

# 2019-2020 STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

Regional School District 13  
Durham - Middlefield, Connecticut  
**Coginchaug Regional High School**  
P.O. Box 280  
135 Pickett Lane  
Durham, CT 06422

General Office Telephone (860) 349-7215  
Guidance Office Telephone (860) 349-7221  
Fax (860) 349-7136  
[www.rsd13ct.org/schools/crhs](http://www.rsd13ct.org/schools/crhs)

School Colors  
Blue, Red and White

School Teams  
Blue Devils



## **ADMINISTRATION**

Brian Falcone, Principal  
Beth Melillo, Dean of Academic and Student Services

## **CENTRAL OFFICE**

Dr. Kathryn Veronesi, Superintendent of Schools  
Kimberly Neubig, Business Manager  
TBD, Director of Student Services & Special Education  
Cori-Ann DiMaggio, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment  
Mary Ellen Manning, Director of Organizational Development  
Susan Gaudreau, Operation Manager  
James Croteau, Facilities Manager  
Ken Pietrasko, Director of Information Technology

# Coginchaug Regional High School

## Core Values, Beliefs, and Expectations

### Mission Statement

Coginchaug Regional High School engages and supports students in rigorous learning experiences. We expect our students to thrive in and improve upon their local and global communities.

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Academic Expectations for Lifelong Learning and Social and Civic Expectations

All graduates of Coginchaug Regional High School will demonstrate high academic standards through the ability to:

1. Evaluate and process information.
2. Analyze and apply information.
3. Communicate clearly and effectively.
4. Work collaboratively.
5. Practice the District Core Ethical Values.

### Regional School District 13's Core Ethical Values:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Honesty
- Kindness
- Courage

DATES OF PROGRESS REPORTS AND GRADE REPORTS						
	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	Midterm Exams	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	Final Exams
Quarter Begins	August 28	October 30	January 16-22	January 23	March 30	June 8-12
Progress Period Ends	September 30	December 6		February 26	May 6	
Grades Close	October 29	January 22		March 27	June 5	June 12

- ★ Report cards will be emailed home each quarter.
- ★ Dates may change to adjust for school closings due to inclement weather.

# 2019-2020 Coginchaug Regional High School Schedule

Time	Monday	Class Length	Daily Schedule
7:25-7:29	Homeroom	4 Minutes	
7:32-8:42	1	70 Minutes	
8:42-9:02	X Block	20 Minutes	
9:02-10:12	2	70 Minutes	
10:16-11:06	Advisory	50 Minutes	
11:10-11:34	Lunch #1	24 Minutes	
11:38-12:48	3	70 Minutes	
11:10-12:20	3	70 Minutes	
12:24-12:48	Lunch #2	24 Minutes	
12:52-2:02	4	70 Minutes	

Time	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Class Length
7:25-7:29	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	4 Minutes
7:32-8:39	5	2	7	4	67 Minutes
8:39-8:54	X Block	X Block	X Block	X Block	15 Minutes
8:54-10:01	6	3	8	5	67 Minutes
10:05-11:12	7	4	1	6	67 Minutes
11:16-11:40	Lunch #1	Lunch #1	Lunch #1	Lunch #1	24 Minutes
11:44-12:51	8	5	2	7	67 Minutes
11:16-12:23	8	5	2	7	67 Minutes
12:27-12:51	Lunch #2	Lunch #2	Lunch #2	Lunch #2	24 Minutes
12:55-2:02	1	6	3	8	67 Minutes

## 2019-2020 Coginchaug Regional High School Schedule

Time	Monday	Class Length			
9:25-9:29	Homeroom	4 Minutes	Two Hour Delay Schedule		
9:32-10:30	1	58 Minutes			
10:34-11:32	2	58 Minutes			
11:35-11:58	Lunch #1	23 Minutes			
12:02-1:00	3	58 Minutes			
11:35-12:33	3	58 Minutes			
12:37-1:00	Lunch #2	23 Minutes			
1:04-2:02	4	58 Minutes			
Time	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Class Length
9:25-9:29	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	4 Minutes
9:33-10:18	5	2	7	4	45 Minutes
10:22-11:07	6	3	8	5	45 Minutes
11:11-11:56	7	4	1	6	45 Minutes
12:00-12:24	Lunch #1	Lunch #1	Lunch #1	Lunch #1	24 Minutes
12:28-1:13	8	5	2	7	45 Minutes
12:00-12:45	8	5	2	7	45 Minutes
12:49-1:13	Lunch #2	Lunch #2	Lunch #2	Lunch #2	24 Minutes
1:17-2:02	1	6	3	8	45 Minutes

# 2019-2020 Coginchaug Regional High School Schedule

Time	Monday	Class Length	<h2 style="margin: 0;">12:12 Early Dismissal Schedule</h2>		
7:25-7:29	Homeroom	4 Minutes			
7:32-8:32	1	60 Minutes			
8:36-9:36	2	60 Minutes			
9:40-10:40	4	60 Minutes			
10:44-11:08	Lunch #1	24 Minutes			
11:12-12:12	3	60 Minutes			
10:44-11:44	3	60 Minutes			
11:48-12:12	Lunch #2	24 Minutes			

Time	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Class Length
7:25-7:29	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	4 Minutes
7:32-8:19	5	2	7	4	47 Minutes
8:23-9:10	6	3	8	5	47 Minutes
9:14-10:01	7	4	1	6	47 Minutes
10:05-10:52	1	6	3	8	47 Minutes
10:56-11:21	Lunch #1	Lunch #1	Lunch #1	Lunch #1	25 Minutes
11:25-12:12	8	5	2	7	47 Minutes
10:56-11:43	8	5	2	7	47 Minutes
11:47-12:12	Lunch #2	Lunch #2	Lunch #2	Lunch #2	25 Minutes

## 2019-2020 Coginchaug Regional High School Schedule

Time	Monday	Class Length			
7:25-7:29	Homeroom	4 Minutes	<b>10:42</b> <b>Early Dismissal Schedule</b>		
7:32-8:17	1	45 Minutes			
8:20-9:05	2	45 Minutes			
9:09-9:54	3	45 Minutes			
9:57-10:42	4	45 Minutes			
Time	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Class Length
7:25-7:29	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	4 Minutes
7:32-8:07	5	2	7	4	35 Minutes
8:10-8:45	6	3	8	5	35 Minutes
8:49-9:24	7	4	1	6	35 Minutes
9:28-10:03	8	5	2	7	35 Minutes
10:07-10:42	1	6	3	8	35 Minutes

# **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

## **COURSE OF STUDY**

All students in grades 9-12 must select at least seven credits in their course choices including physical education and health. Exceptions to the above can be made only by the principal.

A student must pass a subject to be enrolled in the next sequential course. Special requirements must be followed as explained in the Program of Studies.

The school reserves the right to determine the student's level and placement when more than one section of a course is taught.

All students must take physical education unless excused for medical reasons. Only an official letter on file with the school nurse from a medical doctor specifying the duration of the excuse is acceptable.

Students who fail courses are advised to make them up either by increasing their course load or by attending summer school. Summer school credits will be accepted only with prior approval from a counselor. Generally, credit in summer school is awarded on a semester basis. A student will be granted credit for a full year course, after completion of summer school, only if the student passed at least two quarters of work during the regular school year.

Students wishing to complete high school in less than four years should adhere to the following procedure in their sophomore year:

- Parent-student conference with the counselor.
- Students and parents must submit a written petition to the Board of Education, through the principal, stating the reason(s) and requesting permission. Only the Board of Education can grant permission.
- All students must meet all graduation requirements; any exceptions must be approved by the Board of Education.

### **COURSE CHANGES**

Course selections are made by the student in consultation with parents along with the advice and recommendation of the counselor and the teacher. At the beginning of the school year, students receive a schedule listing all courses which they selected. Changes will be allowed only with the approval of the student, parent and counselor if they meet the following conditions:

- Shortage of credits
- Prerequisite has not been met. (i.e. a course failed or not taken)
- A computer/technical or scheduling error or conflict
- To strengthen an academic program
- Adding a course if the desired class has not reached enrollment capacity

Requests for course changes should be addressed to the counselor and will be considered on their individual merits.

## COURSE WITHDRAWAL

If a student wishes to withdraw from a course, then he/she should discuss the change with the counselor. Students may not take fewer than seven credits in a year. The approval of the teacher, parent, counselor, and in some instances an administrator, will be required before a student can withdraw. If the teacher, parent or counselor disagrees with the student's request to withdraw, a conference will be arranged involving all parties in order to resolve the issue. Any absence from class before the teacher receives official notification from the guidance office will be considered a cut.

### Full Year Course:

1. Student withdraws before first quarter progress report date-no penalty/no credit; does not show on report card.
2. Student withdraws after progress report date but before first quarter grade is issued - no penalty/no credit; course name, and "W" show on report card and transcript.
3. Student withdraws after the first quarter but before the end of first semester, the student will be required to remain in class and take the mid-year exam if the drop is approved. Student withdraws with the grade to date.
4. Student withdraws after first semester - this is a "WITHDRAWAL WITH FAILURE" - full weight is assigned but no credit; final grade of "F" is assigned.

### Semester Course:

1. Student withdraws before the first quarter progress report date - no credit; does not show on report card.
2. Student withdraws after progress report date but before the end of the first quarter of the class - no credit; grade of "W" will appear on the report card and transcript.
3. Student withdraws after the first quarter of the class - this is a "WITHDRAWAL WITH FAILURE" - full weight is assigned but no credit; final grade of "F" is assigned.

## GRADING POLICIES

Grades are computed numerically and then assigned the appropriate letter grade.

A+ = 97-100	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 67-69	F = 0-59
A = 93-96	B = 83-86	C = 73-76	D = 63-66	
A- = 90-92	B- = 80-82	C- = 70-72	D- = 60-62	

The following definitions for letter designations are also used as appropriate:

I = Incomplete                      P = Pass                      M = Medical Excuse  
W = Withdrawal                      WF = Withdrawal With Failure                      X = Incomplete Project

Final grades for year-long courses are computed as follows: 20 percent for each quarter, 10 percent for mid-year exam and 10 percent for final exam.

For semester courses, each quarter is 45 percent and the final exam is 10 percent.

Final exams must be taken in order to pass and receive credit in semester and full year courses. Failure to take an exam will result in loss of credit and a failing grade.



An incomplete grade not made up within two weeks of the end of a marking period will be recorded as a failing grade (F) unless an extension has been approved by the administration.

## POWERSCHOOL

Parents will receive PowerSchool information from the school at the onset of the school year regarding access to their child's academic information including grades and attendance. The information sent to parents includes the PowerSchool web address, a user ID number, and a password. It is the responsibility of the parent and child/student to access the information in order to keep track of student progress and attendance information.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate from Coginchaug Regional High School, students must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Twenty-six (26) credits must be earned

2. For the Class of 2020, 2021 & 2022

Distribution of Credits	Credits
English	4
Social Studies including U.S. History and .5 credit of civics (American Citizenship)	3.5
Science including one year of Biology	3
Mathematics	3
4 years of Physical Education (unless medically excused)	2
Health 9, 10, 11, 12	1
Fine Arts/Vocational Arts	1
Other Courses of Choice - To reach requirements for your year of graduation	8.5

2. For the Class of 2023

Distribution of Credits	Credits
English	4
Social Studies including U.S. History and .5 credit of civics (American Citizenship)	3.5
Science including one year of Biology	3
Mathematics	3
4 years of Physical Education/Wellness (unless medically excused)	1
Health/Safety Education 9, 10, 11, 12	1

Fine Arts/Vocational Arts	1
Humanities Elective	.5
STEM Elective	3
World Language	1
Elective Credits	4
Senior Capstone Project	1
50 Hours Of Community Service	

3.

Promotion	Credits
to become a sophomore	5.5
to become a junior	12
to become a senior	19
or a planned program to meet graduation requirements...	26

Parents of seniors will be notified at the end of each marking quarter in the event of failure to meet graduation requirements.

Exceptions:

1. Students are permitted to take a heavier than normal load of courses so that they can complete the regular high school program in less than four years. Students desiring an accelerated program will be required to submit a request for approval to the principal prior to end of the sophomore year.
2. Students may be exempted from the P.E. requirements (credits) for medical reasons, but must still earn twenty-six credits (or the designated number under the phase in process) in order to graduate.
3. Special education students must fulfill the credit requirements for graduation at a level determined by their Individualized Education Program.

### **ONLINE COURSE WORK**

The maximum number of online courses a student can take to receive a Coginchaug Regional High School diploma is two credits. Online courses are not weighted in the calculation of GPA.

### **ONLINE COURSE RECOVERY**

No online course recovery courses will be assigned after the fourth quarter progress report. Students needing recovery and meeting the requirements will have to complete and retake the course during summer school.

## **TRANSFER CREDITS**

Transferred courses offered at Coginchaug will be documented as a grade on a transcript and will be counted towards the GPA.

## **PARTIAL DAY MAGNET SCHOOL CREDIT**

Credit will be awarded on a pass/fail basis and will not count toward the GPA.

## **MID-YEAR/FINAL EXAMINATIONS**

Students must take exams in order to pass and receive credit in semester and full year courses. Students who cannot be present for an exam must have a parent call the school office on the day of the exam and talk to an administrator in order to be eligible for a make-up. Only students with administrative approval will be allowed to make up missed exams. This approval will be made on a case-by-case basis considering the specific reason for the absence. Students who are late for an exam must report to the office prior to going to their exam. On exam days, students are required to be in school only for scheduled exams. Students who are in school when they do not have an exam may study in the library, the cafeteria or a resource room.

Buses will run on an early closing schedule during exams. Students who arrive or leave at other times are responsible for their own transportation. If students leave school grounds before or after their scheduled exams they will not be allowed to reenter school. Students are not allowed to visit other schools during exam periods.

Food will be served in the cafeteria according to an announced schedule.

In the event of school cancellation on an exam day, the day missed will be made up on the day of return to school, with the remaining days to follow in consecutive order.

## **EXAM EXEMPTIONS**

Seniors will be exempt from taking final exams if they meet the following criteria:

Full Year Courses (excluding UCONN and AP courses):

- Seniors must have a 90 average up to the day of the exam.
- The mid-term will be included when computing this average.
- Seniors cannot have a quarterly average below a B- during any marking period.

Semester Courses:

- Seniors must have a 90 average up to the day of the exam (both quarters combined).
- Seniors may not have a quarterly average below a B- for either quarter.

★ If a senior meets all of these criteria, he/she has the option of taking the final exam.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reporting is done on an ongoing basis through the PowerSchool parent and student portals. At the midpoint of a marking period parents will be emailed a reminder to check their son/daughter's progress. Teachers may also send progress reports at other times during the marking period if a sudden change in progress occurs. The counselors also monitor student progress through PowerSchool to identify students in need of greater assistance.

## GPA COMPUTATION

All classes are weighted equally except for Honors Level, Advanced Placement and the University of Connecticut Cooperative Program courses, which receive additional weight. Physical Education, Chamber Choir, Show Choir, Jazz Ensemble and SAT Prep are not included in GPA. To compute GPA in class the following values are assigned to each grade:

Grade Point by Level

Grade	AP/UConn	Honors	College Prep A/B, Electives
A+	5.33	4.83	4.33
A	5.00	4.50	4.00
A-	4.66	4.16	3.66
B+	4.33	3.83	3.33
B	4.00	3.50	3.00
B-	3.66	3.16	2.66
C+	3.33	2.83	2.33
C	3.00	2.50	2.00
C-	2.66	2.16	1.66
D+	2.33	1.83	1.33
D	2.00	1.50	1.00
D-	1.66	1.16	0.66

A student's GPA is the sum of the grade points earned divided by the number of credits taken. (The grade in a full year course thus affects the GPA more than a semester course or quarter course. The weight is proportional to the length of the course). This GPA in class is used primarily on transcripts for college admission and for certain senior awards. A student's GPA in class is cumulative and is computed at the end of the year. Midterms and final exams are included in this determination.

## HONOR ROLL

An Honor Roll will be published at the end of each marking period. The same numerical values assigned for GPA in class are used to compute the Honor Roll. To attain Honors, a student must have no grade below a B- in a non-weighted course, C+ in an honors level course and C- in an AP/Uconn course. High Honors will be awarded to students receiving a grade point average of 3.666 or higher and no grade below a B- in a non-weighted course, C+ in an honors level course and C- in an AP/Uconn course.

\* Eligibility for the Honor Roll will be based on the grade from the previous quarter.

\* Students must be full time and carry a minimum of five credits to be considered for the Honor Roll.

## **GRADUATION “WITH DISTINCTION”**

Seniors graduating with a GPA of 3.70 or better will be designated on the program as graduating “With Honors” and those with a 4.00 or better will be designated as graduating “With Honors and Distinction.”

The official calculation for GPA is based on the first 14 quarters and is calculated at the end of the first semester of senior year. (Seniors are required to meet all Coginchaug graduation requirements in order to be eligible to graduate with the designation of “With Honors” or “With Honors and Distinction)

## **EARLY COLLEGE ADMISSION**

The Board of Education will award a diploma to any student who has successfully completed the 11th grade and has successfully completed at least one year at an accredited college.

All students are required to carry a minimum schedule of seven credits per year. Exceptions can be granted only by the principal.

Students planning to pursue a college education should take a program which consists of three to four credits in the major academic courses (including Foreign Language). Students planning to enter a business or technical career may need additional courses as well.

Students and parents should map out a four-year high school program which will leave a student the maximum number of options. Please consult with a counselor to create such a program.

## **SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT TEST (SAT)**

The SAT is mandated by the state to assess students’ abilities in reading, writing and math. The test is given to juniors on dates to be determined the State Department of Education and the College Board.

## **PSAT & SAT INFORMATION**

Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) for Freshman, Sophomores and Juniors will be held during the school day.

The Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) registration is online @ [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com) and the American College Test (ACT) registration is online @ [ACT.org](http://ACT.org). More information is available in the guidance office.

## **SCHOOL CODE NUMBER**

The school code number for Coginchaug Regional High School is 070160.

## **TRANSCRIPTS**

Students needing official transcripts for college admission, school transfer or other reasons must sign a release form. If the student is under 18 years of age, parent/guardian signature is required on the release form. Seniors requiring transcripts for college applications should allow at least three weeks for them to be processed.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

Students must stay in school until age 18 unless he/she graduates from high school or his/her parent or guardian personally appears at the school and signs a withdrawal form consenting to his/her child's withdrawal from school.

## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

In an instant where a student is absent from school, homework should be completed and turned into the teacher within 48 hours after the student returns to the next scheduled class. If the assignment is posted on Google Classroom and the student has access to the appropriate materials, the homework is due the next scheduled class.

## **ATHLETICS**

The Coginchaug community is proud of its tradition of athletic excellence. Multiple levels of participation (Freshmen, JV, Varsity) exist within programs to meet the needs of our student athletes. Please visit CRHS website for more information.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

#### Academic Eligibility

- Student Athletes must meet the academic eligibility requirements of the CIAC.
- Student athletes must maintain an overall 1.666 GPA (C- average) each quarter.
- Students cannot fail two or more courses within a quarter or on their final school year grades.
- Fall Season eligibility will be based on the final grades earned during the previous school year and a quarter four GPA of 1.666 or above.
- Winter and Spring Season eligibility will be based on grades earned during the previous academic quarter.

#### Current Health Physical from a Physician – Submit to Nurses' Office

- Athletes must check with the school nurse to confirm that their physical is current. As a reminder, a sports physical form must have a physical dated within the last 13 months in order to be eligible to practice or play sports.
- Grade 10 Students – State law requires complete primary immunizations of our students. District #13 requires these immunizations in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and 10<sup>th</sup> grade. A physical and blue State of CT Department of Education – Health Assessment Record form must be completed for all grade 10 students before they can begin practicing or playing a sport.
- All "Sports Physical Forms" and "Blue Health Assessment Forms" can be found in the nurses' office, outside the athletic office or on the RSD#13 website under "Health Services." Please pick up these forms PRIOR to going to your scheduled physical appointment.

#### Family ID-Information needed to Register:

- Physician's name and contact information
- Dentist's name and contact information
- Persons to contact in case of an emergency
- Medication information if applicable

Registration Process – A parent/guardian should register by clicking on the link below. Both the parent/guardian and student –athlete will need to read and add electronic signatures to all required documents. <http://www.familyid.com/regional-school-district> 13

#### Student-Athlete Participation Forms

- Submit to Coach Prior to First Contest

Please note: The Athletic Office will review all paperwork and add the student-athlete to the team roster if they are cleared to practice and play. All forms can be found on the CRHS website under the Athletics webpage.

### **CIAC Eligibility Rules**

In order to represent your school, you must be a bona fide student and meet all CIAC eligibility requirements, including the school's academic requirements.

Student-athletes at all levels of play, e.g. freshman, junior varsity and varsity, must conform to all CIAC eligibility rules.

Eligibility for fall sports is determined by the number of credits received toward graduation at the close of the previous school year, not the fourth marking period grades. You must have received credit in at least four Carnegie units of work for which you did not previously receive credit to be eligible for fall sports participation. This may include credits earned during the summer. Thereafter, marking period grades, not semester grades, are used to determine eligibility. You must take and earn passing grades in at least four quarter Carnegie units and meet the academic requirements of your school to achieve eligibility. For additional information on academic eligibility, consult your athletic director or school principal. Also, see Appendix B in the CIAC Handbook for additional information on eligibility.

Scholastic failures may not be made up for eligibility purposes in any manner until the next report period grades are distributed. Scholastic incompletes must be made up within ten (10) school days following the date that student eligibility was determined for that marking period. Year-end failures may be made up through successful completion of local school system approved summer school courses in the courses failed.

First time ninth grade students will automatically be eligible for the first marking period.

You have eight consecutive semesters, or four consecutive years of eligibility from the date of initial entry into ninth grade. You may not participate in a specific school sport for more than four seasons in grades 9-12.

Student eligibility is determined on the date that report cards are distributed or on the fourteenth calendar day following the end of a marking period, whichever comes first.

You are responsible for knowing your school's eligibility policy, which may be different than the minimum policy established by the CIAC. Contact your athletic director or principal if you have questions on your school's eligibility policy.

#### Team Limitations:

The different nature and structure of sport teams often requires coaches to limit the number of athletes competing as part of an athletic team. Depending on the number of student-athletes that show an interest in joining the various sports teams, every coach may be forced, in any given year, to reduce the size of their

teams due to safety concerns, space limitations, and the availability of coaches. The athletic coach, hired by RSD#13, is the person responsible for selecting student-athletes to compete on a given athletic team. Final decisions will be at the discretion of the coach and Athletic Coordinator and within the CIAC rules.

- Transfer after Team Limitations or “Cuts”: A student-athlete may transfer to another sport with the consent of the coach(es) prior to that team’s first athletic contest.
- Coach’s Discretion: The head coach will determine whether or not a student-athlete can register for a particular sport after try-outs have been completed. (Prior to the team’s first athletic contest.)
- Transfers: Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the head coach and athletic coordinator for transfer students and students whose academic eligibility has been reinstated. Student behavior and academic standing will be taken into strong consideration.

The purpose of a JV team:

JV exists to provide those student-athletes unable to participate on the varsity squad an opportunity to develop skills and gain experience. While the student-athlete’s age, size or skill level may be the limiting factor in not making the varsity team participation on a JV team may enhance the student-athlete’s potential to develop skills and make the varsity squad in the future.

A caution, however, must also be given. Being a member of a JV teams does not guarantee that a student-athlete will automatically move to the varsity level the following year.

Striving to win is important in athletics; however, compiling a great record or winning a championship should not be the primary objective of a JV team. The development of student-athletes should be the ultimate purpose of a JV squad while at the same time acknowledging the value of winning, learning, and enjoying being a member of a team.

## **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

The National Honor Society is an organization whose main purpose is to create and promote enthusiasm for scholarship, leadership, character, and service in the students of Coginchaug Regional High School. The Coginchaug Chapter is governed by the Constitution of the National Honor Society of Secondary Schools as well as local bylaws. Any junior or senior who has been a student at Coginchaug for at least one semester and has maintained at least a 90 average (3.666) weighted will be eligible for candidacy. There is one selection period per school year, which begins after the close of the first marking period with the Induction Ceremony in the fall.

The procedure for selection is as follows:

- A. At the close of the appropriate marking period, the guidance department compiles a list of all eligible students who have the required cumulative grade point average.
- B. The advisor of NHS meets with students eligible for NHS membership to inform them of the steps involved, the membership selection procedure, and instruction regarding the completion of the application.
- C. The Faculty Council of the National Honor Society selects members to the honor society based upon review of the student application for membership.
- D. Once inducted, members must adhere to all standards of the society and must provide individual and group services to the school and community.

Non-Selection:



If a student is not selected for membership, the student and/or students' parents will receive written notification. A student not selected for membership has the opportunity to meet with an advisor to review specific reasons for non-selection. There are no appeals. A student not selected in their junior year, may re-apply as a senior.

**Dismissal:**

Members of the National Honor Society who fall below the standards which were the basis for their selection will be warned in writing by the advisor and will be given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency. In the case of a flagrant violation of school rules or civil laws a member does not necessarily have to be warned.

Members who have an unexcused absence from an NHS commitment will be given a written warning, requiring both student and parent signatures. Members who have a second unexcused absence will be dismissed. Absences from commitments can be excused only by the chapter's advisors.

In the case of impending dismissal, a member shall have the right to a hearing before the Faculty Council.

**SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The representative School Council is an active decision-making group in the school. The Council has authority over:

- Discussion of areas of student interest.
- Recommending changes in rules for student behavior (subject to approval by the school administration and/or the Board of Education).
- Official inter-school communications as the school's student government body.

The Council consists of twelve students (4 Seniors, 3 Juniors, 3 Sophomores, 2 Freshmen), and an advisor. Class Councils elect representatives from their membership. The Council meets bi-weekly.

**CLASS COUNCILS**

Each of the four classes at Coginchaug is represented by a class council. These councils plan social activities and fundraising events in addition to supplying representatives to the School Council. In order to serve on a Class Council a student must obtain 25 signatures of students in his/her class and maintain at least a C-average. Advisors to the Class Councils are:

Senior Class Advisor	Mrs. Germond
Junior Class Advisor	Mr. Donecker
Sophomore Class Advisor	Ms. Schilling & Ms. Alteri
Freshman Class Advisor	Open

**SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

The Coginchaug Counseling Department is committed to assisting students in all aspects of their high school experience. The counselors provide a four year program of planned group and individual meetings to assist each student and parent with orientation to Coginchaug, course selection, career and post high school planning, academic progress, and personal counseling.

The staff consists of:

Lynn Schofield – School Counselor

Leslie Stratton – School Counselor

Stacy DellaCamera – Psychologist

Kathy Bottini - Social Worker

Melissa Ronan – Secretary

Students will be assigned a counselor according to the student's last name. Students should check their class schedule and the counseling office for their assignment.

The counselors are here to assist students. They are trained, skilled, mental health counselors who will work individually and in-groups with students in need of assistance. Students experiencing any type of developmental or personal difficulty will find a willing listener in their counselor.

Students may see the guidance secretary to schedule an appointment with their counselor. They are also free to stop in the counseling office before school, between periods, during lunch, during free blocks or after school to contact their counselor.

Parents are encouraged to call 860-349-7221 between 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to speak to a counselor or to arrange an appointment. There are many evening programs for parents and students that are scheduled during the school year. The specific agendas for these evening programs and other pertinent information regarding the counseling department are publicized throughout the school year. Parents may also feel free to consult with counselors regarding any concerns about their child.

The counseling provided is usually short term in nature, and counselors can provide a list of available, qualified community resources for families in need of on-going services.

### **TEACHER EXTRA HELP**

X Block: There is a fifteen minute block of time Monday through Friday, built into our high school schedule, where students have the opportunity to eat breakfast in our cafeteria, meet with peers to complete projects, utilize our school's library and to meet with any of our teachers for extra help.

Student Centered Assistance: Each Monday we have a 50 minute block of time, built into our high school schedule, where students have the opportunity to meet with any of our teachers for extra help.

After School: Monday through Thursday of each week our teachers offer extra help sessions after school from 2:02 – 2:25. More intensive arrangements can be made with specific teachers to assist students if needed.

### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAM**

The Student Assistance Team consists of administrators, school counselors, the nurse, special education and regular education teachers, and the school psychologist and social worker. This team meets biweekly to review students who are experiencing difficulty in school and discuss options that may be of assistance to them. Students may refer themselves or may be referred by parents, teachers, or other students. Initial referrals to the SAT should be made through the student's school counselor.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Coginchaug provides services and programs to meet the particular educational needs of students whose disabilities have resulted in learning difficulties. Parents (or students over age 18) who are concerned about their student's progress in school should contact a counselor or administrator. "A Guide to Special Education in Connecticut for Parents and Students" will be mailed to parents to explain the Special Education processes. Placement in Special Education Services will begin only after an evaluation has been conducted to determine if a student has a disability and the extent of services needed has been assessed. A PPT (Planning and Placement Team) will determine if an evaluation is warranted, and then, once an evaluation is completed, if the services are appropriate.

There are many regulations regarding Special Education, so parents and students are advised to contact a school counselor and read the guide for helpful information.

### **ATTENDANCE & LOSS OF CREDIT**

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.

- Any absence before the student's tenth absence is considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate written documentation in accordance with this policy.
- For the student's tenth 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:
  - ❖ student illness (verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional);
  - ❖ religious holidays;
  - ❖ mandated court appearances (documentation required);
  - ❖ funeral or death in the family, or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
  - ❖ extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by the District administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance and this regulation;
  - ❖ lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends.

Written documentation from a parent/guardian will not excuse an absence after the first nine (9) days absent from class/school. Official and appropriate documentation, in accordance with this regulation, will be required to consider an absence excused after the first nine (9) days.

The determination of whether an absence is excused will be made by building administration. 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.

#### **Please Note:**

- Neither email nor text message shall serve to satisfy the requirement of written documentation.
- Regional School District 13 reserves the right to randomly audit written documentation received, through telephone and other methods of communication, to determine its authenticity.
- 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, building administration may grant up to a five (5) school day extension for provision of the completed documentation.

Those students who exceed established limits for certain types of absences from school or class will have credit withheld. If a student exceeds the established limits and loses credit toward graduation, only the credit will be withheld; the grades earned by the student will be recorded on his/her permanent record and incorporated into their grade point average. Parents and students will receive notification that credit is being withheld. When they receive this notification, they will have an opportunity to appeal the decision.

Students who exceed established limits for certain types of absences from school or class will have to complete the following to recover credit:

Quarter Class	Semester Class	Full Year Class	Number Of Online Course Units Needed To Recover Credit
X	X	Over 9 Days Absent	1 Unit
X	Over 9 Days Absent	Over 15 Days Absent	2 Units
Over 9 Days Absent	Over 15 Days Absent	Over 20 Days Absent	Credit Cannot Be Recovered

\* To recover credit, units are required to be completed within a semester \*

### **MONITOR THE NUMBER OF ABSENCES IN EACH CLASS**

Throughout the school year, it is the responsibility of the student and parent(s) to monitor closely the number of absences, which have been accumulated in each course.

When a student anticipates an absence from school or from a particular class for any reason, it is very important that the student and the parent consider carefully the necessity of the absence, taking into consideration the current number of accumulated absences and their potential impact on loss of credit in the course.

Cutting class can result in serious consequences and severe penalties because the school takes seriously its responsibility to care and account for students who are in school. This accountability is affected when a student is absent from or leaves the classroom without permission of the teacher. Students who become ill during the day should report to the school nurse or to the office if she is not available. They are not, under any circumstances, to leave school grounds or absent themselves from a class without administrative permission. All classes missed will be considered as cuts unless there has been approval for the missed classes. Truancy will count as cuts in all classes missed. The following policy will be in effect for class cuts:

- First cut: The classroom teacher will turn in a cut slip to the office to begin the credit withdrawal process; in addition, he/she will call home, and assign a one hour detention.
- Second cut: The classroom teacher will send notification to the office, and administration will assign a two hour detention. This will be grounds for credit withdrawal in a quarter or semester course. A formal letter will be sent to the parent (s) or guardian.

- Third and subsequent cuts: The classroom teacher will continue to send notification to the office. Credit withdrawal will occur, and an in school suspension will be assigned. A formal letter will be sent to the parent (s) or guardian.

Credit loss will occur upon the third cut in a full credit course or upon the second cut in a half or quarter credit course.

**TARDINESS TO CLASS**

All students are required to be in their classes on time unless they are detained by school personnel; in such cases, a pass shall be issued as an acceptable excuse for the tardiness. Students should be on time if they wish to help ensure credit for being present.

Three (3) unexcused tardies to class will constitute one (1) CUT. A student who arrives to class without a pass after the first ten minutes of the period will also be charged with a class CUT.

**TARDINESS TO SCHOOL/LATE ARRIVAL - NOT ATTENDING HOMEROOM**

All students are required to be in their respective homerooms prior to the first bell.

Tardies to School (Not in Homeroom Prior to 7:25)

Number of Unexcused Tardies Per Quarter	Consequence
2	Warning
3	Half Hour Detention
4	One Hour Detention
5	Two Hour Administrative Detention
Parking privileges will be suspended after five days of tardies to school each quarter	

Written documentation from a parent/guardian will not excuse a Tardiness to School/Late Arrival. Official and appropriate documentation, in accordance with this regulation, will be required to consider an absence excused.

**EARLY DISMISSAL**

All students are required to be in school from 7:25-2:02. Written documentation or a phone call from a parent/guardian will be required for an Early Dismissal.

**REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF STUDENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Request for release of a student during the school day originating outside the schools must be handled by the administration to ensure maximum provisions for the safety and welfare of the student.

Parents requesting dismissal before the normal end of the school day must make a written request, and/or come into the school office as prescribed by the parent/student handbook. All notes must be handed in prior to the end of X Block. Any notes or phone calls after such time may require additional documentation within 48 hours.

Early dismissal should be requested only in emergency or unusual situations. Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards issued quarterly. To be eligible to participate in an extracurricular activity, students are expected to attend school for at least four (4) hours that day. Only an administrator can grant exception.

## **TRUANCY**

Truant is defined as 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.

The Board of Education believes that regular school attendance is essential to the academic success of students. Furthermore, the Board of Education recognizes the importance of early intervention for students exhibiting truancy behavior. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board of Education to monitor school attendance so as to identify students who are truant or habitually truant, and to enlist the cooperation of parents and, when necessary, the juvenile justice system, in order to address the problem when it arises.

## **JOB SHADOWS/COLLEGE VISITS**

Each student is limited to three job shadows and three college visitations throughout the school year. The appropriate paperwork is required to be turned into building administration three days prior to the shadow or visit.

## **DANCES**

During the school year students will enjoy dances sponsored by classes or clubs. Proceeds go to the club or group arranging the event. Dance regulations are as follows:

- Tickets will be sold only to Coginchaug students. Only Coginchaug students will be allowed to attend school dances (excluding the prom).
- The time for a dance is 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. An exception may be made by the school administration if approved when the sponsoring group submits its application.
- Students will not be admitted after 8:00 p.m. or one hour after the start of the dance without prior permission from the advisor/administration.
- No student who was absent or on suspension the day of the dance or absent or suspended from school the day before a dance held on Saturday, will be admitted. Students must be in school for four hours the day of a dance or the day before a dance held on a Saturday or no-school day. Exceptions can only be approved by an administrator.
- Students are expected to stay in the school building or designated outside area adjacent to the building throughout an event. Any student who leaves the function will not be readmitted. Parents take note that students may leave a dance at any time at their discretion. Loitering in the parking lot or on school grounds, however, will not be permitted.
- Students must adhere to the dress requirements stipulated by the students and chaperones sponsoring the function.
- Drug or alcohol use before or during school functions is strictly prohibited.

A Coginchaug student who wishes to bring a guest to prom must fill out the appropriate paperwork found in the main office. Their guest must be approved by building administration prior to the prom. 8th graders may not attend the prom. High school graduates may not attend without prior approval. The Coginchaug student will be

held responsible for his/her guest's conduct. When the guest and student arrive at the function, the guest must be introduced to the advisor.

## **VISITORS**

Coginchaug Regional High School welcomes school-age visitors provided they meet the criteria listed below:

- The visitor must be currently enrolled in a high school.
- The request to visit must be made and approved by an administrator at least two days prior to the visit. For high school student visitors the request to visit must be made in writing by a parent or guardian of the Coginchaug student with whom the visitor will be staying.
- Approval by teachers of the classes to be attended and by school administration is required prior to the visit.
- No visitors will be allowed prior to holidays, vacations, and exam periods or in the month of June.
- All visitors must register in the main office as soon as they arrive in the building and wear a visitor's pass.

The administration reserves the right to deny any visitor request.

Parents considering moving into District #13 may request that their son or daughter visit by contacting the school counseling department.

## **WORKING PAPERS**

Students age sixteen or older may obtain working papers in the front office during school hours and until 3:30 p.m. State law requires a student to provide a promise of employment form (signed by the employer) and a birth certificate or driver's license in order to be issued working papers.

## **HEALTH CARE**

A registered nurse is available during the school day. Students who feel ill should report to the nurse's office. If the nurse believes a student is too ill to remain in school, a parent/guardian will be notified. The nurse's or administrator's permission is required to be dismissed for illness.

Medications: All medications must be transported to and from school by a parent/guardian and given to the nurse or building administration. A doctor's written order is required for school personnel to dispense medication, including over-the-counter medications like Tylenol and Advil or any topical preparations, or for a student to carry and self-administer a medication (such as an inhaler).

The Connecticut State Department of Education allows parents to choose not to have their students receive emergency administration of an EPI-Pen during an allergic reaction. Please inform the school nurse if you would like more information with regard to EPI-Pen use.

Section 10-206 of the Connecticut Education Laws stipulates that Boards of Education shall require each pupil enrolled in the public schools to have a health examination by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine or by the school medical advisor at least once in each three-year interval. All sophomores must have a complete physical examination, including Hematocrit or Hemoglobin, done by their own physician. This examination may be done anytime between June 1<sup>st</sup> of freshman year and the first day of school of junior year. Failure to do so will result in exclusion from school. Those who qualify on the basis of financial need may obtain the services of the Regional District #13 physician. Please contact the nurse for information.

Students participating in interscholastic sports must have an up-to-date physical examination on file in the Health Office. A student is eligible to practice and play interscholastic sports for 13 months from the date of his/her last examination. Students without an up-to-date physical on file with the school health office will not be eligible to practice or play with sports teams.

State mandated health screening for vision and scoliosis will be done for all freshmen during the school day. Vision, hearing and scoliosis testing will also be done for all students on a referral basis when necessary.

## **MASON LIBRARY**

The library is a learning environment, collaborative learning is encouraged. This means that students may quietly discuss schoolwork with other students. Students who need to discuss schoolwork have an obligation to insure that their discussion does not interfere with the needs of other students or library staff for a quiet place to study and work. Students who are not respectful of the need for a quiet environment will be asked to leave and may also be subject to disciplinary action.

### Library Procedures:

Students may go to the library during study hall only if they need to use library resources to complete an assignment. Passes must be obtained ahead of time from the subject area teacher for whom they are completing the assignment. Students must report to the study hall teacher who will initial the pass and mark the time. Afterwards, they may come to the library where they will sign-in on the yellow study hall sheet and leave their passes. Students coming from study will remain in the library for the time period their pass designates. The sign-in sheet is checked with the study hall to ensure that all who left study hall have arrived at the library. Phones must be turned in at the circulation desk in order to use the library during class time.

## **DISCIPLINE**

School discipline ensures the safety and security of the school community and promotes a productive educational environment. It must be based upon the acceptance of individual responsibility, mutual respect, fairness and consistency of process, and the belief that consequences for disciplinary infractions should be logical and natural. Each member of the school community has a responsibility to choose behavior that promotes the common good of all.

Students at Coginchaug Regional High School are expected to exhibit behavior that:

- respects all members of the school community
- reflects honesty and personal integrity
- enhances the learning process for all
- maintains a safe and orderly environment
- respects school and personal property
- observes school and district policies

## **CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, AND DISHONESTY**

Academic honesty and personal integrity are essential elements of the learning process and responsible citizenship. It involves respect for the work of others, responsibility for one's own work, and the honesty to conduct oneself and one's studies in a trustworthy and forthright manner. The forging of signatures on notes/passes or the unexcused use/possession of keys or other school resources will result in administrative referral and disciplinary action.



Because academic integrity is so important, it is essential that all members of the school community - students, faculty, and parents - understand and agree to honor the following definitions of and expectations regarding cheating and plagiarism.

Cheating is acting dishonestly in one's work by using, accepting, or giving unauthorized or inappropriate assistance. Examples of cheating include (but are not limited to):

1. The inappropriate giving or receiving of academic material.
2. The unauthorized use of notes or resources on a test (including notes, cheat sheets, textbooks, cell phones, calculators, PDAs, etc.).
3. The copying of another student's class work or homework.
4. Collaboration on work without the teacher's knowledge and consent.

Plagiarism is presenting another's words, ideas, or organization as one's own, without providing appropriate and accurate documentation. Examples of plagiarism in school include (but are not limited to):

1. Copying, including cutting and pasting from electronic sources, summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting from a source without providing appropriate and accurate documentation.
2. Using information gained from a conversation or interview without providing appropriate and accurate documentation.
3. Using the wording or organization of another (such as extensive revisions to a paper by a peer) without the teacher's knowledge and consent.
4. Using experimental data or hypotheses without appropriate and accurate documentation.

In order to keep the consequences and concept of cheating and plagiarism firmly in the minds of students, any teacher at his or her discretion, may require each student in his or her own handwriting to write and sign the following statement on any work: "I affirm that this work is free from plagiarism and/or cheating and is entirely my own product."

If a teacher determines that a student has cheated or plagiarized, the teacher will inform the student's parents, school counselor, and school administrators.

The first offense for cheating and/or plagiarism during a school year will result in administrative referral with appropriate administrative consequences. The teacher will inform the student's parent(s). The student will receive a zero for the assignment. The second offense in any school year for cheating and/or plagiarism will result in the student receiving a zero for the assignment, disciplinary consequences, and permanent loss of eligibility for induction into honor societies like: National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, etc. A third offense in any school year for cheating and/or plagiarism will result in the student receiving a zero for the assignment and further disciplinary consequences.

### **DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR**

Each of us has the right to secure an orderly environment. Behaviors that endanger the safety and well-being of others will not be tolerated. Examples of such actions range from possession of dangerous instruments or weapons or materials that cause injury, to throwing snowballs. Such behaviors will automatically result in administrative intervention and parental contact; in addition, they may include suspension, police involvement, and referral for expulsion.

### **DEMEANING & ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR**

We are all responsible for appropriate language and behavior. Foul or abusive language/gestures, intimidation, sexual harassment, harassment, hazing or threatening interfere with one's expectations for a

positive learning environment. Conduct of this nature will be addressed with consequences ranging from administrative intervention to suspension with possible police referral.

## **DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

Maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning is essential to our mutual objectives; behavior that disrupts this environment will not be permitted. Such things as shouting, running or "horseplay" in the halls, offensive language, inappropriate or excessive display of affection, panhandling, or inappropriate pictures, undermine a positive school atmosphere. Consequences of these behaviors will range from adult intervention to administrative action.

## **DISTRACTING & INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS & MATERIALS**

The focus of our school day is primarily academic. Materials or behaviors that distract from the educational environment are not permitted during the school day. Distracting behaviors are, likewise, prohibited. These include but are not limited to; card playing, gambling, inappropriate clothing, inappropriate pictures, locker decorations, the use of "toys" within the building, and the possession of non-alcoholic beer or wine. In addition, the unauthorized sale of food, candy, soda, etc. is not permitted. Such behaviors will result in disciplinary intervention and confiscation of materials. A parental conference may be requested before materials are returned at the discretion of the administration.

## **FIGHTING**

Reasonable behavior dictates respectful interaction. It is the student's responsibility to do whatever he/she can to avoid confrontation and defuse potential problems. This should include walking away from confrontational situations and informing school authorities. Fighting or aggressive "hands on" behavior is not acceptable and will result in a suspension from school. The number of days of the suspension will depend upon the individual situation. In addition, behaviors that increase rather than resolve conflict will be addressed with administrative intervention.

## **ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR**

Students choosing to engage or participate in illegal behavior will be subject to suspension and/or expulsion. All illegal behaviors will be reported to police, e. g., possession/use of alcohol or drugs on school property or at any school sponsored event, possession or transmission of any firearm, knife, explosive, deadly weapon, martial arts weapon, or dangerous instrument, initiating or aiding in a bomb threat or false alarm, theft, vandalism, and assault and battery. To ensure a safe learning environment students who are aware of classmates engaging in illegal behavior have a responsibility to report this to the school. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary consequences.

## **INSUBORDINATION**

The school, as a community, is based on a hierarchy of authority which must be followed. Respect and consideration for this authority are essential. Open defiance of a staff member, including verbal abuse, failure to comply with a request to go to the office, or giving a wrong name when asked, is not acceptable and will result in administrative action.

## **REMOVAL FROM CLASS/ACTIVITIES**

Pursuant to state laws and BOE policy, when deemed necessary by staff, students may be asked to leave class/or school sponsored activity. Reasons may vary for such removal. Disciplinary sanctions may or may not follow.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES of STUDENTS at SCHOOL APPROVED ACTIVITIES**

Our behavior should reflect a sense of pride and school spirit. Any student who attends a school approved activity on or off school property (e. g., field trips, dances, athletic contests, etc.) outside the normal school day, is governed by all school regulations. Students who do not follow regulations are subject to appropriate disciplinary action even when they are not on school property.

## **SMOKING/VAPING**

Per district policy 5131.7 Smoking: There will be no smoking/vaping permitted within the confines of any of the schools or buildings in the District. Possession of all smoking/vaping materials by students is banned from all school buildings, functions and grounds. Smoking/vaping is not permitted in the proximity of the school buildings at any time. Any student who is in possession of a tobacco product or smoking/vaping paraphernalia will have those items confiscated.

- First Offense: 2 hour detention with a smoking/vaping research component
- Second Offense: Two 2 hour detentions with a smoking/vaping research component
- Third Offense: One day of in-school suspension
- Fourth Offense: One day of out-of-school suspension

Students who do not smoke/vape are forewarned to exit any lavatory or other area immediately if they see smoke or electronic cigarettes in evidence. They are expected to alert the nearest teacher or administrator. Students who do not exit such situations will receive disciplinary consequences for complicit behavior.

## **THREATS/VIOLENCE**

As a school community, all members are responsible for their words as well as their actions. Any student who states or implies a threat of injury to a person or property, either verbally or physically, is subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **VANDALISM**

Students vandalizing school property will be subject to suspension or expulsion and possible police intervention. In all instances, the student(s) involved will be held responsible for the cost of damages and/or the clean-up and repair of damages.

## **DISCIPLINE SANCTIONS**

While the school expects that most students will make appropriate choices regarding their behavior, our philosophy dictates that inappropriate behaviors will be met with appropriate consequences. The school uses a variety of strategies to promote changes in behavior. To encourage acceptable behavior, the following sanctions will be administered when necessary:

### **30 MINUTE DETENTIONS/ONE HOUR DETENTIONS**

Teachers or administrators may require a student to stay after school for failure to complete work or for disciplinary reasons. Students who cannot stay after school will have their parents contact the person who issued the detention and agree on an appropriate compromise. Students are expected to work quietly on appropriate assignments or homework. Detention is typically from 2:02pm until 2:32pm. A one hour detention is typically from 2:02pm until 3:02pm (Detention times are set at the discretion of the classroom teacher). The student will be given a 24-hour courtesy notice in writing. The student is responsible for presenting this notice to his/her parent or guardian. If the student does not return the courtesy notice signed by either a parent or guardian, he/she will be directed to remain after school or will face further disciplinary action.

Failure to attend an assigned detention for inappropriate behavior will result in a one hour detention.

Failure to attend an assigned one hour detention for inappropriate behavior will result in an administrative two hour detention session.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE TWO HOUR DETENTION**

Administrative detention is assigned to students who traditional disciplinary actions are not effective.

Administrative detention is two hours in length and is held directly after school from 2:02pm to 4:02pm. When an administrative detention is assigned, teachers are informed and they provide work, if any, for the student.

Failure to attend an assigned administrative detention session for inappropriate behavior will result in an additional administrative detention session.

Failure to attend a reassigned administrative detention session for inappropriate behavior will result in in-school suspension.

### **ACTIONS TO UNDO THE HARM.**

Depending on the nature and severity of an infraction, students may be required to perform a service (such as cleaning an area, repairing damage, etc....) to undo the harm caused by the misbehavior.

### **IN-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION.**

The administration may deny students access to class or school if they are (1) disruptive to the normal educational process, (2) posing a danger to themselves or others, or (3) in violation of school rules. The student suspended is expected to do assignments provided and will receive credit for such work when it is turned in. In determining the length of a suspension period, the administrator may consider evidence of past disciplinary problems. A parent conference if requested by the building administration must precede the student's return to school following a suspension.

Students will not be allowed to participate in after school activities (including athletic events, music events and dances) the day of and the day following an in-school and out-of-school suspension.

### **EXPULSION PROCEDURE**

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, the Board of Education may expel any student whose conduct endangers persons or property, seriously disrupts the educational process or violates publicized Board policy.

### **REFERRAL TO POLICE**

The school is not a sanctuary from the law. Any violation of a law may be referred to local or state police by the administration. Automotive violations are included.

The entrance point on this continuum will vary depending on the nature of the infraction. Anywhere along this continuum, as appropriate, the school will confer with the student, the student's parents and concerned teachers and counselors in an effort to change unacceptable behavior. To the degree possible, these strategies will include "natural consequences," such as losing an abused privilege or making amends for damages.

Ultimately, the only person who can correct a student's behavior is the student. The school will support behavioral contracts or other sincere self-correction efforts of those students who show a commitment to addressing behavioral difficulties. However, the school will not tolerate continued or habitual violations.

Records will be kept of infractions, and repeated or cumulative infractions, regardless of their nature, will result in an escalation of consequences. No student will be permitted to continue disruptive behaviors that erode the quality of a peer's education.

## **DRESS**

Student dress must conform to minimum health, safety and welfare standards. Please understand, we are not making judgments about style or people's taste in clothes. We are simply making a judgment about what we believe is appropriate dress for a school setting. (See BOE Policy 5132 Dress and Grooming)

The following are prohibited:

- Bare midriffs
- Girls-completely bare shoulders/spaghetti straps, halter tops or tank tops less than an inch wide. Boys-tank tops
- Articles having indecent or inflammatory writing, pictures, slogans, or displaying alcohol or other illegal substances (i.e. gang or sexually oriented signs/symbols).
- An article of clothing that could cause damage to other students or property (chains, belts, cleats, studded accessories, belts, wristbands, etc.) or clothing associated with gang activity.
- Clothing that is torn, ragged, or that has holes.
- Bare feet.
- Short shorts/skirts—per administration's discretion.
- Clothing or accessories that symbolize membership in a group which could be construed as disruptive to the educational process.
- An article of clothing that covers any part of the face or head, including hats, bandanas, and all other types of head coverings. ALL HATS MUST BE KEPT IN LOCKERS OR BACKPACKS AND CANNOT BE CARRIED AROUND BY STUDENTS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.
- All non prescription eyewear.
- Underclothing worn as outerwear.
- See-through clothing.
- Pajama bottoms and tops.
- Slippers
- Garments designed to be worn out-of doors.
- Shirts with cutoff sleeves
- Footwear which marks/damage floors or is a safety hazard.
- Exposed undergarments
- All pants to be worn at waist level or above

## **ADMINISTRATION SHALL DETERMINE SPECIFICS ON ATTIRE**

Students who are not dressed appropriately will be asked to put something else on that meets the requirements of our dress code. If they have nothing else to wear in school, the nurse will call the parents to bring in another outfit and the student will sit in a designated office area until appropriate clothing is available.

## **SECURITY CAMERAS**

Security cameras are located in public areas throughout our building to record activity that is in view, and to ensure the safety and well-being of our students and staff. School administrators and security personnel have access to this recorded information.

## **CELL PHONES**

The use of cell phones in the classroom setting is strictly prohibited. Cell phones must be placed in backpacks or in teacher storage bins during class periods. If a student is found to be in possession of a cell phone during class time, they will be required to surrender the electronic device to the teacher for the remainder of the day. Failure to comply with the teacher request will result in an office referral for insubordination and administration being called to confiscate the cell phone.

Students may use their cell phones during study hall, lunch and in the hallways between class time.

If a student chooses to bring an electronic device to school the school district will not be responsible for loss or theft of such an item.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Teacher sanctioned photos may be taken throughout the school day, or at any school function, and may be used for yearbook, the school newspaper, parent bulletins, the school website and in the classroom. To opt out of the publication of or dissemination of your child's photo, submit a written request to the principal by the first quarter progress report.

## **VIDEO RECORDING**

Video recording in school without specific faculty permission is prohibited and could lead to disciplinary action where warranted.

## **HATS**

Hats are not to be worn in the school building. Hats must be stored in student lockers or backpacks and cannot be carried around by students during the school day. Hats will be confiscated from students if they are not stored in lockers or backpacks during school hours.

## **FOOD AND BEVERAGES**

The unauthorized sale of food, candy, soda, etc. is not permitted.

Drinks: Energy drinks are discouraged on school property. Students can carry drinks with screw caps such as water bottles, but they must be kept in bags during class periods.

Any and all drinks brought into the school in the morning (coffee, soda, juice) must be thrown away before the end of the homeroom period.

Outside delivery of food is not permitted.

## **STUDENT LOCKERS**

Lockers are provided to students by Regional School District #13 for the purpose of storage of books, school related equipment and personal belongings. Students are expected to keep their lockers locked and in good orderly condition. For the security of the students' possessions, each locker has a unique combination. The lockers remain at all times the property of District 13, and it reserves the right to inspect student lockers at any time. Should District #13 have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student has violated or may be violating a law or school rule, an individualized search of the student's locker may be conducted in a manner reasonably related to the nature of the infraction. In addition, the administration reserves the right to inspect lockers on a regular basis without notification. All students will be assigned lockers in September. Students must sign an agreement that they are accepting responsibility for their lockers and for maintaining them in the same condition as received. Students are responsible for the condition of the locker assigned to them and the

cleanliness of the contents. The cost of repair or repainting locker damage caused by writing on painted surfaces, affixing non-removable stickers, or bending or otherwise damaging metal parts will be charged to the student.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY AND LOCKERS**

Students should not bring valuable personal property or large sums of money to school. Lockers are provided for the storage of books and coats during the school day. The lockers are school property and may be opened by the administration at anytime. This also includes emergencies or when there exists reasonable suspicion for a search of the contents, consistent with board policy. The security of items brought to school cannot be guaranteed. If students need to bring valuable property to school, they must make storage arrangements with a school administrator in advance. The school is not liable for items unlawfully removed from student lockers or other areas of the school.

### **SEARCH of PROPERTY & STUDENTS**

Students are entitled to the guarantees of the fourth amendment, and they are subject to reasonable searches and seizures. School officials are empowered to conduct reasonable searches of a particular student and school property when there is a reasonable cause to believe that the student may be in possession of drugs, weapons, alcohol and other materials in violation of school policy or state law. School property shall remain under the control of school officials and shall be subject to search. The search of property, including automobiles, could involve the use of a police dog.

Students will be provided notice of the Policy concerning search and seizure by having it placed in the student handbook.

Throughout the school year, visits will be scheduled by building administration with the State Police. During these visits, the State Police specially trained dogs will be utilized to detect illicit drug odors and residual odors to deter students from bringing illegal substances to school. These visits will not be announced to the parents or students.

During the campus search, the school will go into lockdown and students will not be allowed to leave their classrooms. The dogs will sniff the air around student belongings, lockers, classrooms, storage areas, restrooms and cars parked on school grounds for potential contraband items. A building administrator will be present while the State Police conduct their search. If illegal substances are discovered, the appropriate action will be taken by building administration, per board of education policy, and by the State Police, per the law.

### **LOST, DAMAGED, OR STOLEN SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Necessary books and materials are furnished by the school to each student for every course. If these books or materials are lost, stolen, or damaged in a manner to prevent reissuance, the student will be charged the replacement cost.

Repair or replacement costs will be charged for damaged books and materials. All financial obligations must be met before grade reports or transcripts will be furnished.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Items remaining in the lost and found will be donated periodically throughout the year. Ample notice will be given to the students prior to this donation.

## **PASSES**

Students are not to be in the corridors, stairwells, foyers, lavatories, etc. during study hall or class without an authorized pass. Students must have a pass from the study hall teacher or the appropriate classroom teacher to go to the Nurse's Office, Main Office, Library or the School Counseling Office.

Although use of student lavatories is permissible during class time, abuses of lavatory privileges may result in the individual suspension of lavatory passes. Students must have a pass from the study hall teacher or the appropriate classroom teacher to use the lavatory.

The privilege of requesting a pass can be revoked if the student is disruptive, misuses the pass, cuts class or breaks other school rules. An escorted pass can be assigned due to the abuse of the pass system.

During the last 10 minutes of the school day, passes will only be distributed for situations in which the teacher feels necessary. Students will not be granted permission to utilize the lavatory or nurses office unless authorized by the teacher.

## **PHONE CALLS**

The front office phone is for use by students only in emergency situations. The office staff will relay messages to students only in emergency situations when verified by the administration.

## **STUDY HALLS**

All study halls will take place in the cafeteria. Attendance will be taken. Students wishing to leave the cafeteria and see a teacher or utilize the library will need an appropriate pass.

## **LUNCH PERIOD**

During lunch periods, students are to remain in the cafeteria or in the outdoor courtyard area. Students are responsible for disposal of all litter. Food must remain in these areas. Students are expected to leave their tables' clean, dispose of all litter, and return their trays. Throwing food is considered a serious offense.

## **SENIOR PRIVILEGE**

### **EARLY DISMISSAL PRIVILEGE**

Seniors are provided the privilege to leave school the last period of the day if they have an unstructured study hall. Students must report and sign out in the main office before they leave. This privilege will be revoked temporarily or permanently for the following reasons:

- If a student is tardy to school they will lose the privilege to leave early that school day.
- If a student has a grade less than 70 in anyone subject area on their report card, they will lose the privilege to leave early until the grade is improved as documented on the following report card.
- If a student has a detention or ISS they will lose the privilege to leave early that school day.
- If a student does not follow the procedure and rules for Senior Early Dismissal, they will lose the privilege to leave early for a time determined by building administration.

### **LATE ARRIVAL PRIVILEGE**



Seniors are provided the privilege to arrive late to school if they have an unstructured study hall. Students must report and sign in the main office before the end of X Block. This privilege will be revoked temporarily or permanently for the following reasons:

- If a student has a grade less than 70 in anyone subject area on their report card, they will lose the privilege to arrive late until the grade is improved as documented on the following report card.
- If a student has a detention or ISS they will lose the privilege to arrive early that school day.
- If a student does not follow the procedure and rules for Senior Late Arrival, they will lose the privilege to arrive late for a time determined by building administration.

A permission form must be completed and turned into the main office for administrative approval each quarter to receive senior privileges.

Upon arrival and departure to and from school, all seniors must sign in and out in the main office.

Privileges will be suspended or revoked if seniors accumulate excessive tardies to school.

### **LEAVING THE BUILDING OR SCHOOL GROUNDS**

If a student becomes ill at school, he/she should be sent to the nurse. The nurse will assess and determine if the student should be dismissed from school. If the nurse feels dismissal is necessary, she will contact the appropriate person. Under no circumstances should the student be dismissed for illness by any other means than the above mentioned. Failure to follow the proper procedure will be considered an unexcused absence, cut, or truancy. No student will be allowed back into the building after leaving the school without permission. If a student leaves school grounds their parents will be notified. ISS will be assigned for leaving without permission the following school day or parking privileges will be revoked.

## **TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION**

### **BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS/SCOOTERS**

Bicycles, skateboards, and scooters are an acceptable means of transportation. With safety in mind, students must observe all rules of the road. Riding bicycles, skateboards, or scooters (other than to and from school) is strictly prohibited on school grounds.

Please remember - State Law requires children 15 years of age and younger to wear an approved helmet.

### **BUS CODE**

If a child is unruly on the bus and refuses to obey the driver, such child shall be taken to his destination and the school administration shall be advised. The first offense will result in a warning to the child's parent from school administration. The next offense will result in suspension from the bus for a period not to exceed one week. A third offense may result in suspension from the school bus for the remainder of the school year. The student or parent is then responsible for their transportation to and from school.

If any child misbehaves so as to endanger the safety of the other passengers, he/she may be put off immediately for an indefinite period. Action taken by the administration is at the request of the bus driver.

Every bus student must remain on the bus in the morning until it reaches Cuginchaug Regional High School. Getting off at any other place is forbidden. The same applies in the afternoon. Cuginchaug Regional High School students board the bus at Cuginchaug and get off at their stop.

## **BUS CONDUCT**

These rules of conduct are established to ensure student safety and are for the benefit of each individual student. Students are encouraged to comply with these Rules of Conduct which contribute significantly to safety and the efficient operation of our transportation system. These rules apply at bus stops, loading zones, while riding the bus to or from school, and during school related activities.

Please be advised that electronic monitoring devices may be present on school buses.

### **RULES OF CONDUCT:**

- Ride the bus to which assigned and will normally enter and exit only at their regular bus stop. (Students desiring to exit at other than their regular bus stop must present written permission from their parent or legal guardian which must be signed by a school administrator)
- Board the bus in an orderly manner without pushing or crowding of other students.
- Identify themselves when requested to do so by the bus driver.
- Refrain from boisterous conduct, fighting, or throwing on any object.
- Keep all portions of the body inside the bus at all times.
- Do not consume food or beverages or chew gum while on the bus.
- Remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion. (Seating assignments may be made at the discretion of the bus driver or school administrator)
- Do not use profane or abusive language or gestures.
- Do not smoke or possess lighting devices.
- Do not tamper with bus controls, radios, doors, or emergency exits.
- Do not exhibit a public show of affection for another student.
- Be expected to cause no property damage nor leave trash at any bus stop.
- Arrive at their bus stop five (5) minutes before the bus arrives.
- Do not write on seats or walls of the bus or intentionally damage or deface the bus.
- Exit through the front door only, unless otherwise directed by the bus driver.
- Not bring glass containers, live animals, balloon bouquets, or skateboards/bicycles. On the bus at any time.

Students will be advised that they may be suspended from transportation services and subject to further disciplinary action for violation of Rules of Conduct.

### **VEHICLES & PARKING PRIVILEGES**

Transportation to school is available on district buses; therefore, driving to and from school is a privilege, not a right. Students who wish to park on school property must register their vehicle with the front office as soon as they begin driving to school and pay a \$50 parking permit fee payable to "Regional District 13 General Fund" – this fee will not be prorated regardless of the time of year when a permit is issued. Additionally, students must return a parking agreement form signed by him or herself and a parent/guardian. Parking permits will not be sold to any student with outstanding obligations to the school (e.g. missing textbooks, financial obligations, etc). Parking permits must be visibly displayed in the front windshield at all times and lost permits will be subject to a \$5 replacement fee.

The following constitute unsafe operation and may result in temporary or permanent loss of driving privileges:

- Exceeding posted speed.
- Failing to stop or yield, as required.
- Failing to yield to school buses in all situations.

- Transporting students in any vehicle except in seats provided. This includes a prohibition on students riding on hoods, tailgates, in the backs of trucks, or hanging out windows.
- Driving or parking in any non-designated areas, such as sidewalks, grassy areas, or athletic fields.
- Reckless driving.
- Parking in any location except designated parallel spaces. Students are not to park on any public road (e.g., Guire Road, Maiden Lane, Pickett Lane) to avoid parking on campus
- Leaving school without permission.
- Failing to display a parking permit.
- Parking in areas designated for faculty, staff and visitors only.
- Not parking in assigned parking spots.

Any student reported for any of the above infractions may lose driving privileges for up to thirty (30) days from the date of notification. Other disciplinary action may also be involved. Parents will be notified. Any second report may result in loss of privileges for the remainder of the school. Parking permit fee will not be refunded for suspended privileges.

Drivers who are not Coginchaug students and violate the above will be reported to the State Police, with the district filing charges against the violators. Any unauthorized vehicle on school grounds may be towed at the owner's expense. A vehicle without a properly displayed permit will be considered unauthorized. The student will be given a warning the first time. Subsequent failure to register may result in disciplinary consequences, a fine and/or towing.

Parking privileges will be suspended after five days of tardies to school each quarter.

### **STUDENT DROP-OFF**

The student parking lot is south of the gym. The turn-around by the cafeteria is the only acceptable access road for those being dropped off or picked up. The faculty parking area is off limits for both student parking and drop-off/pick-up purposes.

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES**

### **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 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.
- A. 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.
- B. Martial Arts Weapon** means a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or Chinese star.
- C. 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.
- D. School Days** shall mean days when school is in session for students.
- E. School-Sponsored Activity** means any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board and includes activities conducted on or off school property.
- F. 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.
- G. 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.
- H. 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 devise 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.

- I. 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.
- A. In-school suspension may not be imposed on a student without an informal hearing by the building principal or designee.
- B. 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.
- C. 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.
- D. 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 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 school. Discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assist 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, (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, photo electronic or photo-optical system;
- C. **"Hostile environment"** means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to 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. 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 systems. 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 – Regulation 5142**

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

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 systems, 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:
  - b. Full name of the student, age, and grade level;
  - c. Name of parent(s);
  - d. Address and relevant contact information for parent/complainant;
  - e. Date of complaint;
  - f. Specific areas of disagreement relating to the student's identification, evaluation or placement; and
  - g. 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:*

Scott Rosignol, Director of Student Services and Special Education

### 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** **Student Sexual Harassment 5150**

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

## **Student Sexual Harassment 5150**

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

Grievance Form  
Title VI, IX and Section 504

Name:

Employee:                      Student

School:

Statement of Complaint:

Solution Suggested by Complainant:

Signature of 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.

Signature

Date

### **Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Institutions**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g, et seq., affords parents and eligible students (*i.e.*, students over 18, emancipated minors, and those attending post-secondary educational institutions) certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) calendar days of the day the District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parents or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parents or eligible student believe are inaccurate or misleading, or otherwise violate the student's privacy rights. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the District to amend a record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record the parents or eligible student want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parents or eligible student, the District will notify the parents or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to privacy of personally identifiable information in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to a school official with legitimate interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Education; a person or company with whom the District has outsourced services or functions it would otherwise use its own employees to perform (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school

official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses a student's education record without consent to officials of another school, including other public schools, charter schools, and post-secondary institutions, in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the agency that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W. Washington, DC20202-4605

### **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:*

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

### 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

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Last Modified: 02/05/2015

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 a 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 bonfide 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.

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.

**Directory Information**

The District may disclose any of the items listed as "DIRECTORY INFORMATION" without prior written consent, unless notified in writing by parent/guardian to the contrary.

Directory Information includes information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the parent's name, address and/or e-mail address, the student's name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, photographic, computer and/or video images, date and place of birth, major field(s) of study, grade level, enrollment status (full-time; part-time), participation in school-sponsored activities or athletics, weight and height (if the student is a member of an athletic team), dates of attendance, degrees, honors and awards received, the most recent previous school(s) attended and student identification numbers for the limited purposes of displaying a student identification card. The student identification number, however, will not be the only identifier used when obtaining access to educational records or data. Directory information does not include a student's social security number, student identification number or other unique personal identifier used by the student for purposes of accessing or communicating in electronic systems unless the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN or password.

The school district may disclose directory information about students after they are no longer in enrollment in the school district. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the district will continue to honor any valid objection to the disclosure of directory information made while a student was in attendance unless the student rescinds the objection.

An objection to the disclosure of directory information shall not prevent the school district from disclosing or requiring a student to disclose the student's name, identified or institutional email address in a class in which the student is enrolled. Parents and/or eligible students may not use the right to opt out of directory information disclosures to prohibit the school district from requiring students to wear or display a student identification card.

The written objection to the disclosure of directory information shall be good for only one school year. School districts are legally obligated to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, upon request, with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of secondary school students, unless the secondary student or the parent of the student objects to such disclosure in writing. Such objection shall be in writing and shall be effective for one school year. In all other circumstances, information designated as directory information will not be released when requested by a third party unless the release of such information is determined by the administration to be in the educational interest of the school district and is consistent with the district's obligations under both state and federal law. *December 2018*