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It is the policy of the Meriden Board of Education (the "Board") to create a school environment that promotes respect of self, others, and property within the Meriden Public Schools (the "District"). Compliance with this policy will enhance the Board and the District's ability to maintain discipline and reduce interference with the educational process that can result from student misconduct. Pursuant to this policy, the District shall promote the utilization of consistent discipline practices, both within and across schools in the District, while also promoting the consideration of individual circumstances arising in each student disciplinary matter.

Where appropriate, the District utilizes strategies that teach, encourage, and reinforce positive student behavior. Such strategies include, but are not limited to, using evidence and research-based interventions, including restorative practices, and may be implemented with or without imposing discipline, as appropriate. In addition to implementing this Student Discipline policy, the District shall address student behavior in accordance with the Board's School Climate Policy, Restorative Practices Response Policy, and any school rules, student handbook, and/or code of conduct provisions regarding the same.

I. Definitions

A. **Bullying** means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

B. **Cannabis** means marijuana, as defined by Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-240.

C. **Challenging Behavior** means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.

D. **Dangerous Instrument** means any instrument, article or substance which, 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.

E. **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 (e.g., spring v. CO2 cartridge) and potential for serious bodily harm or death.

F. **Electronic Defense Weapon** means a weapon which 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.

G. **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.

H. **Exclusion** means any denial of public school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.

I. **Expulsion** means the exclusion of a student from school privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days and shall be deemed to include, but not be limited to, exclusion from the school to which such student was assigned at the time such disciplinary action was taken. The expulsion period may not extend beyond one (1) calendar year.

J. **Firearm**, as defined in 18 U.S.C § 921, means (a) any weapon (including a starter gun) 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 which the Attorney General finds is generally recognized as 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 and 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.

K. **Generative Artificial Intelligence ("AI")** refers to a technology system, including but not limited to ChatGPT,capable of learning patterns and relationships from data, enabling it to create content, including but not limited to text, images, audio, or video, when prompted by a user.

L. **Protected Class Harassment** is a form of discrimination on the basis of any protected characteristic (or protected class) including race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status, status as a victim of domestic violence, status as a victim of sexual assault or status as a victim of trafficking in persons, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law ("Protected Class"). Harassment constitutes unlawful discrimination when it creates a hostile environment, which occurs when the harassment is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment against any individual on the basis of that individual's association with someone in a Protected Class may be a form of Protected Class harassment.

M. **In-School Suspension** means an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than five (5) 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.

N. **Martial Arts Weapon** means a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or chinese star.

O. **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.

P. **School Days** shall mean days when school is in session for students.

Q. **School-Sponsored Activity** means any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board and includes activities conducted on or off school property.

R. **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.

S. **Suspension** means the exclusion of a student from school and/or transportation services only, 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.

T. **Synthetically created image** means any photograph, film, videotape or other image of a person that (A) is (i) not wholly recorded by a camera, or (ii) either partially or wholly generated by a computer system, and (B) depicts, and is virtually indistinguishable from what a reasonable person would believe is the actual depiction of, an identifiable person.

U. **Weapon** means any BB gun, any blackjack, any metal or brass knuckles, any police baton or nightstick, any dirk knife or switch knife, any knife having an automatic spring release device by which a blade is released from the handle, having a blade of over one and one-half inches in length, any stiletto, any knife the edged portion of the blade of which is four inches and over in length, any martial arts weapon or electronic defense weapon, or any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument, unless permitted by law under Section 29-38 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

V. 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.

W. For purposes of this policy, references to "school", "school grounds" and "classroom" shall include physical educational environments, including on school transportation, as well as environments in which students are engaged in remote learning, which means instruction by means of one or more Internet-based software platforms as part of a remote learning model.

II. Scope of the Student Discipline Policy

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

1. Suspension. Students may be **suspended** for conduct on school grounds, on school transportation, or at any school-sponsored activity that **violates a publicized policy of the Board or is seriously disruptive of the educational process or endangers persons or property.**
2. Expulsion. Students may be **expelled** for conduct on school grounds, on school transportation, or at any school-sponsored activity that either **(1)violates a publicized policy of the Board and is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or (2) endangers persons or property**.

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

Discipline. Students may be disciplined, including suspension and/or expulsion, for conduct off school grounds if such conduct **violates a publicized policy of the Board and is seriously disruptive of the educational process**.

C. ***Seriously Disruptive of the Educational Process:***

In making a determination as to whether off campus conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and the Board may consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to, the following factors: (1) **whether the incident occurred within closeproximity 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 29-38 of the Connecticut General Statutes, and **whether any injuries occurred**; and (4) **whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol**. The Administration and/or the Board may also consider (5) **whether the off-campus conduct involved the illegal use of drugs**.

D. ***Misconduct Involving Cannabis:***

A student shall not have greater discipline, punishment, or sanction for the use, sale, or possession of cannabis on school property than a student would face for the use, sale, or possession of alcohol on school property, except as otherwise required by applicable law.

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

Conduct that is considered to violate a publicized policy of the Board includes the offenses described below. Any such conduct may lead to disciplinary action (including, but not limited to, removal from class, suspension and/or expulsion in accordance with this policy):

1. Striking or assaulting a student, member of the school staff or other person(s).
2. Theft.
3. The use of obscene or profane language or gestures.
4. The possession, display and/or dissemination of obscenity or pornographic images or the unauthorized or inappropriate possession, display and/or dissemination of images, pictures or photographs depicting nudity, including intimate synthetically created images.
5. Violation of smoking, dress, transportation regulations, or other regulations and/or policies governing student conduct.
6. Refusal to obey a member of the school staff, law enforcement authorities, or school volunteers, or disruptive classroom behavior.
7. The use of one or more of the following: objectively offensive racial, ethnic, or religious epithets (or epithets commonly associated with any Protected Class membership, including but not limited to epithets relating to sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity or expression); other words or phrases commonly considered demeaning or degrading on the basis of Protected Class membership; display of images or symbols commonly associated with discrimination against individuals on the basis of their membership in a Protected Class; graphic, written or electronic communications that are harmful, or humiliating based on Protected Class membership; bigoted conduct or communications; and/or physical, written, electronic or verbal threats based on Protected Class membership.
8. Any act of Protected Class Harassment or reprisal or retaliation against any individual for reporting in good faith incidents of Protected Class Harassment, or who participate in the investigation of such reports.
9. Refusal by a student to respond to a staff member's request for the student to provide the student's name to a staff member when asked, misidentification of oneself to such person(s), lying to school staff members or otherwise engaging in dishonest behavior.
10. Inappropriate displays of public affection of a sexual nature and/or sexual activity on school grounds, on school transportation, or at a school-sponsored activity.
11. A walk-out from or sit-in within a classroom or school building or school grounds.
12. 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), including the use of AI to engage in such conduct.
13. Possession and/or use 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.
14. Possession of any ammunition for any weapon described above in Paragraph 13.
15. Unauthorized entrance into any school facility or portion of a school facility or aiding or abetting an unauthorized entrance.
16. 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.
17. Possession, sale, distribution, use, or consumption of tobacco, electronic nicotine delivery systems (e.g., e-cigarettes), electronic cannabis delivery system, or vapor products, or the unlawful possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption of drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages (or any facsimile of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages, or any item represented to be tobacco, drugs or alcoholic beverages), including being under the influence of any such substances or aiding in the procurement of any such substances. For the purposes of this Paragraph 17, the term "electronic nicotine delivery system" shall mean an electronic device used in the delivery of nicotine or other substances to a person inhaling from the device, and includes, but is not limited to, an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe or electronic hookah and any related device and any cartridge or other component of such device, including, but not limited to, electronic cigarette liquid. For purposes of Paragraph 17, the term "electronic cannabis delivery system" shall mean an electronic device that may be used to simulate smoking in the delivery of cannabis to a person inhaling the device and includes, but is not limited to, a vaporizer, electronic pipe, electronic hookah and any related device and any cartridge or other component of such device. For the purposes of Paragraph 17, the term "vapor product" shall mean any product that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit or other electronic, chemical or mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, to produce a vapor that may or may not include nicotine and is inhaled by the user of such product. For the purposes of this Paragraph 17, 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, including cannabis.
18. 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.
19. Possession of paraphernalia used or designed to be used in the consumption, sale or distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, as described in Paragraph 17 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 planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, 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, including cannabis.
20. The destruction of real, personal or school property, such as, cutting, defacing or otherwise damaging property in any way.
21. Accumulation of offenses such as school and class tardiness, class or study hall cutting, or failure to attend detention.
22. Trespassing on school grounds while on out-of-school suspension or expulsion.
23. Making false bomb threats or other threats to the safety of students, employees, and/or other persons.
24. Defiance of school rules and the valid authority of teachers, supervisors, administrators, other employees and/or law enforcement authorities.
25. Throwing snowballs, rocks, sticks and/or similar objects, except as specifically authorized by school employees responsible for student supervision.
26. Unauthorized and/or reckless and/or improper operation of a motor vehicle on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity.
27. Leaving school grounds, school transportation or a school-sponsored activity without authorization.
28. Use of or copying of the academic work of another individual and presenting it as the student's own work, without proper attribution; the unauthorized use of AI for the completion of class assignments; or any other form of academic dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism.
29. Possession and/or use of a cellular telephone, radio, portable audio player, CD player, blackberry, tablet, personal data assistant, walkie talkie, Smartphone, mobile or handheld device, or similar electronic device, on school grounds, on school transportation, or at a school-sponsored activity in violation of Board policy and/or administrative regulations regulating the use of such devices.
30. Possession and/or use of a beeper or paging device on school grounds, on school transportation, or at a school-sponsored activity without the written permission of the principal or designee.

31. Unauthorized use of or tampering with 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, including using AI in a manner that disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district or is otherwise seriously disruptive to the educational process.

32. 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.

33. Hazing.

34. Challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, bullying, as defined in the Board's School Climate Policy and above.

35. 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.

36. Acting in any manner that creates a health and/or safety hazard for employees, students, third parties on school property or the public, regardless of whether the conduct is intended as a joke, including but not limited to violating school or District health and safety protocols.

37. Engaging in a plan to stage or create a violent and/or sexual situation or activity for the purposes of recording it by electronic means and/or recording such situation or activity by electronic means. Reporting recordings to school officials may warrant exceptions from disciplinary action in certain circumstances.

38. The unauthorized publication or dissemination of a recording (photographic or audio) of another individual without permission of the individual or a school employee. Reporting recordings to school officials may warrant exceptions from disciplinary action in certain circumstances.

39. Using computer systems, including email, remote learning platforms, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, AI, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.

40. 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 employee.

41. Engaging in teen dating violence, defined as any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening, which occurs between two students who are currently in or who have recently been in a dating relationship.

42. Any action prohibited by any Federal or State law.

43. 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.An administrator responsible for a school program ("responsible administrator") may consider recommendation of expulsion of a student in **grades three to twelve, inclusive**, in a case where the responsible administrator has reason to believe the student has engaged in conduct described at Sections II.A. or II.B., above.

B.A responsible administrator must recommend expulsion proceedings in all cases against any student in **grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive**, whom the District Administration has reason to believe:

1. was in **possession on school grounds, on school transportation,** 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 or school transportation** 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. Sale or distribution of less than one (1) kilogram of cannabis is not subject to mandatory expulsion.

The terms "**dangerous instrument**," "**deadly weapon**," **electronic defense weapon**," "**firearm**," and "**martial arts weapon**," are defined above in Section I.

C.In any preschool program provided by the Board or provided by a regional educational service center or a state or local charter school pursuant to an agreement with the Board, no **student enrolled in such a preschool program** shall be expelled from such preschool program, except an expulsion hearing shall be conducted by the Board in accordance with Section IX of this policy whenever the Administration has reason to believe that that a student enrolled in such preschool program was in **possession of a firearm** as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921, as amended from time to time, on or off school grounds, on school transportation, or at a preschool program-sponsored event. The term **"firearm"** is defined above in Section I.

D.Upon receipt of an expulsion recommendation, the Superintendent may conduct an inquiry concerning the expulsion recommendation.

If the Superintendent or designee determines that a student should or must be expelled, the Superintendent or designee shall forward such recommendation to the Board so that the Board can consider and act upon this recommendation.

E.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 in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, for one (1) full calendar year for the conduct described in Section IV.B(1), (2) and (3) of this policy and to expel a student enrolled in a preschool program for one (1) calendar year for the conduct described in Section IV.C. For any mandatory expulsion offense, the Board may modify the term of expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

V.Procedures Governing Behavior that Causes a Serious Disruption

A. A school principal or other school administrator shall notify a parent or guardian of a student whose behavior has caused a serious disruption to the instruction of other students; caused self-harm; or caused physical harm to a teacher, another student, or other school employee not later than twenty-four (24) hours after such behavior occurs.

B. Such notice shall include, but not be limited to, informing such parent or guardian that the teacher of record in the classroom in which such behavior occurred may request a behavior intervention meeting.

C. If the teacher of record in the classroom ultimately requests a behavior intervention meeting with the crisis intervention team for the school, the parent or guardian must be notified that such meeting will occur.

D. If a behavior intervention meeting occurs, the crisis intervention team shall, not later than seven (7) days after the behavior intervention meeting, provide to the parent or guardian of such student, in the dominant language of such parent or guardian, a written summary of such meeting, including, but not limited to, the resources and supports identified.

VI. Procedures Governing Removal from Class

A. A student may be removed from class by a teacher or administrator if the student deliberately causes a serious disruption of the educational process. When a student is removed by a teacher, the teacher must send the student to a designated area and notify the building principal or 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 responsible administrator or the administrator's 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.

VII.Procedures Governing Suspension

A.The responsible administrator or the administrator's designee shall have the right to suspend a student for breach of conduct as noted in Section II of this policy for not more than the following: five (5) consecutive school days for an in-school suspension; ten (10) consecutive school days for an out-of-school suspension for students in grades three through twelve, inclusive; or five (5) consecutive school days for an out-of-school suspension for students in grades preschool to two, inclusive. 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 responsible administrator or the administrator's designee at which the student is informed of the alleged misconduct 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.Prior to conducting the informal hearing referenced above, an administrator, school counselor or school social worker at the student's school must contact the District's Homeless Education Liaison to determine whether the student is a homeless child or youth, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. If a student is determined to be a homeless child or youth, the responsible administrator or the administrator's designee must consider the impact of homelessness on the student's behavior during the informal hearing.

3.If suspended, such suspension shall be an in-school suspension, except the responsible administrator or the administrator's designee may impose an out-of-school suspension on any student:

a.in grades three to twelve, inclusive, if, during the informal hearing, (i) the responsible administrator or the administrator's designee determines that the student poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the student should be excluded from school during the period of suspension; or (ii) the responsible administrator or the administrator's designee determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate based on evidence of (A) the student's previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such student, and (B) previous efforts by the District Administration to address the student's disciplinary problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive behavioral support strategies, or

b. in grades preschool to two, inclusive, if the responsible administrator or the administrator's designee

i. determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such student based on evidence that such student's conduct on school grounds is behavior that caused physical harm;

ii. requires that such student receives services that are trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate and align with any behavioral intervention plan, individualized education program ("IEP") or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") for such student upon such student's return to school immediately following the out-of-school suspension; and

iii. considers whether to convene a Planning and Placement Team ("PPT") meeting for the purposes of conducting an evaluation to determine whether such student may require special education or related services.

4.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 responsible administrator or the administrator's designee, but only considered in the determination of the length of suspensions.

5.By telephone, responsible administrator or the administrator's 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.

6.Whether or not telephone contact is made with the parent or guardian of such minor student, responsible administrator or the administrator's 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 responsible administrator or the administrator's designee), offering the parent or guardian an opportunity for a conference to discuss same.

7.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.

8.Not later than twenty-four (24) hours after the commencement of the suspension, the responsible administrator or the administrator's designee shall also notify the Superintendent or designee of the name of the student being suspended and the reason for the suspension.

9.The student shall be allowed to complete any classwork, including examinations, without penalty, which the student missed while under suspension.

10.The 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. The Superintendent may delegate this authority to building or program level administrators.

11.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 VII.A(10), 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. The Superintendent may delegate this authority to building or program level administrators.

12.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.

13.The decision of the responsible administrator or the administrator's designee with regard to disciplinary actions up to and including suspensions shall be final.

14.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 responsible administrator or the administrator's designee 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. The responsible administrator or the administrator's 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.

VIII.Procedures Governing In-School Suspension

A.The responsible administrator or the administrator's designee may impose in-school suspension in cases where a student's conduct endangers persons or property, violates school policy or seriously disrupts the educational process as determined by the responsible administrator or the administrator's designee.

B. In-school suspension may not be imposed on a student without an informal hearing by responsible administrator or the administrator's designee.

C. In-school suspension may be served in the school or program that the student regularly attends or in any other school building within the jurisdiction of the Board.

D. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or for a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.

E. The parents or guardian of any minor student placed on in-school suspension shall be given notice of such suspension within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of the period of the in-school suspension.

IX.Procedures Governing Expulsion Hearing

A.***Emergency Exception:***

Except in an emergency situation, the Board 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 or Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233*l*, if applicable, as well as 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. Expulsion hearings conducted by the Board will be heard by any three or more Board members. 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 and Rights of the Student and Parent(s)/Guardian(s):***

1. Written notice of the expulsion hearing must be given to the student, and, if the student is a minor, to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) at least five (5) business days before such hearing, not including the day of such 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 the student's 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, including if the hearing will be held virtually, via video conference.

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 Superintendent or designee.

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 Superintendent or designee.

f.The student may be represented by an attorney or other advocate of the student's choice at the student's expense or at the expense of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

g.A student is entitled to the services of a translator or interpreter, to be provided by the Board, whenever the student or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) requires the services of an interpreter because they do not speak the English language or 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 concerning the parent's(s') or guardian's(s') and the student's legal rights and about free or reduced-rate legal services and how to access such services.

j.The parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student have the right to have the expulsion hearing postponed for up to one week to allow time to obtain representation, except that if an emergency exists, such hearing shall be held as soon after the expulsion as possible.

1. Prior to conducting the expulsion hearing, an administrator, school counselor, or school social worker at the student's school must contact the District's Homeless Education Liaison to determine whether the student is a homeless child or youth, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

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 others participating in the hearing (if applicable), briefly explain the hearing procedures, and swear in any witnesses called by the Superintendent/designee or the student. If an impartial board or more than one person has been appointed, the impartial board shall appoint a Presiding Officer.
2. The hearing will be conducted in executive session. A verbatim record of the hearing will be made, either by tape or digital 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. The Superintendent or designee shall bear the burden of production to come forward with evidence to support its case and shall bear the burden of persuasion. The standard of proof shall be a preponderance of the evidence.
4. Formal rules of evidence will not be followed. The Board (or the impartial 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, irrelevant and/or any other objections to its submission.
5. The hearing will be conducted in two (2) parts. In the first part of the hearing, the Board (or the impartial board) will receive and consider evidence regarding the conduct alleged by the Administration.
6. In the first part of the hearing, the charges will be introduced into the record by the Superintendent or designee.
7. Each witness for the Superintendent or designee will be called and sworn. After a witness has finished testifying, the witness will be subject to cross-examination by the opposite party or the witness' legal counsel, by the Presiding Officer and by Board members (or the impartial board).
8. The student shall not be compelled to testify at the hearing.
9. After the Superintendent or designee has presented the Administration's case, the student will be asked if the student 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 Superintendent or designee, the Presiding Officer and/or by the Board (or the impartial board). The student may also choose to make a statement at this time. If the student chooses to make a statement, the student will be sworn and subject to cross examination and questioning by the Superintendent or designee, the Presiding Officer and/or by the Board (or the impartial board). Concluding statements will be made by the Superintendent or designee and then by the student and/or the student's representative.
10. In cases where the student has denied the allegation, the Board (or the impartial board) must determine whether the student committed the offense(s) as charged by the Superintendent or designee.
11. If the Board (or the impartial board) determines that the student has committed the conduct as alleged, then the Board (or the impartial board) shall proceed with the second portion of the hearing, during which the Board (or the impartial board) will receive and consider relevant evidence regarding the length and conditions of expulsion.
12. When considering the length and conditions of expulsion, the Board (or the impartial board) may review the student's attendance, academic and past disciplinary records. The Board (or the impartial 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 VII.A (10), (11), (12), above, and Section XI, below. The Board (or the impartial board) may ask the Superintendent or designee for a recommendation as to the discipline to be imposed.
13. Evidence of past disciplinary problems that 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 (or the impartial board) is considering length of expulsion and nature of alternative educational opportunity to be offered.

1. If a student is determined to be a homeless child or youth as described in Subsection IX.C(4), the Board (or the impartial board) must consider the impact of homelessness on the student's behavior. Such student may not be expelled without a plan of interventions and supports to mitigate the impact of homelessness on the student's behavior. If the student is identified as a homeless child or youth and is expelled more than one time, the student shall be provided a meeting with the District's Homeless Education Liaison.
2. Where administrators presented the case in support of the charges against the student, neither such administrative staff nor the Superintendent or designee shall be present during the deliberations of the Board (or the impartial board) either on questions of evidence or on the final discipline to be imposed. The Superintendent or designee may, after reviewing the incident with administrators, and reviewing the student's records, make a recommendation to the Board (or the impartial panel) as to the appropriate discipline to be applied.
3. The Board (or the impartial 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.
4. Except for a student who has been expelled based on possession of a firearm or deadly weapon as described in subsection IV.B(1) and (2) above, the Board (or the impartial 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 (or the impartial board). The Board-specified program shall not require the student and/or the student's parents to pay for participation in the program.
5. The Board (or the impartial 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.
6. The hearing may be conducted virtually, via video conference, at the direction of the Board (or the impartial board), in the event school buildings are closed to students or individuals are provided limited access to school buildings due to a serious health or other emergency. Any virtual hearing must provide the student the due process rights identified in this Subsection D.

F.***Presence on School Grounds, on School Transportation, and Participation in School-Sponsored Activities During Expulsion:***

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

G.***Stipulated Agreements:***

In lieu of the procedures used in this Section, the Superintendent or designee and the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) 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 parent(s) or legal guardian(s) 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 (or the impartial 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 the student's own behalf.

If the parties agree on the facts, but not on the disciplinary recommendation, the Superintendent or designee 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 (or the impartial board) in lieu of holding the first part of the hearing, as described above. Such Joint Stipulation shall include language indicating that the parents and/or student over the age of 18 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 (or the impartial board) rejects the Joint Stipulation of Facts, a full expulsion hearing shall be held pursuant to the procedures outlined herein.

X.Alternative Educational Opportunities for Expelled Students

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

Whenever the Board 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 shall provide an alternative educational opportunity to a sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) year-old student expelled for the first time if the student requests it and if the student agrees to the conditions set by the Board (or the impartial board). Such alternative educational opportunity may include, but shall not be limited to, the placement of a

student who is at least seventeen years of age in an adult education program. Any student participating in an adult education program during a period of expulsion shall not be required to withdraw from school as a condition to participation in the adult education program.

2.The Board 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 a second, or subsequent, time.

3.The Board shall count the expulsion of a student when the student was under sixteen (16) years of age for purposes of determining whether an alternative educational opportunity is required for such student when the student is between the ages of sixteen and eighteen.

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

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

D.Content of Alternative Educational Opportunity

1.For the purposes of Section X, and subject to Subsection X.E, below, any alternative educational opportunity to which an expelled student is statutorily entitled shall be (1) alternative education, as defined by Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-74j and in accordance with the *Standards for Educational Opportunities for Students Who Have Been Expelled,* adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education ("CSBE"), with an individualized learning plan, if the Board provides such alternative education, or (2) in accordance with the *Standards for Educational Opportunities for Students Who Have Been Expelled*, adopted by the CSBE.

2.The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations concerning alternative educational opportunities, which administrative regulations shall be in compliance with the standards adopted by the CSBE. Such administrative regulations shall include, but are not limited to, provisions to address student placement in alternative education; individualized learning plans; monitoring of students placements and performance; and a process for transition planning.

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

Notwithstanding Subsections X.A. through D. above, if the Board 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, and in accordance with the *Standards for Educational Opportunities for Students Who Have Been Expelled*, adopted by the CSBE.

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

The Board may offer an alternative educational opportunity to a student for whom such alternative educational opportunity is not required by law or as described in this policy. In such cases, the Board, or if delegated by the Board, the Administration, shall determine the components, including nature, frequency and duration of such services, of any such alternative educational opportunity.

XI.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. Such notice, except for notice of an expulsion of a student in grades nine through twelve, inclusive, based upon possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record by the District if the student graduates from high school.

In cases where the student's period of expulsion is shortened or waived in accordance with Section IX.D(17), 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. Except as may be specified by the Board in an expulsion hearing decision, the Board delegates the authority to make decisions pertaining to expungement to the Superintendent.

If a student's period of expulsion was not shortened or waived, the Board may choose to expunge the expulsion notice from the student's cumulative record prior to graduation if such student has demonstrated to the Board that the student's conduct and behavior in the years following such expulsion warrants an expungement. In deciding whether to expunge the expulsion notice, the Board may receive and consider evidence of any subsequent disciplinary problems that have led to removal from a classroom, suspension or expulsion of the student. Except as may be specified by the Board in an expulsion hearing decision, the Board delegates the authority to make decisions pertaining to expungement to the Superintendent.

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.

XII.Change of Residence During Expulsion Proceedings

A.***Student moving into the District:***

1.If a student enrolls in the District while an expulsion hearing is pending in another public school 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. The procedures outlined above in Section IX and consistent with the requirements of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233d or Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233*l*, if applicable, as well as the applicable provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 4-176e to 4-180a, and § 4-181a shall be utilized for any hearing conducted under this section.

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 (or the impartial board) shall make its determination pertaining to expulsion based upon a hearing held by the Board (or the impartial 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. The procedures outlined above in Section IX and consistent with the requirements of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233d or Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233*l*, if applicable, as well as the applicable provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 4-176e to 4-180a, and § 4-181a shall be utilized for any hearing conducted under this section.

B.***Student moving out of the 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.

XIII.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 a responsible administrator 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 District that applies to all students, the following procedures shall apply:

1.The responsible administrator 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 District is not required to provide any educational services to the IDEA student beyond that which is provided to all students suspended by the District, except as set forth in subsection (3) below.

1. If an IDEA student is being suspended and that student has already been removed from their current placement for ten (10) school days in the same school year, school personnel, in consultation with at least one of the student's teachers, must determine the extent to which services are needed so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP, so long as the suspension does not constitute a change in placement. If the suspension constitutes a change in placement, subsection (B) below will apply.

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 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 educational placement:

1.Upon the decision by the Administration to recommend expulsion or impose a suspension that would constitute a change in educational placement, the Administration shall promptly notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student of the recommendation of expulsion or the suspension that would constitute a change in educational placement, and provide the parents(s)/guardian(s) a copy of the special education procedural safeguards either by hand-delivery or by mail (unless other means of transmission have been arranged).

2.The 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 which constitutes a change in placement, in order to determine whether the student's behavior was a manifestation of the student's 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 responsible administrator (or designee) should consider the nature of the misconduct and any relevant educational records of the student.

C.***Removal of Special Education Students for Certain Offenses:***

1.A responsible administrator may remove a student eligible for special education under the IDEA to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days if the student:

a.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, on school transportation, or at a school-sponsored activity, or

b.Knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs or sold or solicited the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school transportation, or at a school-sponsored activity; or

c.Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, on school transportation, or at a school function.

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

a.**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.

b.**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).

c.**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.

d.**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.

XIV.Procedures Governing Expulsions for Students Identified as Eligible under Section 504

A.Except as provided in subsection B below, 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 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 the student's 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.

B.The Board may take disciplinary action for violations pertaining to the use or possession of illegal drugs or alcohol against any student with a disability who currently is engaging in the illegal use of drugs or alcohol to the same extent that such disciplinary action is taken against nondisabled students. Thus, when a student with a disability is recommended for expulsion based solely on the illegal use or possession of drugs or alcohol, the 504 team *shall not be required to meet* to review the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior that led to the recommendation for expulsion.

XV.Procedures Governing Expulsions for Students Placed in a Juvenile Detention Center

A.Any student who commits an expellable offense and is subsequently placed in a juvenile detention center 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 placement in a juvenile detention center or other residential placement.

B.If a student who committed an expellable offense seeks to return to the District after participating in a diversionary program or having been placed in a juvenile detention center or any other residential placement and such student has not been expelled by the Board 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.

XVI.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.

XVII.Dissemination of Policy

The District 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.

XVIII.Compliance with Documentation and Reporting Requirements

A.The District shall include on all disciplinary reports the individual student's state-assigned student identifier (SASID).

B.The District shall report all suspensions and expulsions to the State Department of Education.

C.If the Board expels a student for sale or distribution of a controlled substance, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-240(9), whose manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting or possessing with the intent to sell or dispense, offering, or administration is the subject to criminal penalties under Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 21a-277 and 21a-278, the District shall refer such student to an appropriate state or local agency for rehabilitation, intervention or job training and inform the agency of its action.

D.If the Board expels a student for possession of a firearm, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921, or deadly weapon, dangerous instrument or martial arts weapon, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-3, the District shall report the violation to the local police.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes:

§ 10-15cDiscrimination in public schools prohibited. School attendance by five-year olds

§ 10-16Length of school year

§ 10-74jAlternative education

§§ 4-176e through 4-180a and § 4-181a Uniform Administrative Procedures Act

§§ 10-222aa through 10-222kk School climate

§§ 10-233a through 10-233fSuspension and expulsion of students

§ 10-233/Expulsion and suspension of children in preschool programs

§ 10-236cDisruptive or harmful behavior. Behavior intervention meetings for certain students. Notice to parents

§ 10-253School privileges for children in certain placements,

nonresident children, children in temporary shelters, homeless children and children in juvenile detention facilities. Liaison to facilitate transitions between school districts and juvenile and criminal justice systems.

§ 19a-342aUse of electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor product prohibited. Exceptions. Signage required. Penalties

§ 21a-240Definitions

§ 21a-277Penalty for illegal manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing

§ 21a-278Penalty for illegal manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, or administration by non-drug-dependent person

§§ 21a-408a through 408pPalliative use of marijuana

§ 29-35Carrying of pistol or revolver without permit prohibited. Exceptions

§ 29-38Weapons in vehicles

§ 46a-58Deprivation of rights. Desecration of property. Placing of burning cross or noose on property. Penalty. Restitution

§ 53a-3Definitions

§ 53-206Carrying of dangerous weapons prohibited

§ 53-344Sale or delivery of cigarettes or tobacco products to persons under twenty-one.

§ 53-344b Sale and delivery of electronic nicotine delivery system or vapor products to persons under twenty-one years or age

Public Act25-168, Sec. 261, "An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027, and Making Appropriations Therefor, and Provisions Related to Revenue and Other Items Implementing the State Budget." (definition of "synthetically created image")

Public Act 25-93, "An Act Increasing Resources for Students, Schools and Special Education."

Public Act 25-139, "An Act Concerning Human Trafficking and Sexual Assault Victims."

Packer v. Board of Educ. of the Town of Thomaston, 717 A.2d 117 (Conn. 1998).

State v. Hardy, 896 A.2d 755 (Conn. 2006).

State v. Guzman, 955 A.2d 72 (Conn. App. Ct. 2008).

Connecticut State Department of Education, *Standards for Educational Opportunities for Students Who Have Been Expelled*, adopted January 3, 2018.

Federal law:

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.
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681, *et seq.*
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794(a).
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, *et seq.*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, 20 U.S.C. § 7961
Honig v. Doe, 484 U.S. 305 (1988)
U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, *Resource on Confronting Racial Discrimination in Student Discipline (May 2023)*
Take It Down Act, Public L. 119-12
McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. § 11343a

ADOPTED:

Approved 3/18/2026
Previous Policy Number:

BOARD OF EDUCATION MISSION 0100

We will provide all students with educational opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to lead productive and self-sustaining lives in a democratic, multicultural society.

Approved February 4, 1997

Amended May 16, 2017

Previous Policy Number: AF1

Approved 5/16/2017
Previous Policy Number: AF1

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY 0110

The primary purpose and, indeed, the obligation of public education in the Meriden Public Schools is to develop the unique talents and abilities of all students so that they may become responsible and contributing members of society.

Fundamental to education is the recognition that students, as individuals, possess differing rates and styles of development. Further, it is essential to acknowledge that students approach school from a variety of ethnic origins and socio-economic backgrounds. With an awareness of these differences, the educational program should be flexible enough to be sensitive to the needs of the individual students and to demonstrate a quality that will stimulate alike the students, staff and the community.

The educational program must provide students with the basic skills of learning and the capacity to value themselves and others. It must be comprehensive enough to afford students the opportunity to develop career awareness, to obtain added vocational preparation, and/or to attend an institution of higher learning. The program should strive to create an atmosphere in which students can experience desirable intellectual, physical, emotional, cultural, and social growth. Ultimately, the educational system should kindle the individual's desire to continue learning as a life-long process.

The educational program should be extended beyond the school – encouraging the involvement of the entire community to include family, religious affiliation, youth organizations, business, industry, and recreational and social activities. The educational process in Meriden should enable the student to develop a constructive philosophy of life. Each student should obtain the decision-making skills necessary to cope with our rapidly changing and complex society. Each student should acquire an understanding and appreciation of our cultural, historical, and natural environment.

The Meriden Public Schools has the duty to provide fully integrated schools and the best possible situation in terms of staff and facilities for the education of our children.

The Meriden Board of Education endorses this philosophy and adheres to the accompanying system-wide goals.

Approved May, 5, 1981

Amended May 16, 2017

Previous Policy Number: AE

Approved 5/16/2017
Previous Policy Number: AE

SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS 0200

Consistent with the District's mission and educational philosophy, District personnel is committed to offering students educational opportunities that accomplish the following goals and objectives:

Goal #1: Motivate students to learnObjectives:

1. Meriden students will become lifelong learners.
2. Meriden students will develop pride in work, a feeling of self-esteem and sense of self-confidence.

Goal #2: Acquisition of skills and knowledge essential for success in a global societyObjectives:

1. Meriden students will master skills in reading, writing and mathematics necessary to be college and career ready.
2. Meriden students will acquire essential knowledge of the social sciences and natural sciences.

3. Meriden student will demonstrate competence in communications, especially writing, speaking and listening.
4. Meriden students will be able to use information critically to develop decision-making and problem-solving skills.
5. Meriden students will be exhibit an awareness of and appreciation for literary, cultural and aesthetic values.

Goal #3: Competence in Life SkillsObjectives:

1. Meriden students will be qualified for success in meaningful and living-wage employment.
2. Meriden students will practice a healthy lifestyle.
3. Meriden students will demonstrate digital citizenship.

Goal #4: Understanding Society's ValuesObjectives:

1. Meriden students will respect and appreciate people for their individuality and diversity in a global society.
2. Meriden students will be able to adjust and respond to a changing world.
3. Meriden student will demonstrate an understanding of financial literacy.
4. Meriden students will participate in civic life.

Approved 5/1/1990

Amended May 16, 2017

Previous Policy Number: AF

Approved 5/16/2017
Previous Policy Number: AF

BOARD OF EDUCATION GOALS 0220

Pursuant to Section 10-4 of the Connecticut General Statutes and consistent with the District's mission and educational philosophy, the Board shall implement the state's educational interests by offering students educational opportunities that foster the development of the following goals and objectives.

Goal #1: Meet high expectations for academic achievement for all students while preparing them for productive and self-sustaining adult life, continuing education and responsible citizenship in a democratic, global society.

This goal encompasses the following key objectives:

1. Providing developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs;
2. Ensuring continuous improvement in student academic performance;
3. Implementing a unified rigorous curriculum and support systems that results in all students demonstrating proficiency in reading, writing, mathematics and other academic areas as measured by state and standardized assessments;
4. Ensuring student attainment of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for college, career, civic life and a healthy lifestyle;
5. Offering access to comprehensive athletics and co-curricular programs; and
6. Assuring access to academic and job-related skills programs.

Goal #2: Meet the fundamental needs of all learners by providing a safe and disciplined environment conducive to learning.

This goal encompasses the following key objectives:

1. Providing a safe, disciplined, drug-free learning environment;
2. Maintaining well-equipped facilities;
3. Recognizing and valuing diversity in learning experiences, programs and staff; and
4. Establishing high expectations for student behavior and respect for community.

Goal #3: Meet high standards for the performance of teachers and administrators leading to improved student learning.

This goal encompasses the following key objectives:

1. Improving instruction through systematic teacher and administrator evaluation and development;
2. Implementing quality professional learning opportunities; and
3. Providing opportunities for collaboration district-wide through professional learning communities for administrators, teachers and parents.

Goal #4: Focus resources effectively, efficiently and equitably to ensure that all students achieve at sufficiently high levels that enable them to lead productive and self-sustaining lives.

This goal encompasses the following key objectives:

1. Utilizing cost-effective educational services;
2. Implementing technology-rich learning environments;
3. Fostering partnerships between schools and the community; and
4. Reducing the effects of poverty on student achievement.

Goal #5: Increase the direct involvement of all stakeholders in public education.

This goal encompasses the following key objectives:

1. Improving public education through active community involvement;
2. Maintaining ongoing communication with community and city government about student progress; and
3. Sharing responsibility for student achievement through increased parental involvement.

Approved April 28, 1981

Amended May 16, 2017

Previous Policy Number: AF2

Approved 5/16/2017
Previous Policy Number: AF2

Procedures and Time Line 0220 (R)

1. In order to implement the Board of Education Mission Statement, the Superintendent of Schools shall work with the Board of Education and a representative committee to revise the Board Goals and develop objectives on a periodic basis.
2. After adoption of goals and objectives, the information will be shared with the staff and the community through the district website.
3. Once adopted, the Superintendent and staff shall propose necessary program improvements to accomplish the objectives.
4. During the last meeting in May, the Superintendent will report to the Board of Education on progress related to the Board of Education objectives.

Approved January 4, 2000

Amended May 16, 2017

Previous Policy Number: AF2-R

Approved 5/16/2017
Previous Policy Number: AF2-R

COMMITMENT TO ACCOMPLISHMENT 0230

The district's program of accountability shall be systematic and specific, primarily utilizing the following major elements:

- clear statements of expectations and purposes (i.e., philosophy, goals and objectives), coupled with specifications of how their successful achievement will be determined;
- provisions, resources, and support for the staff necessary to achieve these expectations and purposes;
- evaluation carefully designed to determine how well expectations and purposes are met;
- revisions and modifications as needed to improve.

Every effort shall be made by the Board, Superintendent and staff to fulfill the responsibilities required by the concept of accountability.

Policy Adopted: April 28, 1981

Approved 11/6/2013
Previous Policy Number: AG

REPORTING ACCOMPLISHMENT TO THE PUBLIC 0230.1

The Board acknowledges its responsibility to lead in the identification and development of broad goals and specific objectives to be accomplished by the school district. To provide the Board with the information necessary to make sound policy and planning decisions as well as keep the public informed about the District's needs and results, the Superintendent shall employ all appropriate means to provide for continuous and candid reports on the progress towards and/or the accomplishments of District personnel in the pursuit of the Board's articulated goals and objectives.

Policy Adopted: April 28, 1981

Approved November 6, 2013

Amended May 16, 2017

Previous Policy Number: AH

Approved 5/16/2017
Previous Policy Number: AH

Procedures Regarding Complaints of Race, Color or National Origin Discrimination 0521.3 (R)

It is the express policy of the Meriden Board of Education to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints and/or grievances alleging any discrimination on the basis of race, color and/or national origin. In order to facilitate the timely resolution of such complaints and/or grievances, any student, parent/guardian, staff member or other employee who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color or national origin should contact the building administrator, unless the complaint involves that administrator. Should that be the case, the Associate Superintendent of Schools will address complaints from students or parents; the Director of Personnel will address complaints from staff or employees. Contact should be made by the complainant within thirty (30) days of the alleged occurrence to discuss the nature of the complaint. Timely reporting of complaints and/or grievances facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints and/or grievances.

Complaints and/or grievances 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 appropriate.

At any stage in this grievance procedure, the complainant has the right to file formal complaints with the Office of Civil Rights, John W. McCormick Post Office & Court House Building, 2nd Floor, Post Office Square, Boston, Massachusetts 02109 or the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 330 C Street S.W., Washington, DC 20202. If a complaint is filed with the Office of Civil Rights, it must be filed in writing no later than one hundred eighty (180) days after the occurrence of the alleged discrimination.

Approved 4/1/2003
Previous Policy Number: AD-R(2)

Procedures Regarding Complaints of Sex Discrimination 0521.4 (R)

It is the policy of the Meriden Board of Education that any form of sex discrimination is forbidden, whether by students, Board employees or third parties subject to the control of the Board. Students, Board employees and third parties are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of others. Any student or employee who engages in conduct prohibited by the Board's sex discrimination policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Definitions

Sex discrimination occurs when a person, because of his or her gender, is denied participation in or the benefits of any program receiving federal financial assistance.

Complaint Procedure

1. It is the express policy of the Board of Education to encourage victims of sex discrimination to promptly report such claims. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints.
2. As soon as a student or employee feels that he or she has been subjected to sex discrimination, he/she should make a written complaint to the building principal or his/her designee, unless that person is the subject of the complaint. In such cases, complaints from students should be directed to the Associate Superintendent; employee complaints should be directed to the Director of Personnel. The complainant will be provided a copy of this policy and regulation and made aware of his or her rights.
3. The complaint should state the:
    a. Name of the complainant;
    b. Date of the complaint;
    c. Date(s) of the alleged discrimination;
    d. Name(s) of the discriminator(s);
    e. Location where such discrimination occurred;
    f. Names of any witness(es) to the discrimination, and
    g. Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged discrimination.
4. Any student who makes an oral complaint of sex discrimination to any of the above-mentioned personnel will be provided a copy of this regulation and will be requested to make a written complaint pursuant to the above procedure. In appropriate circumstances, due to the age of the student making the complaint, a parent or school administrator may be permitted to fill out the form on the student's behalf.
5. A copy of any complaint filed under this policy shall be forwarded to the appropriate Title IX Coordinator (Associate Superintendent of Schools for students, Director of Personnel for employees).
6. Upon receipt of a sexual harassment or sex discrimination complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall either promptly commence an investigation of the complaint, or shall designate a school administrator to investigate the complaint. The Title IX Coordinator or designee shall consult with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the complainant, the alleged discriminator and any witnesses to the conduct. The investigation shall be carried on discreetly, maintaining confidentiality insofar as possible while still conducting an effective and thorough investigation.
7. The Title IX Coordinator or designee shall make a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and proposed disposition of the matter. Consistent with State and federal law and as deemed appropriate by the Title IX Coordinator or designee, the findings of the investigation shall be shared with persons involved in the investigation.
8. If the student complainant is dissatisfied with the findings of the investigation, he or she may file a written appeal to the Title IX Coordinator, or, if he or she conducted the investigation, to the Superintendent of Schools, who shall review the Title IX Coordinator or designee's written report, the information collected by the Title IX Coordinator or designee together with the recommended disposition of the complaint to determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes sex discrimination. The Title IX Coordinator or Superintendent of Schools may also investigate the complaint further. After completing this review, the Title IX Coordinator or Superintendent of Schools shall respond to the complainant, in writing, as soon as possible.If, after a thorough investigation, there is reasonable cause to believe that sex discrimination has occurred, the district shall take appropriate corrective action in an effort to ensure that the discrimination ceases and will not recur.Retaliation against any individual who complains pursuant to this policy and procedure is strictly prohibited. The district will take actions necessary to prevent retaliation as a result of filing a complaint.**Title IX Coordinators**The Title IX Coordinators for the Meriden Board of Education are: The Associate Superintendent (students), whose telephone number is 630-4185, and the Director of Personnel (employees), whose phone number is 630-4209.

Legal References:

United States Constitution, Article XIVTitle IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. ' 1681, *et seq*.Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 34 C.F.R. ' 106.1, *et seq*.Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent School District, 524 U.S. 274 (1998)Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, 526 U.S. 629 (1999)Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, 66 Fed. Reg. 5512 (Jan. 19, 2001)Constitution of the State of Connecticut, Article I, Section 20

Approved 4/1/2003
Previous Policy Number: AD-R(3)

POLICY TO PROMOTE RACIAL BALANCE AND RESPECT FOR THE DIVERSITY OF POPULATION IN OUR COMMUNITY 0522

The Meriden Board of Education is committed to maintaining racial balance within all its schools and programs and is determined to provide quality integrated education, equal educational opportunities and promote respect for the diversity present in our population for and among all students regardless of race, national origin, sex, gender identity and/or expression, socioeconomic status, language, religion or disability in accordance with its policy and state and federal laws.

In working proactively toward the development and maintenance of quality integrated educational programs and schools for all students, the Board shall be guided by the following criteria:

1. Consider educational factors, including, but not limited to, school integration and the neighborhood school concept, in making decisions about redistricting, the selection of new school sites, and expansion of present schools.
2. Incorporate in the school curriculum instructional materials which encourage respect for diversity of social experience through texts and illustrations and reflect the contribution of minority group members through history and culture.
3. To the extent that it will not make a school racially imbalanced as defined by the Connecticut General Statutes, assign school students who are designated as walking students by Board of Education policy to the school within walking distance of their residence.

4. To the extent that it will not make a school racially imbalanced as defined by the Connecticut General Statutes, assign school students who are designated as bus students by Board of Education policy to one of the two schools closest to their residence.
5. Allocate school educational resources and personnel to schools based upon the educational needs of the school's population.
6. Make every effort to respect the diversity of our population in the scheduling of activities and events within each individual school.

Approved December 20, 1994

Amended May 16, 2017

Previous Policy Number: AI

Approved 5/16/2017
Previous Policy Number: AI

Connecticut School Climate Policy (CABE) 5131.911(a)

Connecticut School Climate Policy
Policy Statement
A mandated policy.
P5131.911(a)

All schools must support and promote teaching and learning environments where all students thrive academically and socially, have a strong and meaningful voice, and are prepared for lifelong success.
Implementation of the following set of guiding principles and systemic strategies will promote a positive school climate, which is essential to achieving these goals.
This policy sets forth the framework for an effective and informed school climate improvement process, which includes a continuous cycle of (i) planning and preparation, (ii) evaluation, (iii) action planning, and (iv) implementation, and serves to actualize the Connecticut School Climate Standards, as detailed herein.
The Board recognizes that improving school climate is contextual. Each school needs to consider its history, strengths, needs, and goals. Furthermore, this policy will support and promote the development of restorative action plans that will create and sustain safe and equitable learning environments.
The Meriden District Board of Education adopts this policy.

Definitions

1. **"School climate"** means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and that reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.
2. **"Positive Sustained School Climate"** is the foundation for learning and positive youth development and includes:
   a. Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, culturally, racially, intellectually, and physically safe.
   b. People who treat one another with dignity and are engaged, respected and solve problems restoratively.
   c. A school community that works collaboratively together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision.
   d. Adults who model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning; and
   e. A school community that contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.
3. **"Social and emotional learning"** means the process through which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.
4. **"Emotional intelligence"** means the ability to (A) perceive, recognize, and understand emotions in oneself or others, (B) use emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to, reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (C) understand and identify emotions, and (D) manage emotions in oneself and others.
5. **"Bullying"** means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
6. **"School environment"** means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs that occur outside of a school- sponsored or school-related activity, function or program if bullying at or during such other activities, functions or programs negatively impacts the school environment.
7. **"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 other electronic communication.
8. **"Teen dating violence"** means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening, that occurs between two students who are currently in or who have recently been in a dating relationship.
9. **"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.
10. **"Electronic communication"** means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.
11. **"School climate improvement plan"** means a building-specific plan developed by the school climate committee, in collaboration with the school climate specialist, using school climate survey data and any other relevant information, through a process that engages all members of the school community and involves such members in a series of overlapping systemic improvements, school-wide instructional practices and relational practices that prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment.
12. **"Restorative practices"** means evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior, and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.
13. **"School climate survey"** means a research-based, validated and developmentally appropriate survey administered to students, school employees and families of students, in the predominant languages of the members of the school community, that measures and identifies school climate needs and tracks progress through a school climate improvement plan.
14. **"Connecticut school climate policy"** means the school climate policy developed, updated and approved by an association in the state that represents boards of education and adopted by the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q of the general statutes, as amended by this act, that provides a framework for an effective and democratically informed school climate improvement process that serves to implement Connecticut school climate standards, and includes a continuous cycle of (A) planning and preparation, (B) evaluation, (C) action planning, and (D) implementation.
15. **"School employee"** means (A) a teacher, substitute teacher, administrator, school superintendent, school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, school nurse, physician, paraeducator or coach employed by a local or regional board of education, or (B) 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 school, pursuant to a contract with a local or regional board of education.
16. **"School community"** means any individuals, groups, businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations that are invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.
17. **"Challenging behavior"** means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.
18. **"Evidence Based Practices"** in education refers to instructional and school-wide improvement practices that systematic empirical research has provided evidence of statistically significant effectiveness.
19. **"Effective School Climate Improvement"** is a restorative process that engages all stakeholders in the following six essential practices:

A. Promoting decision-making that is collaborative and actively involves all stakeholders (e.g., school personnel, students, families, community members) with varied and meaningful roles and perspectives where all voices are heard;

B. Utilizing psychometrically sound quantitative (e.g., school climate survey, discipline data) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups) data to drive action planning, preventive and intervention practices and implementation strategies that continuously improve all dimensions of school climate, including regularly collecting data to evaluate progress and inform the improvement process;

C. Tailoring improvement goals to the unique needs of the students, educators, and broader school community. These goals shall be integrated into overall school improvement efforts thereby leveraging school strengths to address evidence-based areas of need, while sustaining the improvement process over time;

D. Fostering adult learning in teams and/or professional learning communities to build capacity building among school personnel and develop common staff skills to educate the whole child;

E. Basing curriculum, instruction, student supports, and interventions on scientific research and grounding in cognitive, social-emotional, and psychological theories of youth development. Interventions include strength-based programs and practices that together represent a comprehensive continuum of approaches to promote healthy student development and positive learning environments as well as address individual student barriers to learning and adult barriers to teaching; and

F. Strengthening policies and procedures related to:

a. climate and restorative informed teaching and learning environments;
b. infrastructure to facilitate data collection, analysis, and effective planning;
c. implementation of school climate improvement plans with the goal of becoming restorative;
d. evaluation of the school climate improvement process; and
e. sustainability of school climate and restorative improvement efforts.

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the superintendent of schools for each school district, or an administrator appointed by the superintendent, shall serve as the school climate coordinator for the school district.

The school climate coordinator shall be responsible for:

1. providing district-level leadership and support for the implementation of the school climate improvement plan for each school;
2. collaborating with the school climate specialist, for each school to (A) develop a continuum of strategies to prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment, and (B) communicate such strategies to the school community, including, but not limited to, through publication in the district student handbook;
3. collecting and maintaining data regarding school climate improvement, including, but not limited to, school discipline records, school climate assessments, attendance rates, social and emotional learning assessments, academic growth data, types and numbers of alleged and verified bullying complaints submitted by members of the school community, types and numbers of challenging behaviors addressed using the restorative practices response policy, and data concerning the implementation and outcome of restorative practices; and
4. meeting with the school climate specialist for each school at least twice during the school year to (A) identify strategies to improve school climate, including, but not limited to, by responding to challenging behavior and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, such as restorative practices, (B) propose recommendations for revisions to the school climate improvement plan, and (C) assist with the completion of the school climate survey.

School Climate Specialist

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the principal of each school, or a school employee who holds professional certification pursuant to section 10-145 of the general statutes, is trained in school climate improvement or restorative practices and
is designated as the school climate specialist by the school principal, shall serve as the school climate specialist for the school.

The school climate specialist shall be responsible for:

1. leading in the prevention, identification, and response to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, reports of alleged bullying and harassment;
2. implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices;
3. scheduling meetings for and leading the school climate committee; and
4. leading the implementation of the school climate improvement plan.

School Climate Committee

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, each school climate specialist shall appoint members to the school climate committee who are diverse, including members who are racially, culturally, and linguistically representative of various roles in the school community.

The school climate committee shall consist of:

1. the school climate specialist;
2. a teacher selected by the exclusive bargaining representative for certified employees chosen pursuant to section 10-153b of the general statutes;
3. a demographically representative group of students enrolled at the school, as developmentally appropriate;
4. families of students enrolled at the school; and
5. at least two members of the school community, as determined by the school climate specialist.

Membership of the school climate committee shall be annually reviewed and approved by the school climate specialist, in coordination with the school climate coordinator.

The school climate committee shall be responsible for:

1. assisting in the development, annual scheduling, and administration of the school climate survey, and reviewing of the school climate survey data.
2. using the school climate survey data to identify strengths and challenges to improve school climate, and to create or propose revisions to the school climate improvement plan.
3. assisting in the implementation of the school climate improvement plan and recommending any improvements or revisions to the plan.
4. advising on strategies to improve school climate and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices, in the school community.
5. annually providing notice of the uniform challenging behavior and/or bullying complaint form, or similar complaint form used by the school, to the school community.

School Climate Survey

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and biennially thereafter, the school climate committee, for each school, shall administer a school climate survey to students, school employees and families of students, provided the parent or guardian of each student shall receive prior written notice of the content and administration of such school climate survey and shall have a reasonable opportunity to opt such student out of such school climate survey.

School Climate Improvement Plan

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the school climate specialist, for each school, in collaboration with the school climate coordinator, shall develop, and update as necessary, a school climate improvement plan. Such plan shall be based on the results of the school climate survey, any recommendations from the school climate committee, including the protocols, supports, and any other data the school climate specialist and school climate coordinator deem relevant. Such plan shall be submitted to the school climate coordinator for review and approval on or before December thirty-first of each school year. Upon approval of such plan, a written or electronic copy of such plan shall be made available to members of the school community and such plan shall be used in the prevention of, identification of and response to all challenging behavior.

Additionally, districts may place the school climate improvement plans into their district and school improvement plans.

Training

For the school year commencing July 1, 2024, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional Board of Education shall provide resources and training to school employees regarding:

1. social and emotional learning;
2. school climate and culture and evidence and research-based interventions; and
3. restorative practices.

Such resources and training may be made available at each school under the jurisdiction of such board and include technical assistance in the implementation of a school climate improvement plan. Any school employee may participate in any such training offered by the board under this section. The school climate coordinator, shall select, and approve, the individuals or organizations that will provide such training.

Funding

The school district shall in its discretion allocate sufficient funding to satisfy the requirements of this policy for all schools in the district. Such funding shall be distributed accordingly, with Superintendent approval, for assessments and professional development, as well as for school community outreach, training, and technical assistance.

Accountability

The Board shall adopt and allocate adequate resources to support the Connecticut School
Climate Policy and adhere to state regulations set forth in Public Act 23-167.

Connecticut School Climate Standards

1. The school district community[2] has a shared vision and plan for promoting and sustaining a positive school climate[3] that focuses on prevention, identification, and response to all challenging behavior[4].
2. The school district community adopts policies that promote:

a. a sound school environment that develops and sustains academic, social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills; and

b. a restorative school environment focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning by building and supporting meaningful school-wide relationships, and intentionally re-engaging any disengaged students, educators, and families of students in the school community.

[2] School Community means any individuals, groups or businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, stude nts and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.

[3] School climate means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life, and that reflects the norms, goals, values and interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.

[4] Challenging behavior means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.

3. The school community's practices are identified, prioritized, and supported to:
   a. promote learning and the positive academic, social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students;
   b. enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities;
   c. address barriers to teaching and learning; and
   d. develop and sustain a restorative infrastructure that builds capacity, accountability, and sustainability.
4. The school community creates a school environment[5] where *everyone* is safe, welcomed, supported, and included in all school-based activities.
5. The school community creates a restorative system that cultivates a sense of belonging through norms and activities that promote social and civic responsibility, and a dedication to cultural responsiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-222d Policy on bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160, P.A. 11-232, P.A. 14-172 and PA 18-15 and PA 19-166.
10-222g Prevention and intervention strategy re bullying and teen dating violence
10-222h Analysis of school districts' efforts re prevention of and response to bullying in schools. School climate assessment instruments
10-222i State-wide safe school climate resource network. *[Repealed, Effective 7/1/2025 State-wide safe school climate resource network]*
10-222k District safe school climate coordinator. Safe school climate specialist. Safe school climate committee (as amended by PA 21-95, Section 14)
10-222p Review of safe school climate plans by Department of Education. Approval or rejection.
PA 23-167 An Act Concerning Transparency in Education

Policy adopted:
cps 11/23

[5] School environment means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs if bullying at or during such other activities, functions, or programs negatively impacts the school environment.

Sample policies are distributed for demonstration purposes only. Unless so noted, contents do not necessarily reflect official policies of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

Approved 4/7/2026
Previous Policy Number: