in a month or five unexcused absences in a school year may result in a complaint filed with the Superior Court pursuant to section 46b-149 alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that the child's family is a family with service needs. Any person who, in good faith, gives or fails to give such notice shall be immune from liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding which results from such notice or failure to give notice.

(\*Note: State law mandates notification and monitoring only with regard to students in grades K-8. Boards of Education are free, however, to extend the application of monitoring and intervention procedures to students at all grade levels.)

VIII. Procedures applicable to students ages five (5) to eighteen (18)

1. Intervention

- A. When a student is truant, the building principal or his/her designee shall schedule a meeting with the parent (or other person having control of such student) and appropriate school personnel to review and evaluate the reasons for the student's truancy. This meeting shall be held no later than **ten (10) days** after the student becomes truant. The District shall document the meeting, and if parent or other person declines to attend the meeting, or is otherwise is non-responsive, that fact shall also be documented and the meeting shall proceed with school personnel in attendance.
- B. When a student is truant, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall coordinate services with and referrals of students to community agencies providing child and family services, as appropriate. The District shall document efforts to contact and include families and to provide early intervention in truancy matters.
- C. If the parent or other person having control of a student who is truant fails to attend the meeting held pursuant to subsection A., above, or otherwise fails to cooperate with the school in attempting to solve the truancy problem, the Superintendent shall file, within fifteen calendar days of such failure to attend the meeting or other failure to cooperate with the school in attempting to solve the truancy problem, for such truant a written complaint with the Superior Court pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b - 149 alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the truant are such that his/her family is a family with service needs.
- D. In addition to the procedures specified in subsections A through C above, a

regular education student who is experiencing attendance problems should be referred to the building Child Study Team **[or other appropriate school based team]** to consider the need for additional interventions and/or assistance. The Team will also consider whether the student should be referred to a planning and placement team (“PPT”) meeting to review the student's need and eligibility for special education. A special education student who is experiencing attendance problems should be referred to a PPT meeting for program review.

- E. If a FWSN petition is filed and the court orders an educational evaluation of the student, the District shall conduct an appropriate educational evaluation if no such evaluation has been performed within the preceding year.
  - a. For a regular education student, the educational evaluation will be conducted or arranged for by appropriate school personnel and coordinated through the Child Study Team **[or other appropriate school based team]**. Upon completion of the evaluation of a regular education student, the Child Study Team **[or other appropriate school based team]** shall review the evaluations and make appropriate recommendations for alternative procedures, programs or interventions. Such recommendations may include a referral of the student for further evaluation and/or consideration for special education eligibility.
  - b. In the case of a student who requires or may require special education and related services, the District shall convene a PPT to determine what evaluations may be appropriate to assess any specific areas of concern. The PPT shall reconvene to review the evaluations and make appropriate recommendations regarding the student’s need for special education services and the need, if any, to write and/or revise the student’s individualized education program (“IEP”).

**IX. Reports to the State Regarding Truancy Data:**

Annually, each local and regional board of education shall include information regarding truancy in the strategic school profile report for each school under its jurisdiction and for the school district as a whole submitted to the Commissioner of Education. Measures of truancy include the type of data that is required to be collected by the Department of Education regarding attendance and unexcused absences in order for the department to comply with federal reporting requirements and the actions taken by the board of education to reduce truancy in the school district.

**Legal References:**

- Connecticut General Statutes §10-220
- Connecticut General Statutes §10-184
- Connecticut General Statutes §10-186
- Connecticut General Statutes §10-198a
- Guidelines for Reporting Student Attendance in the Public School Information System  
(Connecticut State Department of Education, January 2008)
- Connecticut State Department of Education Circular Letter C-2, *Utilizing Local Support Resources Prior to Referral of Students for Family with Service Needs* (August 4, 2009)
- Connecticut State Board of Education Memorandum, *Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences* (June 27, 2012)
- Connecticut State Department of Education, *Guidelines for Implementation of the Definitions of Excused and Unexcused Absences and Best Practices for Absence Prevention and Intervention* (April 2013)

Policy Revised: February 12, 2014

## STUDENTS 5114

### Student Discipline

#### I. Definitions

- A. **Dangerous Instrument** means any instrument, article or substance that, under the circumstances in which it is used or attempted or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury, and includes a "vehicle" or a dog that has been commanded to attack.
- B. **Deadly Weapon** means any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon or metal knuckles. A weapon such as a pellet gun and/or air soft pistol may constitute a deadly weapon if such weapon is designed for violence and is capable of inflicting death or serious bodily harm. In making such determination, the following factors should be considered: design of weapon; how weapon is typically used (e.g. hunting); type of projectile; force and velocity of discharge; method of discharge (i.e. spring v. CO2 cartridge) and potential for serious bodily harm or death.
- C. **Electronic Defense Weapon** means a weapon that by electronic impulse or current is capable of immobilizing a person temporarily, but is not capable of inflicting death or serious physical injury, including a stun gun or other conductive energy device.
- D. **Emergency** means a situation in which the continued presence of the student in school poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that a hearing may be delayed until a time as soon after the exclusion of such student as possible.
- E. **Exclusion** means any denial of public school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.
- F. **Expulsion** means the exclusion of a student from school privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. The expulsion period may not extend beyond one (1) calendar year.
- G. **Firearm**, as defined in 18 U.S.C § 921, means (a) any weapon that will, is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon, (c) a firearm muffler or silencer, or (d) any destructive device. The term firearm does not include an antique firearm. As used in this definition, a "**destructive device**" includes any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous gas device, including a bomb, a grenade, a rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, or any other similar device; or any weapon (other than a shotgun or shotgun shell particularly suited for sporting purposes) that will, or may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by explosive or other propellant, and which has a barrel with a bore of more than ½" in diameter. The term "destructive device" also includes any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device or any device from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. A "destructive device" does not include: an antique firearm; a rifle intended to be used by the owner solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes; or any device which is neither designed nor redesigned for use as a weapon.
- H. **In-School Suspension** means an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such in-school suspension was imposed. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one (1) school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.
- I. **Martial Arts Weapon** means a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or Chinese star.
- J. **Removal** is the exclusion of a student from a classroom for all or part of a single class period, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond ninety (90) minutes.
- K. **School Days** shall mean days when school is in session for students.
- L. **School-Sponsored Activity** means any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board and includes activities conducted on or off school property.
- M. **Seriously Disruptive of the Educational Process**, as applied to off-campus conduct, means any conduct that markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operation of a school.
- N. **Suspension** means the exclusion of a student from school and/or transportation services for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, provided such suspension shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed; and further provided no student shall be suspended more than ten (10) times

or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, unless such student is granted a formal hearing as provided below.

- O. **Weapon** means any BB gun, any blackjack, any metal or brass knuckles, any police baton or nightstick, any dirk knife or switch knife, any knife having an automatic spring release device by which a blade is released from the handle, having a blade of over one and one-half inches in length, any stiletto, any knife the edged portion of the blade of which is four inches and over in length, any martial arts weapon or electronic defense weapon, or any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument, unless permitted by law under section 29-38 of the Connecticut General Statutes.
- P. Notwithstanding the foregoing definitions, the reassignment of a student from one regular education classroom program in the district to another regular education classroom program in the district shall not constitute a suspension or expulsion.

## II. Scope of the Student Discipline Policy

### A. **Conduct on School Grounds or at a School-Sponsored Activity:**

Students may be disciplined for conduct on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity that **endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or that violates a publicized policy of the Board.**

### B. **Conduct off School Grounds:**

1. Students may be suspended or expelled for conduct off school grounds if such conduct is **seriously disruptive of the educational process and violates a publicized policy of the Board.** In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and the Board of Education may consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to, the following factors: (1) **whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school;** (2) **whether other students from the school were involved or whether there was any gang involvement;** (3) **whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon,** as defined in section Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38, and **whether any injuries occurred;** and (4) **whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.**

In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and/or the Board of Education may also consider **whether such off-campus conduct involved the use of drugs.**

## III. Actions Leading to Disciplinary Action, including Removal from Class, Suspension and/or Expulsion

Conduct that may lead to disciplinary action (including, but not limited to, removal from class, suspension and/or expulsion) includes conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity (including on a school bus), and conduct off school grounds, as set forth above. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Striking or assaulting a student, members of the school staff or other persons.
2. Theft.
3. The use of obscene or profane language or gestures, the possession and/or display of obscenity or pornographic images or the unauthorized or inappropriate possession and/or display of images, pictures or photographs depicting nudity.
4. Violation of smoking, dress, transportation regulations, or other regulations and/or policies governing student conduct.
5. Refusal to obey a member of the school staff, law enforcement authorities, or school volunteers, or disruptive classroom behavior.
6. Any act of harassment based on an individual's sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, disability, national origin or ancestry.
7. Refusal by a student to identify himself/herself to a staff member when asked, misidentification of oneself to such person(s), lying to school officials or otherwise engaging in dishonest behavior.
8. Inappropriate displays of public affection of a sexual nature and/or sexual activity on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity.
9. A walkout from or sit-in within a classroom or school building or school grounds.

10. Blackmailing, threatening or intimidating school staff or students (or acting in a manner that could be construed to constitute blackmail, a threat, or intimidation, regardless of whether intended as a joke).
11. Possession of any weapon, weapon facsimile, deadly weapon, martial arts weapon, electronic defense weapon, pistol, knife, blackjack, bludgeon, box cutter, metal knuckles, pellet gun, air pistol, explosive device, firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, whether functional or not, or any other dangerous object or instrument. The possession and/or use of any object or device that has been converted or modified for use as a weapon.
12. Possession of any ammunition for any weapon described above in paragraph 11.
13. Unauthorized entrance into any school facility or portion of a school facility or aiding or abetting an unauthorized entrance.
14. Possession or ignition of any fireworks, combustible or other explosive materials, or ignition of any material causing a fire. Possession of any materials designed to be used in the ignition of combustible materials, including matches and lighters.
15. Unauthorized possession, sale, distribution, use, consumption, or aiding in the procurement of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages (or any facsimile of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages), including being under the influence of any such substances. For the purposes of this Paragraph 15, the term "drugs" shall include, but shall not be limited to, any medicinal preparation (prescription and non-prescription) and any controlled substance whose possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption is illegal under state and/or federal law.
16. Sale, distribution, or consumption of substances contained in household items; including, but not limited to glue, paint, accelerants/propellants for aerosol canisters, and/or items such as the aerators for whipped cream; if sold, distributed or consumed for the purpose of inducing a stimulant, depressant, hallucinogenic or mind-altering effect.
17. Possession of paraphernalia used or designed to be used in the consumption, sale or distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, as described in subparagraph (15) above. For purposes of this policy, drug paraphernalia includes any equipment, products and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use or designed for use in growing, harvesting, manufacturing, producing, preparing, packaging, storing, containing or concealing, or injecting, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise introducing controlled drugs or controlled substances into the human body, including but not limited to items such as "bongs," pipes, "roach clips," vials, tobacco rolling papers, and any object or container used, intended or designed for use in storing, concealing, possessing, distributing or selling controlled drugs or controlled substances.
18. The destruction of real, personal or school property, such as, cutting, defacing or otherwise damaging property in any way.
19. Accumulation of offenses such as school and class tardiness, class or study hall cutting, or failure to attend detention.
20. Trespassing on school grounds while on out-of-school suspension or expulsion.
21. Making false bomb threats or other threats to the safety of students, staff members, and/or other persons.
22. Defiance of school rules and the valid authority of teachers, supervisors, administrators, other staff members and/or law enforcement authorities.
23. Throwing snowballs, rocks, sticks and/or similar objects, except as specifically authorized by school staff.
24. Unauthorized and/or reckless and/or improper operation of a motor vehicle on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity.
25. Leaving school grounds, school transportation or a school-sponsored activity without authorization.
26. Use of or copying of the academic work of another individual and presenting it as the student's own work, without proper attribution; or any other form of academic dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism.
27. Possession and/or use of a cellular telephone, radio, walkman, CD player, blackberry, personal data assistant, two-way radio, Smartphone, mobile or handheld device, or similar electronic device, on

school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity in violation of Board policy and/or administrative regulations regulating the use of such devices.

28. Possession and/or use of a beeper or paging device on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity without the written permission of the principal or his/her designee.
29. Unauthorized use of any school computer, computer system, computer software, Internet connection or similar school property or system, or the use of such property or system for inappropriate purposes.
30. Possession and/or use of a laser pointer, unless the student possesses the laser pointer temporarily for an educational purpose while under the direct supervision of a responsible adult.
31. Hazing.
32. Bullying, defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district, that:
  - a) Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property.
  - b) Places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property.
  - c) Creates a hostile environment at school for such student.
  - d) Infringes on the rights of such student at school.
  - e) Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.
33. Cyberbullying, defined as any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.
34. Acting in any manner that creates a health and/or safety hazard for staff members, students, or the public, regardless of whether the conduct is intended as a joke.
35. Engaging in a plan to stage or create a violent situation for the purposes of recording it by electronic means or recording by electronic means acts of violence for purposes of later publication.
36. Engaging in a plan to stage sexual activity for the purposes of recording it by electronic means or recording by electronic means sexual acts for purposes of later publication.
37. Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.
38. Use of a privately owned electronic or technological device in violation of school rules, including the unauthorized recording (photographic or audio) of another individual without permission of the individual or a school staff member.
39. Any action prohibited by any Federal or State law.
40. Any other violation of school rules or regulations or a series of violations which makes the presence of the student in school seriously disruptive of the educational process and/or a danger to persons or property.

#### IV. Discretionary and Mandatory Expulsions

- A. A principal may consider recommendation of expulsion of a student in a case where he/she has reason to believe the student has engaged in conduct described at sections II.A. and II.B., above.

- B. A principal must recommend expulsion proceedings in all cases against any student whom the administration has reason to believe:
1. Was in **possession on school grounds** or at a **school-sponsored activity** of a **deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, martial arts weapon, or firearm** as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921 as amended from time to time; or
  2. **off school grounds, possessed a firearm** as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921, in violation of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-35, or **possessed and used a firearm** as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921, a **deadly weapon, a dangerous instrument** or a **martial arts weapon** in the **commission of a crime** under chapter 952 of the Connecticut General Statutes; or
  3. was engaged **on or off school grounds in offering for sale or distribution a controlled substance** (as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-240(9)), whose manufacturing, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting, or possessing with intent to sell or dispense, offering or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Conn. Gen. Stat. §§21a-277 and 21a-278.
- The terms “**dangerous instrument,**” “**deadly weapon,**” “**electronic defense weapon,**” “**firearm,**” and “**martial arts weapon,**” are defined above in Section I.
- C. Upon receipt of an expulsion recommendation, the Superintendent may conduct an inquiry concerning the expulsion recommendation.
- If the Superintendent or his/her designee determines that a student should or must be expelled, he or she shall forward his/her recommendation to the Board of Education so that the Board can consider and act upon this recommendation.
- D. In keeping with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233d and the Gun-Free Schools Act, it shall be the policy of the Board to expel a student for one (1) full calendar year for: the conduct described in Section IV(B)(1), (2) and (3) of this policy. For any mandatory expulsion offense, the Board may modify the term of expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

#### **V.Procedures Governing Removal from Class**

- A. A teacher or administrator may remove a student from class if he/she deliberately causes a serious disruption of the educational process. When a student is removed, the teacher must send him/her to a designated area and notify the principal or his/her designee at once.
- B. A student may not be removed from class more than six (6) times in one school year nor more than twice in one week unless the student is referred to the building principal or designee and granted an informal hearing at which the student should be informed of the reasons for the disciplinary action and given an opportunity to explain the situation.
- C. The parents or guardian of any minor student removed from class shall be given notice of such disciplinary action within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of such removal from class.

#### **VI.Procedures Governing Suspension**

- A. The principal of a school, or designee on the administrative staff of the school, shall have the right to suspend any student for breach of conduct as noted in Section II of this policy for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days. In cases where suspension is contemplated, the following procedures shall be followed.
  1. Unless an emergency situation exists, no student shall be suspended prior to having an informal hearing before the principal or designee where the student is informed of the charges and given an opportunity to respond. In the event of an emergency, the informal hearing shall be held as soon after the suspension as possible.
  2. If suspended, such suspension shall be an in-school suspension unless, during the informal hearing, the principal or designee determines that the student: (a) poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that he or she should be excluded from school during the period of suspension; or (b) the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate based on evidence of (i) the student’s previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such student, and (ii) previous efforts by the administration to address the student’s disciplinary problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive behavioral support strategies.



3. Evidence of past disciplinary problems that have led to removal from a classroom, suspension, or expulsion of a student who is the subject of an informal hearing may be received by the principal or designee, but only considered in the determination of the length of suspensions.
  4. By telephone, the principal or designee shall make reasonable attempts to immediately notify the parent or guardian of a minor student following the suspension and to state the cause(s) leading to the suspension.
  5. Whether or not telephone contact is made with the parent or guardian of such minor student, the principal or designee shall forward a letter promptly to such parent or guardian to the last address reported on school records (or to a newer address if known by the principal or designee), offering the parent or guardian an opportunity for a conference to discuss same.
  6. In all cases, the parent or guardian of any minor student who has been suspended shall be given notice of such suspension within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of the suspension.
  7. Not later than twenty-four (24) hours after the commencement of the suspension, the principal or designee shall also notify the Superintendent or his/her designee of the name of the student being suspended and the reason for the suspension.
  8. The student shall be allowed to complete any classwork, including examinations, without penalty, which he or she missed while under suspension.
  9. The school administration may, in its discretion, shorten or waive the suspension period for a student who has not previously been suspended or expelled, if the student completes an administration-specified program and meets any other conditions required by the administration. Such administration-specified program shall not require the student and/or the student's parents to pay for participation in the program.
  10. Notice of the suspension shall be recorded in the student's cumulative educational record. Such notice shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school. In cases where the student's period of suspension is shortened or waived in accordance with Section VI.A(9), above, the administration may choose to expunge the suspension notice from the cumulative record at the time the student completes the administration-specified program and meets any other conditions required by the administration.
  11. If the student has not previously been suspended or expelled, and the administration chooses to expunge the suspension notice from the student's cumulative record prior to graduation, the administration may refer to the existence of the expunged disciplinary notice, notwithstanding the fact that such notice may have been expunged from the student's cumulative file, for the limited purpose of determining whether any subsequent suspensions or expulsions by the student would constitute the student's first such offense.
  12. The decision of the principal or designee with regard to disciplinary actions up to and including suspensions shall be final.
  13. During any period of suspension served out of school, the student shall not be permitted to be on school property and shall not be permitted to attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities, unless the principal specifically authorizes the student to enter school property for a specified purpose or to participate in a particular school-sponsored activity.
- B. In cases where a student's suspension will result in the student being suspended more than ten (10) times or for a total of fifty (50) days in a school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, the student shall, prior to the pending suspension, be granted a formal hearing before the Board of Education. The principal or designee shall report the student to the Superintendent or designee and request a formal Board hearing. If an emergency situation exists, such hearing shall be held as soon after the suspension as possible.

#### VII. Procedures Governing In-School Suspension

- A. The principal or designee may impose in-school suspension in cases where a student's conduct endangers persons or property, violates school policy, seriously disrupts the educational process or in other appropriate circumstances as determined by the principal or designee.
- B. In-school suspension may not be imposed on a student without an informal hearing by the building principal or designee.
- C. In-school suspension may be served in the school that the student regularly attends or in any other school building within the jurisdiction of the Board.

- D. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or for a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.
- E. The parents or guardian of any minor student placed on in-school suspension shall be given notice of such suspension within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of the period of the in-school suspension.

VIII. Procedures Governing Expulsion Hearing

A. Emergency Exception:

Except in an emergency situation, the Board of Education shall, prior to expelling any student, conduct a hearing to be governed by the procedures outlined herein and consistent with the requirements of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233d and the applicable provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 4-176e to 4-180a, and § 4-181a. Whenever an emergency exists, the hearing provided for herein shall be held as soon as possible after the expulsion.

B. Hearing Panel:

- 1. Any three or more Board members will hear expulsion hearings conducted by the Board. A decision to expel a student must be supported by a majority of the Board members present, provided that no less than three (3) affirmative votes to expel are cast.
- 2. Alternatively, the Board may appoint an impartial hearing board composed of one (1) or more persons to hear and decide the expulsion matter, provided that no member of the Board may serve on such panel.

C. Hearing Notice:

- 1. Written notice of the expulsion hearing must be given to the student, and, if the student is a minor, to his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) within a reasonable time prior to the time of the hearing.
- 2. A copy of this Board policy on student discipline shall also be given to the student, and if the student is a minor, to his/her parent(s) or guardian(s), at the time the notice is sent that an expulsion hearing will be convened.
- 3. The written notice of the expulsion hearing shall inform the student of the following:
  - a. The date, time, place and nature of the hearing.
  - b. The legal authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held, including a reference to the particular sections of the legal statutes involved.
  - c. A short, plain description of the conduct alleged by the administration.
  - d. The student may present as evidence relevant testimony and documents concerning the conduct alleged and the appropriate length and conditions of expulsion; and that the expulsion hearing may be the student's sole opportunity to present such evidence.
  - e. The student may cross-examine witnesses called by the Administration.
  - f. The student may be represented by any third party of his/her choice, including an attorney, at his/her expense or at the expense of his/her parents.
  - g. A student is entitled to the services of a translator or interpreter, to be provided by the Board of Education, whenever the student or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) requires the services of an interpreter because he/she/they do(es) not speak the English language or is(are) disabled.
  - h. The conditions under which the Board is not legally required to give the student an alternative educational opportunity (if applicable).
  - i. Information about free or reduced-rate legal services and how to access such services.

D. Hearing Procedures:

- 1. The hearing will be conducted by the Presiding Officer, who will call the meeting to order, introduce the parties, Board members and counsel, briefly explain the hearing procedures, and swear in any witnesses called by the Administration or the student.

2. The hearing will be conducted in executive session. A verbatim record of the hearing will be made, either by tape recording or by a stenographer. A record of the hearing will be maintained, including the verbatim record, all written notices and documents relating to the case and all evidence received or considered at hearing.
3. Formal rules of evidence will not be followed. The Board has the right to accept hearsay and other evidence if it deems that evidence relevant or material to its determination. The Presiding Officer will rule on testimony or evidence as to it being immaterial or irrelevant.
4. The hearing will be conducted in two (2) parts. In the first part of the hearing, the Board will receive and consider evidence regarding the conduct alleged by the Administration.
5. In the first part of the hearing, the Superintendent or his/her designee will introduce the charges into the record.
6. Each witness for the Administration will be called and sworn. After a witness has finished testifying, he/she will be subject to cross-examination by the opposite party or his/her legal counsel, by the Presiding Officer and by Board members.
7. After the Administration has presented its case, the student will be asked if he/she has any witnesses or evidence to present concerning the charges. If so, the witnesses will be sworn, will testify, and will be subject to cross-examination and to questioning by the Presiding Officer and/or by the Board. The student may also choose to make a statement at this time. If the student chooses to make a statement, he or she will be sworn and subject to cross-examination and questioning by the Presiding Officer and/or by the Board. Concluding statements will be made by the Administration followed by the student and/or his or her representative.
8. In cases where the student has denied the allegation, the Board must determine whether the student committed the offense(s) as charged by the Superintendent.
9. If the Board determines that the student has committed the conduct as alleged, then the Board shall proceed with the second portion of the hearing, during which the Board will receive and consider relevant evidence regarding the length and conditions of expulsion.
10. When considering the length and conditions of expulsion, the Board may review the student's attendance, academic and past disciplinary records. The Board may not review notices of prior expulsions or suspensions which have been expunged from the student's cumulative record, except as so provided in Section VI.A (9), (10), (11), above, and Section X, below. The Board may ask the Superintendent for a recommendation as to the discipline to be imposed.
11. Evidence of past disciplinary problems, which have led to removal from a classroom, suspension, or expulsion of a student being considered for expulsion may be considered only during the second portion of the hearing, during which the Board is considering length of expulsion and nature of alternative educational opportunity to be offered.
12. Where administrators presented the case in support of the charges against the student, such administrative staff shall not be present during the deliberations of the Board either on questions of evidence or on the final discipline to be imposed. The Superintendent may, after reviewing the incident with administrators, and reviewing the student's records, make a recommendation to the Board as to the appropriate discipline to be applied.
13. The Board shall make findings as to the truth of the charges, if the student has denied them; and, in all cases, the disciplinary action, if any, to be imposed. While the hearing itself is conducted in executive session, the vote regarding expulsion must be made in open session and in a manner that preserves the confidentiality of the student's name and other personally identifiable information.
14. The Board may, in its discretion, shorten or waive the expulsion period for a student who has not previously been suspended or expelled, if the student completes a Board-specified program and meets any other conditions required by the Board. The Board-specified program shall not require the student and/or the student's parents to pay for participation in the program.
15. The Board shall report its final decision in writing to the student, or if such student is a minor, also to the parent(s) or guardian(s), stating the reasons on which the decision is based, and the disciplinary action to be imposed. Said decision shall be based solely on evidence presented at the hearing. The parents or guardian or any minor student who has been expelled shall be given notice of such disciplinary action within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of the period of the expulsion.

E. Presence on School Grounds and Participation in School-Sponsored Activities During Expulsion:

During the period of expulsion, the student shall not be permitted to be on school property and shall not be permitted to attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities, except for the student's participation in any alternative educational program provided by the district in accordance with this policy, unless the Superintendent specifically authorizes the student to enter school property for a specified purpose or to participate in a particular school-sponsored activity.

F. **Stipulated Agreements:**

In lieu of the procedures used in this section, the Administration and the parents (or legal guardians) of a student facing expulsion may choose to enter into a Joint Stipulation of the Facts and a Joint Recommendation to the Board concerning the length and conditions of expulsion. Such Joint Stipulation and Recommendation shall include language indicating that the parents (or legal guardians) understand their right to have an expulsion hearing held pursuant to these procedures, and language indicating that the Board, in its discretion, has the right to accept or reject the Joint Stipulation of Facts and Recommendation. If the Board rejects either the Joint Stipulation of Facts or the Recommendation, an expulsion hearing shall be held pursuant to the procedures outlined herein. If the Student is eighteen years of age or older, the student shall have the authority to enter into a Joint Stipulation and Recommendation on his or her own behalf.

If the parties agree on the facts, but not on the disciplinary recommendation, the Administration and the parents (or legal guardians) of a student facing expulsion may also choose to enter into a Joint Stipulation of the Facts and submit only the Stipulation of the Facts to the Board in lieu of holding the first part of the hearing, as described above. Such Joint Stipulation shall include language indicating that the parents understand their right to have a hearing to determine whether the student engaged in the alleged misconduct and that the Board, in its discretion, has the right to accept or reject the Joint Stipulation of Facts. If the Board rejects the Joint Stipulation of Facts, a full expulsion hearing shall be held pursuant to the procedures outlined herein.

IX. **Alternative Educational Opportunities for Expelled Students**

A. *Students under sixteen (16) years of age:*

Whenever the Board of Education expels a student under sixteen (16) years of age, it shall offer any such student an alternative educational opportunity.

B. *Students sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) years of age:*

1. The Board of Education shall provide an alternative educational opportunity to a sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) year old student expelled for the first time if he/she requests it and if he/she agrees to the conditions set by the Board of Education. Such alternative educational opportunity may include, but shall not be limited to, the placement of a pupil who is at least sixteen years of age in an adult education program. Any pupil participating in an adult education program during a period of expulsion shall not be required to withdraw from school as a condition to his/her participation in the adult education program.

2. The Board of Education is not required to offer an alternative educational opportunity to any student between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) who is expelled for the second time, or if it is determined at the hearing that (1) the student possessed a dangerous instrument, deadly weapon, firearm or martial arts weapon on school property or at a school-sponsored activity, or (2) the student offered a controlled substance for sale or distribution on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.

3. The Board of Education shall count the expulsion of a pupil when he/she was under sixteen years of age for purposes of determining whether an alternative educational opportunity is required for such pupil when he/she is between the ages of sixteen and eighteen.

C. *Students eighteen (18) years of age or older:*

The Board of Education is not required to offer an alternative educational opportunity to expelled students eighteen (18) years of age or older.

D. *Students identified as eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"):*

Notwithstanding Sections IX.A. through C. above, if the Board of Education expels a student who has been identified as eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"), it shall offer an alternative educational opportunity to such student in accordance with the requirements of IDEA, as it may be amended from time to time.

E. *Students for whom an alternative educational opportunity is not required:*

The Board of Education may offer an alternative educational opportunity to a pupil for whom such alternative educational opportunity is not required as described in this policy.

X. Notice of Student Expulsion on Cumulative Record

Notice of expulsion and the conduct for which the student was expelled shall be included on the student's cumulative educational record. The Board shall expunge such notice, except for notice of an expulsion based upon possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school.

In cases where the student's period of expulsion is shortened or waived in accordance with Section VIII.D(14), above, the Board may choose to expunge the expulsion notice from the cumulative record at the time the student completes the Board-specified program and meets any other conditions required by the Board.

If the student has not previously been suspended or expelled, and the administration chooses to expunge the expulsion notice from the student's cumulative record prior to graduation, the administration may refer to the existence of the expunged notice, notwithstanding the fact that such notice may have been expunged from the student's cumulative file, for the limited purpose of determining whether any subsequent suspension or expulsion by the student would constitute the student's first such offense.

XI. Change of Residence During Expulsion Proceedings

A. *Student moving into the school district:*

1. If a student enrolls in the district while an expulsion hearing is pending in another district, such student shall not be excluded from school pending completion of the expulsion hearing unless an emergency exists, as defined above. The Board shall retain the authority to suspend the student or to conduct its own expulsion hearing.
2. Where a student enrolls in the district during the period of expulsion from another public school district, the Board may adopt the decision of the student expulsion hearing conducted by such other school district. The student shall be excluded from school pending such hearing. The excluded student shall be offered an alternative educational opportunity in accordance with statutory requirements. The Board shall make its determination based upon a hearing held by the Board, which hearing shall be limited to a determination of whether the conduct which was the basis of the previous public school district's expulsion would also warrant expulsion by the Board.

B. *Student moving out of the school district:*

Where a student withdraws from school after having been notified that an expulsion hearing is pending, but before a decision has been rendered by the Board, the notice of the pending expulsion hearing shall be included on the student's cumulative record and the Board shall complete the expulsion hearing and render a decision. If the Board subsequently renders a decision to expel the student, a notice of the expulsion shall be included on the student's cumulative record.

XII. Procedures Governing Suspension and Expulsion of Students Identified as Eligible for Services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")

A. *Suspension of IDEA students:*

Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Administration suspends a student identified as eligible for services under the IDEA (an "IDEA student") who has violated any rule or code of conduct of the school district that applies to all students, the following procedures shall apply:

1. The administration shall make reasonable attempts to immediately notify the parents of the student of the decision to suspend on the date on which the decision to suspend was made, and a copy of the special education procedural safeguards must either be hand-delivered or sent by mail to the parents on the date that the decision to suspend was made.
2. During the period of suspension, the school district is not required to provide any educational services to the IDEA student beyond that which is provided to all students suspended by the school district.

B. *Expulsion and Suspensions that Constitute Changes in Placement for IDEA students:*

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, if the administration recommends for expulsion an IDEA student who has violated any rule or code of conduct of the school district that applies to all students, the procedures described in this section shall apply. The procedures described in this section shall also apply for students

whom the administration has suspended in a manner that is considered under the IDEA, as it may be amended from time to time, to be a change in placement:

1. The parents of the student must be notified of the decision to recommend for expulsion (or to suspend if a change in placement) on the date on which the decision to suspend was made, and a copy of the special education procedural safeguards must either be hand-delivered or sent by mail to the parents on the date that the decision to recommend for expulsion (or to suspend if a change in placement) was made.
2. The school district shall immediately convene the student's planning and placement team ("PPT"), but in no case later than ten (10) school days after the recommendation for expulsion or the suspension that constitutes a change in placement was made. The student's PPT shall consider the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior that led to the recommendation for expulsion or the suspension that constitutes a change in placement, in order to determine whether the student's behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability.
3. If the student's PPT finds that the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the Administration shall not proceed with the recommendation for expulsion or the suspension that constitutes a change in placement.
4. If the student's PPT finds that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the Administration may proceed with the recommended expulsion or suspension that constitutes a change in placement.
5. During any period of expulsion, or suspension of greater than ten (10) days per school year, the Administration shall provide the student with an alternative education program in accordance with the provisions of the IDEA.
6. When determining whether to recommend an expulsion or a suspension that constitutes a change in placement, the building administrator (or his or her designee) should consider the nature of the misconduct and any relevant educational records of the student.

C. *Transfer of IDEA students for Certain Offenses:*

School personnel may transfer an IDEA student to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days if the student:

1. Was in possession of a dangerous weapon, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 930(g)(2), as amended from time to time, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, or
2. Knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs or sold or solicited the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school-sponsored activity; or
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

The following definitions shall be used for this subsection XII.C.:

1. **Dangerous weapon** means a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than 2.5 inches in length.
2. **Controlled substance** means a drug or other substance identified under schedules I, II, III, IV, or V in section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. 812(c).
3. **Illegal drug** means a controlled substance but does not include a substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under the Controlled Substances Act or under any other provision of federal law.
4. **Serious bodily injury** means a bodily injury which involves: (A) a substantial risk of death; (B) extreme physical pain; (C) protracted and obvious disfigurement; or (D) protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.

XIII. Procedures Governing Expulsions for Students Identified as Eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504")

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, if the Administration recommends for expulsion a student identified as eligible for educational accommodations under Section 504 who has violated any rule or code of conduct of the school district that applies to all students, the following procedures shall apply:

1. The parents of the student must be notified of the decision to recommend the student for expulsion.

2. The district shall immediately convene the student's Section 504 team ("504 team") for the purpose of reviewing the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior that led to the recommendation for expulsion. The 504 team will determine whether the student's behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability.
3. If the 504 team finds that the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the Administration shall not proceed with the recommended expulsion.
4. If the 504 team finds that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the Administration may proceed with the recommended expulsion.

**XIV. Procedures Governing Expulsions for Students Committed to a Juvenile Detention Center**

- A. Any student who commits an expellable offense and is subsequently committed to a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement for such offense may be expelled by the Board in accordance with the provisions of this section. The period of expulsion shall run concurrently with the period of commitment to a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement.
- B. If a student who committed an expellable offense seeks to return to a school district after having been in a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement and such student has not been expelled by the board of education for such offense under subdivision (A) of this subsection, the Board shall allow such student to return and may not expel the student for additional time for such offense.

**XV. Early Readmission to School**

An expelled student may apply for early readmission to school. The Board delegates the authority to make decisions on readmission requests to the Superintendent. Students desiring readmission to school shall direct such readmission requests to the Superintendent. The Superintendent has the discretion to approve or deny such readmission requests, and may condition readmission on specified criteria.

**XVI. Dissemination of Policy**

The Board of Education shall, at the beginning of each school year and at such other times as it may deem appropriate, provide for an effective means of informing all students, parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of this policy.

**XVII. Compliance with Reporting Requirements**

- A. The Board of Education shall report all suspensions and expulsions to the State Department of Education.
- B. If the Board of Education expels a student for sale or distribution of a controlled substance, the Board shall refer such student to an appropriate state or local agency for rehabilitation, intervention or job training and inform the agency of its action.
- C. If the Board of Education expels a student for possession of a deadly weapon or firearm, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-3, the violation shall be reported to the local police.

**Legal References:**

**Connecticut General Statutes:**

§§ 4-176e through 4-180a and § 4-181a Uniform Administrative Procedures Act)  
 §§ 10-233a through 10-233e Suspension and expulsion of students.  
 § 10-233f In-school suspension of students.  
 §29-38 Weapons in vehicles  
 §53a-3 Definitions  
 §53a-206 (definition of "weapon")  
Packer v. Board of Educ. of the Town of Thomaston, 246 Conn. 89 (1998).  
State v. Hardy, 896 A.2d 755, 278 Conn. 113 (2006).  
State v. Guzman, 955 A.2d 72, 2008 Conn. App. LEXIS 445 (Sept. 16, 2008).

**Federal law:**

Honig v. Doe, 484 U.S. 305 (1988)  
 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., as amended by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-446.  
 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794(a).  
 18 U.S.C. § 921 (definition of "firearm")

18 U.S.C. § 930(g)(2) (definition of “dangerous weapon”)  
18 U.S.C. § 1365(h)(3) (identifying “serious bodily injury”)  
21 U.S.C. § 812(c) (identifying “controlled substances”)  
34 C.F.R. § 300.530 (defining “illegal drugs”)  
Gun-Free Schools Act, Pub. L. 107-110, Sec. 401, 115 Stat. 1762 (codified at 20 U.S.C. § 7151)

Policy Adopted: May 11, 2005

Policy Revised: June 11, 2008

Policy Revised: January 9, 2013

## **STUDENTS - 5131.8**

### **Bullying**

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment that is physically, emotionally and intellectually safe and thus free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. In accordance with state law and the Board’s Safe School Climate Plan, the Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education.

The Board also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying is likewise prohibited.

Students who engage in bullying behavior shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with the Board’s policies on student discipline, suspension and expulsion, and consistent with state and federal law.

For purposes of this policy, “**Bullying**” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district, that:

- 1) causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property;
- 2) places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
- 3) creates a hostile environment at school for such student;
- 4) infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
- 5) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

For purposes of this policy, “**Cyberbullying**” means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

Consistent with the requirements under state law, the Regional School District 13 Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent or his/her designee(s), along with the Safe School Climate Coordinator, to be responsible for developing and implementing a Safe School Climate Plan in furtherance of this policy. As provided by state law, such Safe School Climate Plan shall include, but not be limited to provisions which:

- (1) enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees and require students and the parents or guardians of students to be notified annually of the process by which students may make such reports;
- (2) enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying;



- (3) require school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying to orally notify the safe school climate specialist, or another school administrator if the safe school climate specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report;
- (4) require the safe school climate specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports made under this section;
- (5) require the safe school climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
- (6) include a prevention and intervention strategy for school employees to deal with bullying;
- 7) provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying;
- (8) require each school to notify the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation;
- (9) require each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed and to prevent further acts of bullying;
- (10) establish a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection, and annually report such number to the Department of Education and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;
- (11) direct the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;
- (12) prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;
- (13) direct the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that address safety measures the school will take to protect such students against further acts of bullying;
- (14) require the principal of a school, or the principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such principal, or the principal's designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct;
- (15) prohibit bullying (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the local or regional board of education, and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;
- (16) require, at the beginning of each school year, each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan; and
- (17) require that all school employees annually complete the training described in Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-220a.

The notification required pursuant to subdivision (8) (above) and the invitation required pursuant to subdivision (9) (above) shall include a description of the response of school employees to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying. Any information provided under this policy or accompanying Safe School Climate Plan shall be provided in accordance with the confidentiality restrictions imposed under the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act ("FERPA") and the district's Confidentiality and Access to Student Information policy and regulations.

Not later than January 1, 2012, the Regional School District 13 Board of Education shall approve the Safe School Climate Plan developed pursuant to this policy and submit such plan to the Department of Education. Not later than thirty (30) calendar days after approval by the Board, the Board shall make such plan available on the Board's and each individual school in the school district's web site and ensure that the Safe School Climate Plan is included in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

Legal References:

Public Act 11-232, *An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws*

Conn. Gen. Stat. 10-145a

Conn. Gen. Stat. 10-145o

Conn. Gen. Stat. 10-220a

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222d

Conn. Gen. Stat. 10-222g

Conn. Gen. Stat. 10-222h

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 10-233a through 10-233f

Policy Approved: February 11, 2009

Policy Revised: January 11, 2012

**Regional School District 13  
SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN**

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe educational environment free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. In order to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, the Board has developed the following Safe School Climate Plan, consistent with state law and Board Policy. This Plan represents a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying and sets forth the Board's expectations for creating a positive school climate and thus preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying.

Bullying behavior is strictly prohibited, and students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. The district's commitment to addressing bullying behavior, however, involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a positive school climate in which bullying will not be tolerated by students or school staff.

**I. Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation**

- A. The Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by Board of Education.
- B. The Board also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;
- C. In addition to prohibiting student acts which constitute bullying, the Board also prohibits discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying.
- D. Students who engage in bullying behavior in violation of Board Policy and the Safe School Climate Plan shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with the Board's policies on student discipline, suspension and expulsion, and consistent with state and federal law.

**II. Definition of Bullying**

- A. **"Bullying"** means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student attending school in the same district that:
  - 1. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;
  - 2. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
  - 3. creates a hostile environment at school for such student;

4. infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
  5. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- B. Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

### III. Other Definitions

- A. **"Cyberbullying"** means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.
- B. **"Electronic communication"** means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system;
- C. **"Hostile environment"** means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive alter the conditions of the school climate;
- D. **"Mobile electronic device"** means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted;
- E. **"Outside of the school setting"** means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education;
- F. **"Prevention and intervention strategy"** may include, but is not limited to, (1) implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying identified by the Department of Education, (2) school rules prohibiting bullying, harassment and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts, (3) adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur, (4) inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school, (5) individual interventions with the bully, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied child, parents and school employees, (6) school-wide training related to safe school climate, (7) student peer training, education and support, and (8) promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions.
- G. **"School climate"** means the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults.
- H. **"School employee"** means (1) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (2) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of education.
- I. **"School-Sponsored Activity"** shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board of Education.

### IV. Leadership and Administrative Responsibilities

#### A. Safe School Climate Coordinator

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Superintendent shall appoint, from existing school district staff, a District Safe School Climate Coordinator ("Coordinator"). The Coordinator shall:

1. be responsible for implementing the district's Safe School Climate Plan ("Plan");

2.collaborate with Safe School Climate Specialists, the Board, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify and respond to bullying in district schools;

3.provide data and information, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education regarding bullying;

4.meet with Safe School Climate Specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss issues relating to bullying the school district and to make recommendations concerning amendments to the district's Plan.

B. Safe School Climate Specialist

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the principal of each school (or principal's designee) shall serve as the Safe School Climate Specialist. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying and act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to reports of bullying in the school.

V. **Development and Review of Safe School Climate Plan**

- A. For the school year commencing July 1, 2012 and each school year thereafter, the Principal of each school shall establish a committee or designate at least one existing committee ("Committee") in the school to be responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues relating to bullying in the school. Such committee shall include at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, as appointed by the school principal.
- B. The Committee shall: 1) receive copies of completed reports following bullying investigations; 2) identify and address patterns of bullying among students in the school; 3) review and amend school policies and procedures relating to bullying, including making recommendations to the Board of Education for amendments to the Board's bullying policy; 4) review and make recommendations to the Coordinator regarding the Safe School Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school; 5) educate students, school employees and parents/guardians on issues relating to bullying; 6) collaborate with the Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying; and 7) perform any other duties as determined by the Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying.
- C. Any parent/guardian serving as a member of the Committee shall not participate in any activities which may compromise the confidentiality of any student, including, but not limited to receiving copies of investigation reports, or identifying or addressing patterns of bullying among students in the school.
- D. Not later than January 1, 2012, the Board of Education shall approve the Safe School Climate Plan developed pursuant to Board policy and submit such plan to the Department of Education. Not later than thirty (30) calendar days after approval by the Board, the Board shall make such plan available on the Board's and each individual school in the school district's web site and ensure that the Safe School Climate Plan is included in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

VI. **Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Complaints of Bullying**

- A. Students and parents (or guardians of students) may file written reports of bullying. Written reports of bullying shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the alleged conduct, the number of incidents, the target of the suspected bullying, and the names of potential witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any building administrator and/or the Safe School Climate Specialist (i.e. building principal), and all reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for review and actions consistent with this Plan.
- B. Students may make anonymous reports of bullying to any school employee. Students may also request anonymity when making a report, even if the student's identity is known to the school employee. In cases where a student requests anonymity, the Safe School Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall meet with the student (if the student's identity is known) to review the request for anonymity and discuss the impact that maintaining the anonymity of the complainant may have on the investigation and on any possible remedial action. All anonymous reports shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that does not disclose the source of the report, and is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- C. School employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying shall orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable, **not later than one (1) school day** after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying. The school employee shall then file a **written report not later than two (2) school days** after making such oral report.

- D. The Safe School Specialist shall be responsible for reviewing any anonymous reports of bullying and shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports. In order to allow the district to adequately investigate complaints filed by a student or parent/guardian, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied should be asked to provide consent to permit the release of that student's name in connection with the investigation process, unless the student and/or parent has requested anonymity.
- E. In investigating reports of bullying, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegations and the ages of the students involved. The Safe School Climate Specialist will interview witnesses, as necessary, reminding the alleged perpetrator and other parties that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

## **VII. Responding to Verified Acts of Bullying**

- A. Following investigation, if acts of bullying are verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall notify the parents or guardians of the students against whom such acts were directed as well as the parents or guardians of the students who commit such acts of bullying of the finding **not later than forty-eight hours** after the investigation is completed. This notification shall include a description of the school's response to the acts of bullying. In providing such notification, however, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of other students, including the perpetrator of such bullying. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the perpetrator, or personally identifiable information about a student other than the parent/guardian's own child, may not be disclosed except as provided by law.
- B. In any instance in which bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also invite the parents or guardians of the student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardian of the student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student/victim and to prevent further acts of bullying. The invitation may be made simultaneous with the notification described above in Section VII.A. The purpose of the meeting is to communicate to parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student involved and to prevent further acts of bullying. Normally, separate meetings shall be held with the respective parents; however, at the discretion of the Safe School Climate Specialist and with written consent of the parents/guardians involved, the meeting(s) may be held jointly.
- C. If bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall develop a student safety support plan for any student against whom an act of bullying was directed. Such support plan will include safety measures to protect against further acts of bullying.
- D. A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. The written intervention plan may include counseling, discipline and other appropriate remedial actions as determined by the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee, and may also incorporate a student safety support plan, as appropriate.
- E. Notice to Law Enforcement

If the Principal of a school (or his/her designee) reasonably believes that any act of bullying constitutes a criminal offense, he/she shall notify appropriate law enforcement. Notice shall be consistent with the Board's obligations under state and federal law and Board policy regarding the disclosure of personally identifiable student information. In making this determination, the Principal or his/her designee, may consult with the school resource office, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.
- F. If a bullying complaint raises concern about discrimination or harassment on the basis of a legally protected classifications (such as race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or gender identity), the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also coordinate any investigation with other appropriate personnel within the district as appropriate (e.g. Title IX Coordinator, Section 504 Coordinator etc.)

## **VIII. Documentation and Maintenance of Log**

- A. Each school shall maintain written reports of bullying, along with supporting documentation received and/or created as a result of bullying investigations, consistent with the Board's obligations under state and federal law.
- B. Any educational record containing personally identifiable student information pertaining to an individual student shall be maintained in a confidential manner, and shall not be disclosed to third parties without written prior written consent of a parent, guardian or eligible student, except as permitted under Board policy and state and federal law.
- B. The Principal of each school shall maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in the school and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. Consistent with district obligations under state and federal law regarding student privacy, the log shall not contain any personally identifiable student information, or any information that alone or in combination would allow a reasonable person in the school community to identify the students involved. Accordingly, the log should be limited to basic information such as the number of

verified acts, name of school and/or grade level and relevant date. Given that any determination of bullying involves repeated acts, each investigation that results in a verified act of bullying for that school year shall be tallied as one verified act of bullying unless the specific actions that are the subject of each report involve separate and distinct acts of bullying. The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of bullying in each school and shall not set out the particulars of each verified act, including, but not limited to any personally identifiable student information, which is confidential information by law.

- C. The Principal of each school shall report the number of verified acts of bullying in the school annually to the Department of Education in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.

## **IX. Other Prevention and Intervention Strategies**

- A. Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in the nature of the offense and the impact the behavior may have on the victim and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of “bullying”, as defined above, will generally warrant traditional disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (e.g., detention, in-school suspension, suspension or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the building principal (or responsible program administrator or his/her designee). No disciplinary action may be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint. As discussed below, schools may also consider appropriate alternative to traditional disciplinary sanctions, including age-appropriate consequences and other restorative or remedial interventions.

- B. A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. This plan may include safety provisions, as described above, for students against whom acts of bullying have been verified and may include other interventions such as counseling, discipline, and other appropriate remedial or restorative actions as determined by the responsible administrator.

- C. The following sets forth possible interventions which may also be utilized to enforce the Board’s prohibition against bullying:

- i. **Non-disciplinary interventions**

When verified acts of bullying are identified early and/or when such verified acts of bullying do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of bullying, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered bullying. Students may also be subject to other forms of restorative discipline or remedial actions, appropriate to the age of the students and nature of the behavior.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer or other forms of mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring such cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. In such cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

- ii. **Disciplinary interventions**

When acts of bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints, however, shall not be the basis for disciplinary action.

In-school suspension and suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation, in accordance with the Board’s Student Discipline policy.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education, a committee of the Board or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Education in accordance with the Board’s Student Discipline policy. This consequence shall normally be reserved for serious incidents of bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating bullying behavior.

- iii. **Interventions for bullied students**

The building principal (or other responsible program administrator) or his/her designee shall intervene in order to address incidents of bullying against a single individual. Intervention strategies for a bullied student may include the following:

- a. Counseling;

- b. Increased supervision and monitoring of student to observe and intervene in bullying situations;
- c. Encouragement of student to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization;
- d. Peer mediation or other forms of mediation, where appropriate;
- e. Student Safety Support plan; and
- f. Restitution and/or restorative interventions.

iv. General Prevention and Intervention Strategies

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying and direct intervention when acts of bullying are verified, other district actions may ameliorate potential problems with bullying in school or at school-sponsored activities. While no specific action is required, and school needs for specific prevention and intervention strategies may vary from time to time, the following list of potential prevention and intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators, teachers and other professional employees in each school. Such prevention and intervention strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- a. school rules prohibiting bullying, harassment and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts;
- b. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur;
- c. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school, which may include instruction regarding building safe and positive school communities including developing healthy relationships and preventing dating violence as deemed appropriate for older students;
- d. Individual interventions with the perpetrator, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied student, parents and school employees;
- e. School-wide training related to safe school climate, which training may include Title IX/Sexual harassment training, Section 504/ADA Training, cultural diversity/multicultural education or other training in federal and state civil rights legislation or other topics relevant to safe school climate;
- f. Student peer training, education and support; and
- g. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
- h. Implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying, including any such program identified by the Department of Education;
- i. Respectful responses to bullying concerns raised by students, parents or staff;
- j. Planned professional development programs addressing prevention and intervention strategies, which training may include school violence prevention, conflict resolution and prevention of bullying, with a focus in evidence based practices concerning same;
- k. Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
- l. Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping;
- m. Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of school employees and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies;
- n. Modeling by all staff, including teachers of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;
- o. Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;
- p. Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

- D. In addition to prevention and intervention strategies, administrators, teachers and other professional employees may find opportunities to educate students about bullying and help eliminate bullying behavior through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially-appropriate behavior. Administrators, teachers and other professional employees should intervene promptly whenever they observe mean-spirited student conduct, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of "bullying."

## **X. Improving School Climate**

Individual schools will annually outline affirmative steps to improve the quality of their school climate by employing a variety of strategies that will be listed on the school's website.

## **XI. Annual Notice and Training**

- A. Students, and parents or guardians of students shall be notified annually of the process by which students may make reports of bullying.
- B. The Board shall provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying.
- C. At the beginning of each school year, each school shall provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan and require that all school employees annually complete training on the identification, prevention and response to bullying as required by law.

## **XII. School Climate Assessments**

On and after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, the Board directs the administration in each school in the district to ensure the completion of an assessment using the school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the Department of Education. The administration shall collect the school climate assessments for each school in the district and submit such assessments to the Department.

### **Legal References:**

Public Act 11-232, *An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws*  
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222d  
Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 10-233a through 10-233f  
Connecticut State Department of Education Circular Letter C-8,  
Series 2008-2009 (March 16, 2009)

## **INSTRUCTION 5142**

### **Section 504**

#### **POLICY REGARDING SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is an Act that prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. For the purposes of Section 504, the term "disability" with respect to an individual means:

1. a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual;
2. a record of such an impairment; or
3. being regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, Regional School District 13 recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel, students, parents and members of the public who participate in school sponsored programs. In this regard, Regional School District 13 will not knowingly permit discrimination against any person with a disability in any of the programs operated by the school system. Persons who feel that they may have been discriminated against on the basis of disability should contact Regional School District 13's Section 504 Coordinator.



The school district also has specific responsibilities under Section 504 with respect to providing access to appropriate educational services for students who qualify under Section 504. These responsibilities include the obligation to identify, to evaluate, and to afford access to appropriate educational services. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the decisions made by the professional staff of the school district with respect to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their child, he/she has a right to an impartial hearing. Additional written information about an impartial hearing is available on request from the Section 504 Coordinator.

Please contact Amy Emory, the Section 504 Coordinator for Regional School District 13, at 860-349-7208 with any additional questions or concerns about this policy.

Legal References:       29 U.S.C. § 794  
                              34 C.F.R. § 104 *et seq.*  
                              42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*  
                              ADA Amendments of 2008, Public Law 110-325

*Protecting Students with Disabilities, Frequently Asked Questions About Section 504 and the Education of Children with Disabilities*, Office for Civil Rights (March 27, 2009), available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>

Policy Adopted: October 25, 1995

Policy Revised: October 12, 2011

## **INSTRUCTION**

### **Section 504**

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

##### **Regional School District 13 Board of Education Section 504 Complaint Procedures**

Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. For the purposes of Section 504, the term "disability" with respect to an individual means: (a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (b) a record of such an impairment; or (c) being regarded as having such an impairment. "Major life activities" include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working. A major life activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including, but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine and reproductive functions.

##### *I. Procedures for Complaints Alleging Discrimination on the Basis of Disability*

- A. It is the express policy of the Board of Education to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any violation of Section 504. In order to facilitate the timely resolution of such complaints, any eligible person, including any student, parent/guardian, staff member or other employee who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability should submit a written complaint to the district's designated Section 504 Coordinator within thirty (30) days of the alleged occurrence. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints. Complaints regarding a student's rights with respect to his/her identification, evaluation, or educational placement shall be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth below in Section II.
- B. If the Section 504 Coordinator is the subject of the complaint, the complaint should be submitted directly to the Superintendent, who shall investigate or appoint a designee to do so.
- C. Complaints will be investigated promptly and corrective action will be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality will be maintained by all persons involved in the investigation to the extent possible.
- D. The written complaint should contain the following information:
  1. The name of the complainant;
  2. The date of the complaint;

3. The date(s) of the alleged discrimination;
4. The names of any witness(es) or individuals relevant to the complaint; and
5. A detailed statement describing the circumstances in which the alleged discrimination occurred.

E. Upon receipt of the written complaint, the Section 504 Coordinator (or Superintendent, as outlined above), shall:

1. Provide a copy of the written complaint to the Superintendent of Schools;
2. Meet with the complainant to discuss the nature of the complaint;
3. Provide the complainant with a copy of the Board's Section 504 Policy and applicable administrative regulations;
4. Investigate the factual basis for the complaint, including interviews with individuals with information relevant to the complaint;
5. Attempt to resolve the complainant's concerns, whenever possible;
6. Maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable throughout the investigative process, in accordance with state and federal law;
7. Communicate the findings of the investigation to the complainant, along with intended remedial actions, whenever appropriate, while keeping in mind confidentiality obligations; and
8. Ensure that appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action is taken whenever allegations are verified.

F. If, following the investigation by the Section 504 Coordinator, the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the investigation or the proposed resolution, the complainant may request, in writing, that the Superintendent review the findings of the Section 504 Coordinator. Upon receipt of a written request from the complainant, the Superintendent shall review the investigative results of the Section 504 Coordinator and determine if further action and/or investigation is warranted.

## *II. Complaint Resolution Procedures for Complaints Involving a Student's Identification, Evaluation, and/or Educational Placement*

Complaints regarding a student's identification, evaluation, or educational placement shall generally be handled using the procedures described below, **However, at any time, the complainant may request that the Section 504 Coordinator submit the complaint directly to an impartial hearing officer, and request a hearing in accordance with the provisions of subsection D (below).**

### **A. Submission of Complaint to Section 504 Coordinator**

1. In order to facilitate the prompt investigation of complaints, any complaint regarding a student's identification, evaluation or educational placement under Section 504 should be forwarded to the District's Section 504 Coordinator within thirty (30) days of the alleged date that the dispute regarding the student's identification, evaluation or education placement arose. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the resolution of potential educational disputes as it assists the district in gathering current, accurate information and enables the district to take corrective actions when necessary to ensure that a student is provided with an appropriate educational program.
2. The written complaint concerning a student's identification, evaluation or educational placement should contain the following information:
  - a. Full name of the student, age, and grade level;
  - b. Name of parent(s);
  - c. Address and relevant contact information for parent/complainant;
  - d. Date of complaint;
  - e. Specific areas of disagreement relating to the student's identification, evaluation or placement; and
  - f. Remedy requested.
3. Upon receipt of the written complaint, the Section 504 Coordinator shall:
  - a. Forward a copy of the complaint to the Superintendent of Schools;
  - b. Meet with the complainant within ten (10) business days to discuss the nature of his/her concerns and determine if an appropriate resolution can be reached;

- c. If, following such a meeting, further investigation is deemed necessary, the Section 504 Coordinator shall promptly investigate the factual basis for the complaint, consulting with any individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the student and/or complainant; and
- d. Communicate the results of his/her investigation to the complainant within fifteen (15) business days from the date upon which the complaint was received by the Section 504 Coordinator.

**B. Review by Superintendent of Schools**

1. If the complainant is not satisfied with the findings and/or resolution offered as a result of the Section 504 Coordinator's review, he or she may present the written complaint to the Superintendent for his/her review.
2. The Superintendent shall review the complaint and any relevant documents maintained by the Section 504 Coordinator and shall consult with the Section 504 Coordinator regarding attempts to resolve the complaint. The Superintendent shall also consult with the complainant. The Superintendent may attempt to resolve the complainant's concerns alone, or with another appropriate administrator.
3. Following the Superintendent's review, he or she shall communicate his/her findings to the complainant within ten (10) business days following his/her receipt of the written request for review by the Superintendent.
4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision or proposed resolution, he/she may request that the Superintendent submit the matter to a mediator or to an impartial hearing officer. This request for a hearing/mediation should be made within fifteen (15) days of the Superintendent's decision. Mediation shall only occur by mutual agreement of the parties.

**C. Mediation Procedures:**

1. The mediator must be someone who is knowledgeable about Section 504 and the differences between Section 504 and the regulations and requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
2. The mediator shall inform all parties involved of the date, time and place of the mediation and of the right to have legal counsel or other representation at the complainant's own expense, if desired.
3. The mediator shall meet with the parties jointly, or separately, as determined by the mediator, and shall facilitate a voluntary settlement of the dispute between the parties, if possible.
4. If the parties are not able to reach a voluntary settlement of the dispute, the complainant may request an impartial hearing, as described below.

**D. Impartial Hearing Procedures:**

1. The impartial hearing officer must be someone who is knowledgeable about Section 504 and the differences between Section 504 and the regulations and requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
2. The impartial hearing officer shall inform all parties involved of the date, time and place of the hearing and of the right to present witness(es) and to have legal counsel or other representation at the complainant's own expense, if desired.
3. The impartial hearing officer shall hear all aspects of the complainant's appeal and shall reach a decision within forty-five (45) calendar days of receipt of the request for hearing. The decision shall be presented in writing to the complainant and to the Section 504 Coordinator.
4. A Section 504 impartial hearing officer does not have jurisdiction to hear claims alleging discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on an individual's disability unless such a claim is **directly related** to a claim regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a student under Section 504.

- E. The time limits noted throughout Section II may be extended if more time is needed to permit thorough review and opportunity for resolution.

III. *The Section 504 Coordinator for Regional District 13:*

Amy Emory, Pupil Personnel Director  
Regional School District 13  
135A Pickett Lane  
P.O. Box 190  
Durham, CT 06422  
860-349-7208

IV. *Complaints to State and Federal Agencies*

At any stage in these complaint procedures, the complainant has the right to file a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109-0111 (TELEPHONE NUMBER (617) 289-0111). Any such complaints must be filed within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the date of the alleged violation of Section 504.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, 1229 Albany Avenue, Hartford, CT 06112 (TELEPHONE NUMBER 860-566-7710) and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office, John F. Kennedy Federal Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02114 (TELEPHONE NUMBER 617-565-3200). Connecticut law requires that a formal written complaint be filed with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the date when the alleged discrimination. Remedies for discrimination include cease and desist orders, back pay, compensatory damages, hiring, promotion or reinstatement.

Regulation Adopted: October 12, 2011

**STUDENTS - 5150**

**Student Sexual Harassment**

**It is the policy of the Board of Education to create and maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment and discrimination on the basis of sex. The District strictly prohibits all forms of sexual harassment on school grounds, school buses and at all school-sponsored activities, programs and events including those that take place at locations outside the district. Sexual harassment can occur adult to student, student to student, between members of the opposite sex, or between members of the same sex.**

The District encourages all victims of sexual harassment and persons with knowledge of sexual harassment to report the harassment immediately. All students have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind. The District will promptly investigate all complaints of sexual harassment, and will take prompt corrective action to end the harassment.

Policy Adopted: March 24, 1999

Policy Reviewed: February 8, 2011

## **STUDENTS**

### **Student Sexual Harassment - Regulation**

**Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct or communication of a sexual nature, and any other gender-based harassment, whether initiated by students, school employees, or third parties, when:**

1. Submission to the conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's participation in school-sponsored activities, or any other aspect of the student's education;
2. Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting a student's academic performance, participation in school-sponsored activities, or any other aspect of a student's education;
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance or participation in school-sponsored activities, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

While an exhaustive list is not possible, the following are examples of specific behaviors that could constitute sexual harassment:

1. Unwelcome sexual invitations or requests for sexual activity in exchange for grades, promotions, preferences, favors, selection for extra-circular activities or job assignments, homework, etc.
2. Any unwelcome communication that is sexually suggestive, sexually degrading or implies sexual motives or intentions, such as sexual remarks or innuendoes about an individual's clothing, appearance or activities; sexual jokes; sexual gestures; public conversations about sexual activities or exploits; sexual rumors and "rating lists"; howling, catcalls, and whistles; sexually graphic computer files, messages or games, etc.
3. Unwelcome physical contact or closeness that is sexually suggestive, sexually degrading, or sexually intimidating.
4. Any other unwelcome gender-based behavior that is offensive, degrading, intimidating or demeaning.

### **Complaint Procedures**

It is the policy of the District to investigate promptly and resolve equitably all complaints of sexual harassment and discrimination on the basis of sex. Victims of sexual harassment shall be afforded avenues for filing complaints which are free from bias, collusion, intimidation or reprisal.

#### **Step I – Informal Level**

The complainant may request a meeting to discuss the complaint with the building principal of his/her school in an effort to resolve the matter informally. In the event that the student is uncomfortable, for any reason, with discussing the matter with the building principal, the student may speak with any other administrator regarding the alleged harassment. The principal or other school administrator shall schedule a meeting promptly with the complainant to discuss the complaint, but in no event shall the meeting be held later than fourteen (14) days from the receipt of the meeting request.

#### **Step II – Formal Level**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the disposition of his or her complaint at the informal level, he or she may file a formal complaint with the Pupil Personnel Director. A student need not have brought an informal complaint before filing a formal written complaint. Complaint forms may be obtained from the office of the Superintendent of Schools, as well as the office of the building principal. In addition, written complaints may be brought to the attention of a building principal or the Pupil Personnel Director. Any student who is unable to file a written complaint may speak with one of the above mentioned district employees, who will then assist the student in filing a written complaint. Any school employee who receives a complaint of sexual harassment from a student shall inform the student of the employee's obligation to report the complaint to the school administration, and then shall immediately notify the principal and/or the Pupil Personnel Director/Title IX Coordinator.

The written complaint should state the name of the complainant and the date of the complaint, the date(s) of the alleged harassment, the name or names of the alleged harasser or harassers, the name or names of any witnesses, and a statement of the circumstances in which the alleged harassment occurred. All formal complaints must be filed within sixty (60) days from the alleged violation. Upon the filing of a written complaint, the complainant shall be provided with a copy of this regulation.

The Pupil Personnel Director shall schedule a meeting promptly with the complainant to discuss the complaint but in no event shall the meeting be held later than fourteen (14) days from receipt of the formal complaint. Whenever possible, the District will make an effort to respect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties and witnesses to complaints brought under this policy.

However, because an individual's need for confidentiality must be balanced with the District's obligation to investigate complaints, the District retains the right to disclose the identity of

parties and witnesses to the extent necessary. Whenever, a sexual harassment complaint is made, the school administration will investigate the complaint or refer the complaint for investigation even if the student does not request any action or withdraws the complaint. Upon completion of an investigation but in no event later than fourteen (14) days after meeting with the complainant, the Pupil Personnel Director/Title IX Coordinator shall render a written decision to the complainant as to the disposition of the complaint. Time lines herein for investigation and resolution of sexual harassment complaints may be extended to ensure a thorough investigation of the complaint.

If the decision results in a determination that sexual harassment has occurred, appropriate actions shall be taken to ensure that the harassment ceases and will not reoccur. Appropriate action may include re-assignment, transfer, and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or expulsion from school of the harasser. No adverse action will be taken against a student for filing a complaint of sexual harassment.

Regulation Approved: March 24, 1999

Regulation Reviewed: February 8, 2011  
Grievance Form

Title VI, IX and Section 504

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Complaint:

Solution Suggested by Complainant:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Student/Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Submitted

### Level One Procedure

The student or employee who has a complaint, and is unable to solve the issue, may address the complaint in writing to the compliance coordinator.

The coordinator's responsibilities:

- a. investigate, within one (1) week, the circumstances of the complaint,
- b. render a decision, within two (2) weeks after receipt of the complaint, and notify the complainant,
- c. provide the complainant one (1) week to react to the decision before it becomes final.

## **Level Two Procedure**

The compliance coordinator requests the Superintendent of Schools to review the complaint.

The Superintendent will schedule a meeting within one (1) week of the request for review. The participants shall be the complainant, the coordinator and the superintendent.

The Superintendent will make a decision within (1) week which shall be final. The complainant and the coordinator will receive copies of the decision.

I have read the above policy, regulation and complaint procedure on sexual harassment, and understand my rights and obligations under this policy.

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Signature

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Date

## **School Sponsored Activities - 6145.3**

Students who reside in Durham and Middlefield but are full time students outside District 13 or are home schooled are not eligible to participate in any curricular or extra curricular activities provided by or sponsored by Regional School District 13. The only exception to this policy will be school-sponsored dances at the middle school and high

**school as long as the guest is invited by a student currently enrolled in Regional School District 13. All guests must be registered with the school's principal before the dance.**

**Policy Adopted: May 22, 2002**  
Policy Revised: January 8, 2003  
Policy Reviewed: February 8, 2011

## **Field Trips - 6153**

**The Board of Education encourages and sanctions student trips and other out-of-school activities, including participation in interscholastic events and community service projects, which are of value in helping achieve each participating student's educational objectives.**

The school staff, under the direction of the administration, shall take all reasonable and prudent steps to safeguard the physical and educational welfare of participating students. The principal may place restrictions upon a student's participation when, in the staff's judgment, his/her welfare requires it.

Transportation for trips of significant educational value as described above may be free of cost to students. In some instances, transportation for trips may be provided for a fee set by the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee to cover costs.

If a fee is charged, the opportunity to participate in a field trip, specifically tied to the curriculum, must be available to every member of a class who is unable to pay. Efforts may be made to defray costs for enrichment field trips for students unable to pay.

Field trips that are overnight or for more than one school day require Board of Education approval. Out of state field trips that are not overnight or not for more than one school day require approval by Superintendent of Schools. All other field trips require approval by the building principal.

Applications must be submitted well in advance because event dates are reserved only after applications have been approved. Applications for trips requiring Board of Education approval must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent of Schools by the principal prior to the beginning of any fundraising, and 45 days prior to the date of the trip or 90 days for any trip that includes air travel or is greater than 4 days in length on a form designated and approved by the Board of Education. Exceptions to the "prior notice" clause may be approved by the Superintendent.

All field trips must occur within the school year, any request for exception would require special Board of Education approval.

Applications for trip approval shall include the following information:

1. Clear and detailed statement of educational objectives
2. Description of activities
3. Statement of costs
4. Provision for students who cannot afford trip
5. Provision for supervision including number of students, number of staff, number of parents, and names of chaperones

The criteria utilized by the Board of Education in determining whether to approve a field trip includes, but it is not limited to the following:

1. Degree of educational value
2. Cost to the District or to each student
3. Location of the trip
4. Amount of time missed from regular classes
5. Number of chaperones
6. Number of previous field trips undertaken by particular group
7. Age appropriateness of students for the trip

Approval by the Board of Education is also contingent upon all building requirements having been met.

Field trips will be offered exclusively to Regional School District 13 students who are enrolled at the time of the trip.

Chaperones for field trips that are out-of-state or overnight must be certified staff or adults over the age of 25. Spouses of certified staff who are chaperones may accompany a field trip at the discretion of the Superintendent. Students from other districts traveling simultaneously with a District 13 sanctioned field trip shall not be under the auspices of Regional School District 13.

If any trip is not approved by the Principal, Superintendent, or Board of Education, the Board of Education and Regional District 13 bears no responsibility or liability if such trip occurs without appropriate authorization.

Policy Revised: September 14, 1983  
Policy Revised: January 8, 1992  
Policy Revised: February 8, 1995  
Policy Revised: May 10, 1995  
Policy Revised: April 25, 2001  
Policy Revised: September 12, 2012



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Complaint Resolution Procedure  
Elementary and Secondary Education Act  
34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 299(10)(a)

I. Filing of Complaint

A. Violation of Law

A written complaint may be filed by an organization or individual with the Connecticut Commissioner of Education alleging that the state educational agency (SEA) or an agency or consortium of agencies is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to the following applicable programs:

1. Part A of Title I (Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies).
2. Part B, Subpart 1 of Title I (Reading First).
3. Part B, Subpart 3 of Title I (Even Start Family Literacy Programs).
4. Part D of Title I (Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk of Dropping Out).
5. Part A of Title II (Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund).
6. Part D of Title II (Enhancing Education Through Technology).
7. Part A of Title III (English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act).
8. Part B, Subpart 4 of Title III (Emergency Immigrant Education Program).
9. Part A of Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities).
10. Part A of Title V (Innovative Programs).

B. Review of an Appeal

A written complaint may be filed by an individual with the Connecticut Commissioner of Education appealing the decision of an agency or consortium of agencies based on prior written complaint presented by an individual to such agency or consortium of agencies.

C. Content of Complaint

The complaint shall be in writing, signed by the complainant and contain the following:

1. A statement that the SEA or an agency or consortium of agencies has violated a requirement of federal statutes or regulation regarding the applicable program, or in the case of an appeal, a statement of aggrievement with the decision rendered by the agency or consortium of agencies based on a prior written complaint.
2. A clear and concise description of the facts on which the statement is based and the specific alleged violation or aggrievement.
3. A description of prior efforts to resolve the complaint, including information demonstrating that the SEA, agency or consortium of agencies has taken action adverse to the complaint or has refused or failed to take action within a reasonable period of time.
4. Complainant's and respondent's name, address and telephone number.
5. Other materials or documents containing information which support or clarify the statement.

II. Review of Complaint

A. Analysis

Within three business days of the receipt of the complaint, the Commissioner shall assign a review official. Within five business days of the assignment, the review official shall determine whether the complaint has been properly filed in accordance with Section I. If necessary, the review official shall interview the complainant.

B. Dismissal of Complaint

The review official may dismiss the complaint in writing stating an explanation for such action. The grounds for dismissal shall include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Failure to file a proper complaint pursuant to Section I.

2. The allegations fail to state a bona fide violation of federal statute or regulations by the SEA or an agency or consortium of agencies.
3. The allegations fail to state a bona fide aggrievement with the decision rendered by an agency or consortium of agencies based on prior written complaint.
4. The allegations were not caused by the actions or failure to act by the SEA, agency or consortium of agencies.

### III. Notification of Complaint and Investigation

If a complaint is not dismissed, the review official shall forward the complaint to the respondent immediately along with a copy of the Complaint Resolution Procedures.

### IV. Response to Complaint

Within 10 business days of the receipt of the complaint from the review official, the respondent shall file with the Commissioner a written response to the complaint.

#### A. Content of Response

The response shall address each and every allegation of the complaint and shall list the respondent's name, address and telephone number.

#### B. Interview

The review official or the respondent may request an interview to discuss the response and to resolve the dispute informally.

### V. Complaint Investigation

Upon completion of Section IV or the failure of the respondent to file a response, the review official shall conduct an investigation. All parties may be duly notified that an investigation has begun. At any time during the investigation, the review official shall attempt to resolve the dispute informally.

Within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the complaint, an investigation of the complaint shall be completed and a written report shall be mailed to both parties. Information shall be gathered in a timely manner, while minimizing any inconvenience or disruption to the complainant or respondent.

Concerning a review of an appeal of the decision of an agency or consortium of agencies, the review official may elect to disregard the procedures contained in this section using in lieu thereof the following abbreviated procedure.

1. Review all of the appropriate records and determine whether the decision of the agency or consortium of agencies shall be affirmed, reversed or modified.
2. Draft a letter of review of an appeal addressing, but not limited to, the issue in dispute, the facts found, the affirmation, reversal or modification of the lower decision and recommendation for improved practices, policies or procedures.

#### A. Data Collection

The complainant and respondent shall provide the review official with copies of all relevant records requested in writing. Telephone interviews of the complainant, respondent and others with knowledge of the allegations may be conducted.

Pursuant to 34 CFR 99-35(a) the review official, acting on behalf of the SEA, is authorized to have access to education records in connection with an evaluation of federal or state-supported education programs or for the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements which relate to those programs.

#### B. Independent On-Site Investigation

The review official may conduct an on-site visit to investigate the complaint if the official deems it necessary.

Any on-site visit shall be coordinated with the respondent.

#### C. Complaint Investigation Report

The Complaint Investigation Report shall be completed by the review official and mailed to the parties within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the complaint by the SEA. The Commissioner may grant an extension for the completion of the report on written request of the review official or respondent if exceptional circumstances exist with respect to the particular complaint. Such extension shall be in writing and shall be mailed to the parties.

The report shall contain the following contents:

1. Summary of all investigation activities including, but not limited to, date of receipt of complaint, allegations, parties interviewed, documents received and dates of on-site visits.
2. Specific allegation of the complaint, the findings of fact, conclusions and final decisions rendered regarding each allegation, including citation to applicable federal statute or regulation.
3. Specific corrective action plan that resolves the complaint or ensures future compliance of the respondent regarding the violation of federal statute or regulation.
4. Recommendations for improved practices, policies or procedures shall be offered when no violation of federal statute or regulation is found.

D. **Corrective Action Plan**

If the Complaint Investigation Report finds that the respondent is violating federal statute or regulations, the respondent shall be requested to submit a corrective action plan within a specified period of time as determined by the review official.

Respondent may request technical assistance from the SEA in order to prepare a plan to achieve compliance.

VI. **Review of Final Decision**

The complainant may file a written request with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education to review the final decision of the SEA.

All local educational agencies shall disseminate information about the complaint procedures to teachers, staff, parents and appropriate private school officials or representatives.

## Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) Home

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

School officials with legitimate educational interest;

Other schools to which a student is transferring;

Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;

Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;

Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;

Accrediting organizations;

To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;

Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and

State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the [Federal Relay Service](#).

Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

## Nondiscrimination Statement

Regional School District 13 does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, national origin, or ancestry with respect to employment practices or in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and grievances regarding these non-discrimination policies and practices: Amy Emory, Pupil Personnel Director, 135A Pickett Lane, Durham, CT 06422. Phone: 860-349-7208.

### Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–
  1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
  2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
  3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
  4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parent; or
  8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of* –
  1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
  3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)
- *Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use –
  1. Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
  2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
  3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

*Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:*

Amy Emory, Pupil Personnel Director  
Regional School District 13  
135A Pickett Lane  
P.O. Box 190  
Durham, CT 06422

or

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202