



**NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ANNUAL NOTIFICATIONS TO PARENTS
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Attached please find the following annual notifications which are also publicized on the district website at www.newmilfordps.org and in student handbooks:

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Notice of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of the New Milford Board of Education that students shall be provided an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the activities, programs, and courses of study offered by the school district without discrimination on account of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, parenthood, pregnancy, alienage or any other basis prohibited by local, state and federal law.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and/or complaints regarding the school district's non-discrimination policy:

Assistant Superintendent of Schools
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776
(860) 354-3235

For more information, please refer to Board Policy #5000 and administrative regulations.

Notice Regarding Sexual, Racial and Other Unlawful Harassment

NOTICE TO ALL STUDENTS
DISCRIMINATION IS AGAINST THE LAW
SEXUAL, RACIAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT
IS AGAINST THE LAW

Everyone in the New Milford Public Schools has a right to feel respected and safe. Consequently, we want you to know about our policies to prevent unlawful harassment and other forms of discrimination.

The New Milford Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation, in any of its programs, activities and employment practices and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Furthermore, it is the policy of the Board to maintain a working and learning environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment based upon a student's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, alienage or any other basis prohibited by law.

A harasser may be a student, school employee, or any other person involved in or present for school-sponsored events or programs.

Harassment may include the following when based upon a student's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or alienage:

1. name calling, jokes or rumors;
2. pulling on clothing;
3. graffiti;
4. notes or cartoons;
5. unwelcome touching of a person or clothing;
6. offensive or graphic posters or book covers;
7. any words, images or actions that make you feel uncomfortable, embarrass you, hurt your feelings or make you feel bad.

If any words, images or actions make you feel uncomfortable or fearful, you need to tell a guidance counselor, the Principal, Assistant Principal or the district's Title IX Coordinator. You may also make a written report.

Your right to privacy will be protected as much as possible.

We take seriously all reports of harassment or violence and will take all appropriate actions based on your report. The school district will also take action if anyone tries to intimidate you because you have reported harassment.

This is a brief summary of the district's policies on non-discrimination and unlawful harassment. Complete policies (Nos. 5000, 5145.5) are available at the Board of Education offices and on the district website at www.newmilfordps.org under BOE Policies.

Students who harass other students or school employees may be subject to discipline as severe as expulsion from school for up to one calendar year.

For more information or to file a complaint of discrimination or unlawful harassment, contact the school district's Title IX Coordinator:

Office of the Assistant Superintendent
50 East Street, New Milford, CT 06776
(860) 354-3235

Title IX Sexual Harassment of Students (Policy 5145.7)

The District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs and activities that it operates. This requirement not to discriminate in the District's education programs and activities extends to admission (as applicable) and employment. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated among New Milford Public Schools' students. It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of sexual harassment is forbidden whether by students, supervisory or non-supervisory personnel, individuals under contract, or volunteers subject to the control of the Board. Students are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful and courteous to employees, to fellow students, and to the public. A student found to be a responsible party for sexual harassment in violation of Title IX may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. A finding that a student is not a responsible party for conduct that violates Title IX does not prevent discipline of the student if the conduct violates another Board policy or another provision of the student code of conduct. Student conduct that is not sexual harassment as defined under the Title IX regulations may still be found to be sexual harassment under Connecticut state law as set forth in Policy 5145.5.

Definitions

Sexual Harassment under Title IX: conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee of the Board conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the Board on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the Board's education program or activity, or
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking.

Actual Knowledge: notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to the District's Title IX coordinator or any employee of an elementary and/or secondary school. This standard is not met where the only District employee with actual knowledge is the respondent.

Complainant: an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Education Program or Activity: includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the District exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment is alleged to have occurred.

Formal Complaint: a document filed by a complainant or signed by the school-based Title IX coordinators alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the District investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

Respondent: an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Sexual Assault: an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation as set forth in 20 USC §1092(f)(6)(A)(v).

Dating Violence: means violence committed by a person (a) who has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim, and (b) where the existence of such relationship shall be determined based on consideration of the following factors (i) the length of the relationship, (ii) the type of relationship, and (iii) the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship as set forth in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(10).

Domestic Violence: includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of Connecticut, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family laws of the jurisdiction as set forth in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(8).

Stalking: means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to (a) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others, or (b) suffer substantial emotional distress as set forth in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(30).

Supportive Measures: non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered, as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the education program or

activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the District's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment.

Procedure

It is the express policy of the Board of Education to encourage victims of sexual harassment or those who have knowledge of sexual harassment to report such claims. Students are encouraged to promptly report sexual harassment to the school-based Title IX coordinator or his/her designee. Victims of sexual harassment may file a report of sexual harassment and receive supportive measures. Victims of sexual harassment who want a formal investigation into the sexual harassment must file a written complaint of sexual harassment and request a formal investigation. Formal complaints will be investigated promptly and corrective action will be taken when the respondent is found, after an investigation, to be the responsible party. Retaliation against any individual because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing regarding a claimed Title IX violation is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action against the retaliator.

Procedures for Reports and Complaints of Sexual Harassment of Students (Regulation 5145.7)

Sexual harassment is prohibited within the New Milford Public Schools. Examples of conduct that may be sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Where submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
2. Where a person is subjected to unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a District education program or activity.
3. Where submission to, or rejection of, the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the District.
4. Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, invitations, slurs, jokes, epithets, or gestures, derogatory comments, assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement, leering, display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures or cartoons.
5. Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome.
6. Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence, or affect the educational opportunities, grades, and/or learning environment of students, including promises or threats regarding grades, course admission, performance evaluations, or recommendations; enhancement or limitation of student benefits or services (e.g. scholarships, financial aid, work study job).
7. Inappropriate attention of a sexual nature from peer(s), i.e. student to student, employee to employee.
8. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking.

How to Report Sexual Harassment

Any person may report sexual harassment, whether or not the person reporting is a person who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. Such report may be made in person, by mail, by telephone or by electronic mail to a school-based Title IX coordinator or his/her designee. Such reports may be made anonymously. Individuals who believe that they have been sexually harassed at a District education program or activity, or those who have knowledge of sexual harassment occurring at or during a District education program or activity should report the same to the school-based Title IX coordinator for the school at which the harassment is alleged to have occurred.

School employees who receive reports of sexual harassment should immediately send the report to the school-based Title IX coordinator with a copy to the school principal.

Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the wishes of the complainant with regard to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures whether or not the complainant files a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

Supportive measures may include, but are not limited to:

1. A change in class schedule;
2. Additional time to make up assignments/tests missed due to the alleged harassment;
3. Ability to withdraw from elective classes without penalty;
4. Separating the parties as much as possible during the school day;
5. Provision of support by the guidance counselor, school social worker or other designated individual;
6. Increased monitoring, supervision or security in locations or activities where the alleged misconduct occurred; and
7. Other similar measures.

Supportive measures provided must be kept confidential unless disclosure is necessary for the supportive measure's effectiveness.

The Title IX Coordinator must document that they have taken measures designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity and such documentation should address why the response was not deliberately indifferent. The Title IX Coordinator must document all supportive measures offered to and/or provided to the complainant. If the Title IX Coordinator does not provide supportive measures to a complainant, the Title IX Coordinator must document why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

A report of sexual harassment or sex discrimination is not a request for a formal Title IX complaint investigation. A complainant who wants a formal complaint investigation must file a formal

written complaint with the District-wide Title IX Coordinator as outlined in the formal grievance procedure below.

Formal Grievance Procedure

The formal grievance procedure is designed to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX and its implementing regulations. The grievance procedure applies only to claims of sex discrimination occurring in the District's education programs or activities. The formal grievance procedure is only initiated if the complainant or the complainant's parent/guardian signs a formal complaint or the Districtwide Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the District investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker and any person designated to facilitate an informal resolution process will recuse themselves if they have a conflict of interest or a bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or to an individual complainant or respondent.

There is a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process. "Responsible for the alleged conduct" is determined by the preponderance of the evidence standard whereby the respondent is responsible for the conduct if there is more than a 50% chance that they engaged in the alleged conduct.

The grievance process will be completed within a reasonable time frame. Although each complaint is different, a reasonable time frame generally means that the grievance process will be completed within sixty (60) days of when the formal complaint is filed. Time frames may be extended for good cause. Both the complainant and respondent should be informed in writing of any extension of the time frame and the reason for the extension. Good cause may include, but is not limited to, the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity or Department of Child and Family investigation; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.

If a respondent is found to be responsible for the alleged conduct and the alleged conduct is found to be a violation to Title IX, the respondent may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion from school. If the respondent is found to be responsible for the alleged conduct and it is determined that the conduct does not violate Title IX as set forth in the regulations implementing Title IX but the conduct violates another Board policy or school rule, the respondent also may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion from school if the respondent is a student or termination of employment if the respondent is an employee.

1. A written formal complaint should include:
 - a. The name of the complainant,
 - b. The date of the complaint,
 - c. The date of the alleged harassment,
 - d. The name or names of the harasser or harassers (if known),
 - e. Identification of the location where such harassment occurred,

- f. A detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment.
2. Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator must provide the following written notice to the parties who are known:
 - a. Notice of the District's grievance process including any informal resolution processes that are available.
 - b. Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment including sufficient details known at the time including the identifies of the parties involved in the incident (if known), the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment in violation of Title IX, and the date and location of the alleged incident (if known).
 - c. A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility will be made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
 - d. A statement that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney.
 - e. A statement that each party will have the opportunity to inspect and review evidence provided.
 - f. A statement that parties who knowingly make false statements or knowingly submit false information during the grievance process may be disciplined.
3. If, during the course of the investigation, the investigator decides to investigate allegations not included in the original notice, the investigator will provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.
4. Risk Assessment: Upon receipt of a formal Title IX written complaint, the Districtwide Title IX Coordinator and/or designee will undertake an individualized safety and risk analysis. If the Districtwide Title IX Coordinator and/or their designee determines that there is an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment that justifies removal of the respondent from the school setting, the Title IX Coordinator and/or their designee, in conjunction with the School Principal, if the respondent is a student, or the Director of Human Resources, if the respondent is an employee, will immediately remove the respondent from the school setting. If the respondent is a student, any decision to suspend or expel the student will follow the District's normal suspension/expulsion process. If the respondent is an employee, the District will follow its normal exclusionary proceedings for employees, including but not limited to placement on administrative leave.
5. The Title IX Coordinator will evaluate whether a report must be made to the Connecticut Department of Children and Families.
6. The District may consolidate two or more formal complaints where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances.
- 7a. Mandatory Dismissal of Formal Complaint: If, during the course of the investigation, it is determined that the respondent's conduct, even if proved, did not occur in the District's education program or activity, or did not occur against a person in the United States,

pursuant to the Title IX Regulations, the District is required to dismiss the formal complaint with regard to that conduct. Such dismissal must be approved by the Superintendent and/or designee. Such a dismissal does not preclude discipline under another provision of the District's Code of Conduct or another District policy including but not limited to Board Policies 4118.112/4218.112 (Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment – Personnel) and 5145.5 (Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment of Students).

- 7b. Permissive Dismissal of Formal Complaint: The District may dismiss the formal complaint or specific allegations therein, if (a) any time during the investigation or decision-making process, the complainant notifies the Districtwide Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein, (b) the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the District, or (c) specific circumstances prevent the District from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein. Such dismissal must be approved by the Superintendent and/or designee. Such a dismissal does not preclude discipline under another provision of the District's Code of Conduct or another District policy including but not limited to Board Policies 4118.112/4218.112 (Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment – Personnel) and 5145.5 (Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment of Students).
8. Upon mandatory or permissive dismissal, the District must promptly send simultaneous written notice of the dismissal to all parties.
9. The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute sexual harassment under Title IX.

Formal Investigation Process:

1. The investigator must be free from bias and conflicts of interest and trained to serve impartially.
2. The investigator must ensure that the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility rests on the District, not the parties.
3. The investigator and decision makers cannot access, consider, disclose or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment of the party, unless the investigator or decision maker obtains that party's parent's/guardian's voluntary, written consent to do so (or the written consent of the party if the party is over the age of eighteen).
4. The investigator will provide an equal opportunity for all parties to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other evidence.
5. No party will be prohibited from discussing the allegations under investigation or gathering and presenting relevant evidence.
6. Each party may be accompanied to any meeting or proceeding by an advisor of their choosing. The advisor, however, is merely there to provide advice to the party and may

not actively participate in the meeting or proceeding. The advisor will not be allowed to ask or answer questions during the meeting or proceeding.

7. Each party will be given written notice of the date, time, location, participants and purpose of all hearings, investigative interview or other meetings to which the party is invited, at least two days in advance in order to provide the party sufficient time to prepare to participate.
8. To the extent the documents and information are not protected from disclosure by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act or any other federal law, both parties will be given an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the formal complaint, including evidence upon which the District does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to the conclusion of the investigation
9. Prior to completing the investigative report, the investigator must send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties will be given a minimum of ten (10) calendar days to submit a written response to that information. The investigator must consider any written response prior to completing the investigative report.
10. After completing the investigation, the investigator must create an investigative report that fairly summarizes the relevant evidence and, at least ten (10) days before the decision maker makes a determination of responsibility, send a copy of the investigation report to each party and the party's advisor, if any, in an electronic format or hard copy, for their review and written response.
11. Credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent or witness.
12. The investigative report must include the following:
 - a. The identity of the parties;
 - b. The conduct potentially constituting sexual harassment;
 - c. A list of the evidence reviewed; and
 - d. Findings of fact.

The Formal Decision-Making Process The Decision maker will be the Superintendent of Schools.

1. The Decision-maker be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator.
2. Before making a decision, the decision-maker must give each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness. After posing the relevant questions to the party or witness, the decision-maker must provide each party with the answers and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

3. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant unless offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent.
4. The Decision maker may not require, allow, rely upon or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privileged has waived the privilege.
5. If the Decision maker chooses to exclude any requested questions, the decision-maker should explain to the party proposing the questions the decision to exclude a question as not relevant. To the extent that explanation is given verbally, the Decision maker should document the decision in writing.
6. The Decision maker must make a determination regarding whether the respondent is responsible for sexual harassment in violation of Title IX. To reach the determination, the Decision maker must use the preponderance of the evidence standard. This standard is met if there is more than a fifty percent (50%) chance that the respondent is responsible for sexual harassment in violation of Title IX.
7. Credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.
8. The Decision maker must issue a written determination that includes:
 - a. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
 - b. A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather other evidence and hearings held;
 - c. Findings of fact supporting the determination;
 - d. Conclusions regarding the application of the District's code of conduct to the facts;
 - e. A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility. The formal report also must include any disciplinary sanctions the District imposes on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity will be provided by the District to the complainant. To the extent that the District does not have permission from the relevant party to reveal the discipline, remedies provided, or other information protected by FERPA, the IDEA, the ADA or other federal law, such portion of the report must be redacted before providing it to the other party.
 - f. The District's appeal procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal the decision.
9. The written decision must be provided to both parties simultaneously.

10. The decision is not considered final until after the date the District provides a written determination of any appeal or the deadline for appeal passes.
11. To the extent that the Decision maker determines that the conduct in question meets the District's criteria for expulsion, the provisions of C.G.S. §10-233d and Board policy must be followed prior to the institution of an expulsion.
12. The Title IX coordinator is responsible for effective implementation of any remedies.
13. Conduct that is not found to rise to the level of a Title IX violation may still constitute prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex or another protected category as defined in federal, state or local law, Board policy or the school's code of conduct. A finding of no responsibility under Title IX does not prohibit the District from investigating and determining that the respondent's conduct violated another provision of Board policy and/or the student code of conduct including but not limited to Board Policies 4118.112/4218.112 (Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment – Personnel) and 5145.5 (Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment of Students).

The Formal Appeal Process The Board of Education Student and Personnel Hearing Committee will make the final appeal decision.

Both parties have a right to appeal the determination of responsibility and/or the District's decision to dismiss the formal complaint or any allegations thereon. Appeals are only available on the following bases:

1. Procedural irregularities that affected the outcome of the matter;
2. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, and that could affect the outcome of the matter; and/or
3. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

The appeal Decision maker will not be the same individual as the original Decision maker, the investigator and/or the Title IX Coordinator.

If an appeal is received, the appeal Decision maker will notify the other party in writing.

Before issuing his/her decision, the Decision maker must give both parties a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome.

The Decision maker must provide his/her/their written decision simultaneously to both parties. The written decision must describe the results of the appeal and the rationale for the result.

Informal Resolution Process

After a formal complaint has been filed, the parties may voluntarily agree to participate in the District's informal resolution process. The parties may not be required to participate in the informal resolution process as a condition of continued enrollment or employment or the enjoyment of any right to an investigation and/or adjudication of the formal complaint of sexual harassment.

Prior to participating in any informal resolution process, the parties will be provided with written notice disclosing the following:

1. The allegations;
2. The circumstances under which the informal resolution process would preclude the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations;
3. The right of any party to withdraw from the informal resolution process at any time prior to the parties agreeing to a resolution and to require the resumption of the formal complaint process after such withdrawal; and
4. The consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including whether records will be maintained or could be shared.

Each party must give written consent to engage in the informal resolution process. Such consent may be withdrawn at any time.

The informal resolution process may not be used to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

The District provides the following types of informal resolution processes:

1. Mediation,
2. An agreement to truncate the steps of the grievance procedure where the parties agree to some or all of the facts.

The District must maintain the following records for a minimum of seven years from the end of the grievance process:

1. The records of each sexual harassment investigation including any determination regarding responsibility and any audio or audiovisual recording or transcript, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and any remedies provided to the complainant designed to restore or preserve equal access to the district's education program or activity;
2. Any appeal and the result therefrom;
3. Any informal resolution and the result therefrom; and
4. Records of any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment.

The District must maintain for a minimum of seven years all materials used to train Title IX coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process. The District will make such training materials publicly available on its website.

Prohibition on Retaliation

Retaliation against any individual because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or

hearing regarding a claimed Title IX violation is prohibited. Retaliation shall include intimidation, threats, coercion or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment if the purpose is to interfere with any right or privilege secured by Title IX.

Complaints of retaliation must be filed through the formal complaint process.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute prohibited retaliation.

Confidentiality

The District will keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by FERPA or as required

by law, or to carry out the purposes of 34 C.F.R. part 106, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing or other proceedings arising thereunder.

Materially False Statements

A complainant, respondent or witness who is found to have made a materially false statement in bad faith during the grievance process shall be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion from school. Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding does not constitute retaliation. A determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

Title IX Coordinator

The Title IX Coordinator(s) for the New Milford Board of Education are:

STUDENTS:

Ms. Holly Hollander
Assistant Superintendent
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776
Phone number: 860-354-3235
hollanderh@newmilfordps.org

STAFF:

Ms. Catherine Gabianelli
Director of Human Resources
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776
860-210-2200
gabianellic@newmilfordps.org

Publication

A copy of this regulation must be provided to all students, parents or legal guardians of elementary and secondary school students, employees, and all unions holding collective bargaining agreements with the District.

Training

All Title IX coordinators, investigators, decision-makers and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, will receive training on the definition of sexual harassment in 34 C.F.R. §106.30, the scope of the District's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process including hearings, appeals and informal resolution processes, as applicable, and how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias. Decision makers will receive training on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about a complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behaviors are not relevant. Investigators will receive training on issues of relevance to create an investigation report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.

Safe School Climate Plan/Bullying (Policy 5131.911)

I. PURPOSE

The Board of Education is dedicated to promoting and maintaining a positive learning environment where all students are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school, socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically. The purpose of this policy is to address the existence of bullying in schools and teen dating violence and to establish the district's Safe School Climate Plan.

II. BULLYING PROHIBITED

- A.** Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the local or regional board of education.
- B.** Bullying is also prohibited outside of the school setting if such bullying results in any of the following: (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- C.** Any form of discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying is also strictly prohibited.
- D.** Any student who engages in bullying as defined in this policy may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. Any school employee who fails to respond to bullying as required by this policy and the district's Safe School Climate Plan may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A.** "Bullying" means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive, which (A) causes physical or emotional harm to an individual, (B) places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or (C) infringes on the rights or opportunities of an individual at school. Bullying shall include, but need not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national

origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

- B. “Cyberbullying” means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.
- C. “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.
- D. “Electronic communication” means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system;
- E. “Hostile environment” means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate;
- F. “Outside of the school setting” means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education;
- G. “Safe School Climate Coordinator” means the individual appointed by the Superintendent of Schools from existing staff who is responsible for:
 - 1. Implementing the district's Safe School Climate Plan;
 - 2. Collaborating with the safe school climate specialists, the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to prevent, identify and respond to bullying in the schools of the district;
 - 3. Providing data and information, in collaboration with the Superintendent of Schools of the district, to the State Department of Education regarding bullying, in accordance with state law; and
 - 4. Meeting with the safe school climate specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss issues relating to bullying in the school district and to make recommendations concerning amendments to the district's Safe School Climate Plan.
- H. “Safe School Climate Specialist” means the principal of each school, or the principal's designee who is responsible for:
 - 1. Investigating or supervising the investigation of reported acts of bullying in the school in accordance with the district's Safe School Climate Plan;
 - 2. Collecting and maintaining records of reports and investigations of bullying in the school; and
 - 3. Acting as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to reports of bullying in the school.
- I. “School employee” means
 - 1. A teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or

2. Any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of education.
- J. “School climate” means the quality and character of school based on patterns of students’, parents’ and guardians’ and school employees’ experiences of school life, including, but not limited to norms goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures;
- K. “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;
- L. “Positive school climate” means a school climate in which (A) the norms, values, expectations and beliefs that support feelings of social, emotional and physical safety are promoted, (B) students, parents and guardians of students and school employees feel engaged and respected and work together to develop and contribute to a shared school vision, (C) educators model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning, and (D) each person feels comfortable contributing to the operation of the school and care of the physical environment of the school;
- M. “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;
- N. “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.

IV. SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN

The district’s Safe School Climate Plan consists of this policy as well as the administrative regulations developed by the Superintendent of Schools to implement this policy. This policy clarifies the legal mandates regarding the district’s response to bullying in its schools. The administrative regulations shall address the broader topic of school climate and may incorporate the National School Climate Standards or other applicable evidence-based standards. Revisions to any part of the Safe School Climate Plan shall be approved by the Board of Education.

A. Reporting Procedures

1. Any student who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying may report the matter to any school employee. Students may anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees.
2. Parents or guardians of students may also file written reports of suspected bullying.
3. School employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying are required to orally notify the safe school climate specialist (or another school administrator if the safe school climate specialist is unavailable), not later than one school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying, and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report.

B. Investigation

1. The safe school climate specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports. Parents of both the alleged bully and the alleged victim

- must receive prompt notice that an investigation has begun.
2. The safe school climate specialist shall review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
 3. The investigator shall assess whether there is a necessity to take immediate interim measures to prevent further allegations of bullying or retaliation of any kind while the investigation is pending.
 4. The investigator shall remind involved parties that any form of discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying is strictly prohibited.
 5. At all times the investigator must be mindful of the requirements regarding the confidentiality of education records.
 6. If the allegations of bullying involve acts that may also constitute unlawful harassment based upon a student's race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, the investigator shall notify the district's Title IX Coordinator. The student who has made a report of bullying and his/her parent or guardian will be provided with information about the district's policies and procedures for making a complaint of unlawful harassment.
 7. After a prompt investigation, the investigator should ascertain whether the alleged conduct occurred and whether such conduct constitutes bullying as defined by this policy.

C. Response to Verified Acts of Bullying

1. If it is determined that bullying has occurred, the school will take prompt corrective action that is reasonably calculated to stop the bullying and prevent any recurrence of such behavior. As part of such remedial action, the offender may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action which may include, but is not limited to one or a combination of the following: counseling, awareness training, warning, reassignment, transfer, suspension, or expulsion.
2. Each school shall notify the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation investigation (A) of the results of such investigation, and (B) verbally and by electronic mail, if such parents' or guardians' electronic mail addresses are known, that such parents or guardians may refer to the plain language explanation of the rights and remedies available under sections 10-4a and 10-4b published on the Internet web site of the local or regional board of education pursuant to section 10-222r. This notification shall include a description of the response of school employees to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying.
3. Each school is required to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed and to prevent further acts of bullying. This invitation shall also include the description of the response of school employees to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying. The

meeting with parents of the bully shall be separate and distinct from the meeting with the parents of the victim.

4. A student safety support plan shall be developed for any student against whom an act of bullying was directed. The plan shall address safety measures the school will take to protect such students against further acts of bullying. When meeting with the parents of a student who has been the victim of bullying, school officials shall communicate not only the details of the student safety support plan, but also the policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying.
5. Case-by-case interventions shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline.
6. The principal of a school, or designee, shall notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such principal, or designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct.

D. Prevention and Intervention Strategy

Students shall be provided with a variety of prevention and intervention strategies which may include, but are not limited to:

1. Implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying and teen dating violence identified by the State Department of Education;
2. School rules prohibiting bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts;
3. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying and teen dating violence is likely to occur;
4. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying and teen dating violence education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school;
5. Individual interventions with the bully, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied child, parents and school employees;
6. School-wide training related to safe school climate;
7. Student peer training, education and support;
8. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying and teen dating violence prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
9. Culturally competent school-based curriculum focused on social-emotional learning, self-awareness and self-regulation;
10. Referrals to a school counselor, psychologist or other appropriate social or mental health service, and periodic follow-up by the safe school climate specialist with the bullied student.

E. Documentation and Record Keeping

1. Safe school specialists shall establish a procedure for each school to:
 - a. Document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school.
 - b. Maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection. This public list must not contain any personally identifiable information about any student or information that might

reasonably lead to the identification of any student.

2. The district's safe school climate coordinator shall annually report the number of verified acts of bullying in the district's schools to the Department of Education in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.
3. The Safe School Climate Plan shall be submitted for approval by the State Department of Education in accordance with state law.

F. Training

1. All school employees must annually complete training on the prevention, identification and response to bullying, teen dating violence and the prevention of and response to youth suicide. The training will be provided to teachers, administrators and pupil personnel who hold the initial educator, provisional educator or professional educator certificate via in-service training. (Such in-service training may not be required if the district implements any evidence-based model approach that is approved by the State Department of Education and is consistent with state law.) All other school employees shall receive such training as provided by the State Department of Education.
2. As part of the prevention and intervention strategies, schools may also implement school-wide training related to safe school climate and student peer training, education and support.

G. Safe School Climate Committee

Each school year, the principal of each school shall establish a committee (or designate at least one existing committee in the school) to be responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues relating to bullying in the school. Such committee shall include at least one parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the school appointed by the school principal. Parents or guardians who serve on such committee shall not participate in the activities described in subparagraphs (1) and (2) below or any other activity that may compromise the confidentiality of a student. The safe school climate committee of each school shall:

1. Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying;
2. Identify and address patterns of bullying among students in the school;
3. Review and make recommendations to amend school policies relating to bullying;
4. Review and make recommendations to the district safe school climate coordinator regarding the district's safe school climate plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
5. Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying;
6. Collaborate with the district safe school climate coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying, in accordance with the law;
7. Perform any other duties as determined by the school principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying for the school.

H. Periodic Assessment of School Climate

1. On and after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, each school in the district shall complete an assessment using the school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the State Department of Education. The assessments for each school in the district shall be submitted to the State Department of Education so that the state can monitor bullying prevention efforts over time and

- compare each district's progress to state trends.
2. Assessment tools may also be used by Safe School Climate Committees to review and make recommendations for revisions to the district's Safe School Climate Plan.
 3. Assessment tools shall include student assessment instruments, including surveys that contain uniform grade-level appropriate questions that collect information about students' perspectives and opinions about the school climate at the school and allow students to complete and submit such assessments and survey anonymously.

I. Notice Requirements

1. At the beginning of each school year, each school will provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's Safe School Climate Plan.
2. Students and the parents or guardians of students shall be notified annually at the beginning of the school year of the process by which students may make reports of bullying.
3. Students shall be provided with notice of the definition of bullying, cyberbullying and the potential consequences of engaging in such acts by the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying.
4. The district's Safe School Climate Plan shall be made available on the board's and each individual school in the school district's Internet web site and ensure that such plan is included in the school district's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

Attendance: (Annual Notification of Parental Obligations under C.G.S. 10-184)

Connecticut law requires that the school district annually provide you with written notice of your obligations under Connecticut General Statute 10-184. This law requires each parent or guardian of a child five years of age and older and under eighteen years of age to ensure that the child attends school regularly when school is in session — unless such parent or guardian shows that the child is receiving equivalent instruction elsewhere, or that the child has graduated from high school. Parents or guardians of a child five or six years of age have the option of not sending the child to school until age six or age seven. Parents or guardians should communicate this decision to the district by personally appearing at the school district office and signing an option form. The parent or guardian of a child seventeen years of age may consent to such child's withdrawal from school by signing a withdrawal form at the school district office. Such parent or guardian shall personally appear at the school district office and sign a withdrawal form. Such withdrawal form shall include an attestation from a guidance counselor, school counselor or school administrator of the school that the District has provided such parent or person with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community.

Regular student attendance is essential to the educational process. So that we can inform you if your child is absent without a previous explanation, Connecticut laws also require that we obtain from you a telephone number or other means of contacting you during the school day. Please complete and return the demographic form which we will send to you at the beginning of the school year.

Truancy - Policy #5113

Attendance

Classroom learning experiences are the basis for public school education. Time lost from class is lost instructional opportunity. The attendance policy is intended to promote student success.

The New Milford Board of Education requires parents to ensure that their children attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public schools are in session.

Regular attendance at school is not only required by state law, but is an integral component in student success and a matter of self-discipline which will prove important later in life. Class time is an invaluable opportunity for students and teachers to interact with each other and exchange ideas. It is also the forum for a wide range of learning opportunities which cannot be duplicated outside of the classroom. Therefore, in order to avail themselves of the maximum opportunity for learning, students need to be present in each and every class.

The success of a student is determined by the cooperative effort of the student, parents, school, and the community. Failure of these groups to live up to their responsibilities can result in failure for the student. For this reason, responsibilities must be clearly defined and followed.

The procedures and regulations shall be in accordance with Board policy and Connecticut State law. The Superintendent shall insure that administrative procedures and disciplinary actions for student attendance will be contained in each student/parent handbook.

Procedures and regulations shall be maintained and implemented for the schools to provide age-appropriate measures which promote regular and punctual attendance. Schools that share the same grade levels shall have the same procedures and regulations. The procedures and regulations shall clearly define the responsibilities of parents and students regarding attendance in class and school, tardiness, early dismissal, completion of missed work, and other areas which affect the classroom learning experience.

The Principal will give annual written notice to parents/guardian of their obligations according to Connecticut General Statute 10-184. At the beginning of each academic year -- or, in the case of students who enroll during the school year, at the time of enrollment -- the school district will require from the parents/guardians a telephone number where they can be contacted during the school day (i.e. from first bell to dismissal).

The official school day, during which all students are the responsibility of the high school, begins when the student either boards a school bus to come to school or otherwise when the student arrives on campus for the day. Students may neither get off the bus prior to arrival at school nor may they leave campus once they have arrived, without prior approval of the Principal or the Principal's designee.

Standards

A. Student Responsibilities

1. To attend all classes except for reasons stated under "Excused Absence" and to be punctual.
2. To report directly to the Attendance Office or School Office when tardy to school, in accordance with school procedures.
3. To notify teachers of anticipated absence and to make arrangements to make up work promptly upon return from an excused absence. In the case of an extended absence, to seek faculty assistance if needed and to make up work in a reasonable time frame.

4. To communicate with parents, teachers, and/or school administrators any problems related to lack of attendance and/or tardiness to school or any class.
5. To report one's own absences from school or class in accordance with school procedures if one is legally emancipated.

B. Parent Responsibilities:

1. To communicate and work cooperatively with the school for the benefit of the student.
2. To emphasize the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. To authorize only those absences that are included under "Excused Absence." Also, to make every effort to schedule appointments and vacations outside of school hours.
3. To contact the school regarding an absence or tardy the morning of that absence or tardy.
4. To assist students with arrangements to seek faculty assistance and make up missed work resulting from an absence.

C. School Responsibilities:

1. To take all actions necessary to ensure the success of the student, including parent conferences, counseling, and interaction with the community in making use of community services.
2. To keep accurate attendance records.
3. To notify parents promptly (when parents have not called the school) of all absences whether, for one class or the entire school day.
4. To arrange opportunities for the students to make up missed tests, quizzes and assignments resulting from absences, upon their return to school. In the case of extended absence, to prepare with the student a plan for faculty assistance and an opportunity to make up work in a reasonable time frame.

D. Community Responsibilities:

1. To realize that the success of students contributes to the success of the community.
2. To encourage regular school attendance as a prerequisite for student employment.
3. To encourage area businesses to refrain from allowing students to congregate during school hours.
4. To encourage medical and dental offices to arrange student appointments outside of school hours.
5. To do all that is possible under current state law to ensure that all students attend school regularly.

Definitions

1. Truant - Shall mean a student age 5 — 18 inclusive who has four unexcused absences in any one month or ten unexcused absences in one school year.
2. Tardy - A student shall be considered tardy if he/she arrives at class after classes have begun.
3. Absence - any non-attendance of an enrolled student. A student is considered to be in attendance if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g. field trip), for at least half of the regular school day.
4. Disciplinary Absence - an absence that is the result of school or district disciplinary action such as an out-of-school suspension or expulsion. Disciplinary absences are neither excused nor unexcused.
5. Documentation of absence — a written explanation of the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence. This includes a signed note from the student's parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with the parent/guardian regarding the absence, or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional, as appropriate. Separate documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absenteeism. Non-English speaking parents/guardians may submit documentation in their native language.
6. Excused Absence - A student's non-attendance from school shall be considered excused if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten school days of the student's return to school or in accordance with Section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes (when the school medical advisor provides notice to a parent or guardian that a student has symptoms of a communicable disease) and meets the following criteria:
 - A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation; and
 - B. For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:
 1. student illness (all student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of absence);
 2. up to two (2) “mental health wellness days,” during which a student attends to such student’s emotional and psychological well-being in lieu of attending school, which days may not be taken consecutively;
 3. student's observance of a religious holiday;
 4. death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;

5. mandated court appearances (additional documentation required); the lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason); or
 6. extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.
- C. Up to ten absences will be considered excused for students to visit with parents or legal guardians who are active members of the armed forces and have been called to duty for, are on leave from or have immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. The Board of Education may grant additional excused absences for such purposes.
7. Unexcused absence — Any absence that does not meet the criteria for an excused absence (including proper documentation) or a disciplinary absence.
 8. Dismissal - No school, grade, or class may be dismissed before the regularly scheduled dismissal time without the approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee. No teacher may permit any individual student to leave school prior to the regular hour of dismissal without the permission of the Principal. No student may be permitted to leave school at any time other than at regular dismissal without the approval of the student's parent/guardian. If a court official with legal permission to take custody of a child, or if a police officer arrests a student, the parent/guardian should be notified of these situations by the administration.
 9. Chronically Absent Child - a child who is enrolled in a school under the jurisdiction of the Board and whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than ten per cent of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at such school during such school year.

Attendance

Connecticut state law requires parents to cause their children, ages five through eighteen inclusive, to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. Parents or persons having control of a child five years of age have the option of not sending the child to school until age six or seven. The parent or person having control of a child of age five or six shall exercise such option by personally appearing at the school district office and signing an option form. At such time, school personnel shall provide the parent or person with information on the educational opportunities available in the school system. Mandatory attendance terminates upon graduation or withdrawal with written parent/guardian consent at age seventeen.

Classroom learning experiences are the basis for public school education. Time lost from class is lost instructional opportunity. The Board of Education requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child, and students should not be absent from school without parental knowledge and consent.

Parents and guardians shall be notified when a student has reached nine (9) absences and reminded of the stricter rules that apply to further absences for the remainder of the school year.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall periodically audit a small percentage of the documentation provided for student absences in order to ensure general compliance with this policy.

Excessive Absences/Truancy

It is the policy of the Board of Education to monitor school attendance so as to identify students who are truant, and to enlist the cooperation of parents and, when necessary, the juvenile justice system, in order to address the problem when it arises. The following truancy procedures are hereby adopted:

For purpose of these procedures, "Parent" means the parent, guardian or other person having control of a child.

1. Whenever a student in grade K-8 is absent from school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been received by school personnel that the parent or other person having control of the child is aware of the student's absence, school personnel or volunteers under the direction of the building principal shall make a reasonable effort to notify the parent of the student's absence by telephone.
2. When a student is identified as a truant, the Superintendent or his/her designee will conduct a meeting with the parent, the student, if appropriate, and with such school personnel where involvement is determined appropriate. The meeting will occur not later than ten (10) school days after the child's fourth (4th) unexcused absence in a month or the tenth (10th) unexcused absences in a school year and will be for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating the reasons for truancy. In reviewing and evaluating the reasons for the student's truancy, the participants of the meeting should consider the appropriateness of referring the student to the school's [Student Assistance Team] or planning and placement team. At the meeting, school personnel shall be designated to coordinate services with and referrals of children to community agencies providing child and family services if appropriate.

Chronic Absenteeism

The Board will report data to the state regarding the number of students who are truant and chronically absent as required by law. In the event that a school experiences high rates of chronic absenteeism, the Superintendent will form an attendance review team to address the problem. Such attendance review teams may utilize resources developed by the State Department of Education for chronic absenteeism prevention and intervention.

Confidentiality of Student Information

Directory information

NOTIFICATION OF DISCLOSURE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT
--

Name of Student: _____

Date: August 25, 2021

Name of School: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian and Student:

Federal law enables the School District to release “directory” information about the above-named student to the public without your prior written consent. The term “directory information” refers to information that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Although the District uses its discretion and exercises caution when releasing directory information about its students, it is possible that information regarding your child may be released to parties such as the media, colleges, civic or school-related organizations, employment and military recruiters, as well as to the public via school district websites or in published programs for athletic, music, theater and other school sponsored presentations.

Directory information is the following categories of information:

1. Name of student
2. Address
3. Telephone number
4. Electronic mail address
5. Photograph
6. Date and place of birth
7. Major field of study
8. Grade level
9. Dates of attendance
10. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
11. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
12. Degrees, honors and awards received (including publication of honor roll)
13. Most recent school previously attended

IF YOU DO NOT WANT ANY OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD TO BE RELEASED WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT, YOU MUST NOTIFY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE BY COMPLETING AND RETURNING THE FOLLOWING FORM:

Refusal to allow disclosure of directory information

I understand that the District has designated the above categories as directory information and may disclose such information about my child without my prior written consent. I refuse to allow disclosure of directory information to the following extent:

- Do NOT release information from the specific categories I have circled above without prior written consent.
- Do NOT release any category of directory information without prior written consent.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Rights

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

Consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [“FERPA”], parents of enrolled students and students over 18 years of age [“eligible students”] have certain rights with respect to education records. These rights are as follows:

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

The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask school officials to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading or a violation of privacy. If school officials decide not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, they will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records except to the extent that FERPA, specifically as set forth in 34 C.F.R. §99.31, authorizes disclosure without consent, including but not limited to the following situations:

- To other school officials within the school system who have a legitimate educational interest. A school official is defined as persons who are employed by the Board in an administrative, counseling, supervisory, academic, student support services, research position, or a support person to these positions AND contractors, consultants, volunteers or other parties engaged to perform a special task or service for the Board. School officials include the superintendent, administrators, supervisors, teachers, school nurses, medical advisors, psychologists, social workers, guidance counselors, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, paraprofessionals, support or clerical staff, security personnel, school resource officers, members of the Board of Education, attorneys who represent the District, accountants, auditors, bus contractors, medical or educational consultants or therapists; or a person serving on a Board of Education committee or as a hearing officer in discipline cases. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
- To other agencies or institutions that have requested the records and in which the student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided that the school makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena prior to compliance.
- To appropriate parties in the event of a health or safety emergency.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by school officials to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

The Board of Education has adopted a comprehensive written policy concerning the access, confidentiality and amendment of students’ education records. Copies of the complete “Education Records” policy are available at www.newmildfordps.org

Military and college recruiters

**-NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS OF SECONDARY STUDENTS-
ACCESS TO STUDENT INFORMATION BY
MILITARY and COLLEGE RECRUITERS**

Name of Student: _____

Date: August 25, 2021

Name of School: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian and Secondary Students:

In compliance with federal law, our school district must, upon request, provide to military recruiters, colleges and universities, access to the names, addresses and telephone listings of secondary students.

A parent/guardian or student may request that the student's name, address, and telephone number not be released by the District without prior written parental consent. If you would like to make such a request, please complete the following and return it to your child's school. If we do not receive this request within two weeks of the date of this notice, we will give military recruiters, colleges and universities access to your child's name, address and telephone listing.

IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR CHILD'S NAME, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER TO BE RELEASED TO MILITARY OR COLLEGE RECRUITERS WITHOUT PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT, YOU MUST NOTIFY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE BY COMPLETING AND RETURNING THE FOLLOWING FORM:

Request for non-disclosure of information to recruiters

I am aware the District must provide access to military recruiters and colleges or universities of student names, addresses and telephone listings. I am aware the District will provide this information upon request, unless I require that such information not be given to the following groups without prior written parental consent. I therefore request the following:

Military Recruiters *(please check one)*

- Do not release my secondary student's information to military recruiters at any time.
- Do not release my secondary student's information to military recruiters until you have first obtained my *prior written parental consent* before doing so.

Colleges, Universities, or Institutions of Higher Learning *(please check one)*

- Do not release my secondary student's information to colleges, universities or other institutions of higher learning at any time.
- Do not release my secondary student's information to colleges, universities or institutions of higher learning until you have first obtained my *prior written parental consent* before doing so.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Adult Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 U.S.C. § 1232h (“PPRA”) affords parents and eligible students over the age of eighteen certain rights regarding the District’s conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education -

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of -

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use -

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

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

The school district has adopted policies (Board of Education Policy 6162.51 and 6141.11) and regulations, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The school district will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The school district will also directly notify, such as through United States Mail or e-mail, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The school district will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the district has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out

of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. The following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution;
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED;
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

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

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

Students with Disabilities – Reasonable Accommodations and Special Education

Section 504

A student who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity or otherwise substantially limits the student's ability to access his or her education may be entitled to reasonable accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Major life activities include, but are not limited to learning, concentrating, thinking, working, communicating, caring for oneself, seeing, hearing, walking, breathing or eating as well as the operation of a major bodily function. A student's eligibility for such accommodations is determined by a Section 504 Team, and any accommodations the disabled student may require are set forth in what is known as a Section 504 Plan. The 504 Plan outlines the modifications and accommodations that the disabled student needs in order to participate fully in the programs offered by the school. If you wish to have your child considered for identification for accommodations under Section 504, you should contact your child's assistant principal and/or guidance counselor. Any questions, concerns or disagreements regarding 504 Plans should be directed to the school district's Section 504 Coordinator:

Assistant Superintendent of Schools
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776
(860) 354-3235

Special Education

Students with disabilities who need specialized instruction may qualify for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, or "IDEA." Unlike Section 504 accommodations, which are intended to support the student in a general education setting, specialized instruction is tailored to the student's unique academic needs and consists in large part of annual goals and short-term objectives that are set forth in the student's Individual Education Plan, or "IEP." The New Milford Public School system actively seeks to identify children, beginning at age 3, who may require special education services. Eligibility for special education is determined by a Planning and Placement Team, or "PPT." Before a child is referred to a PPT, however, the law requires that the school system consider and, where appropriate, implement alternative procedures and programs in a general education setting.

Referrals for special education may be made by school personnel as well as from a student's parents, physician, or social worker. If you wish to refer your child for special education services, you should contact the principal or assistant principal at your child's school. Any questions, concerns or disagreements regarding special education should be directed to:

Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services
50 East Street
New Milford, CT 06776
(860) 354-2654

In providing special education and/or reasonable accommodations to students, the district complies with the requirements of federal and state law.

Video surveillance

Video camera surveillance may be used on school buses, other transportation vehicles, in school buildings and on school property for the purpose of promoting the safety and security of students, staff and property. There will be no video surveillance in areas where students and staff have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as lavatories and locker rooms. For more information, please refer to Board Policy 5131.111.

Use of canines to detect illicit substances on school grounds

New Milford Public Schools has zero tolerance for the possession and/or use of illegal drugs on school campuses. As educators, we are concerned about the use of illegal drugs by adolescents in our community. Our school district's efforts to prevent drug use at New Milford High School and Schaghticoke Middle School are well-established through our comprehensive health education and developmental guidance programs. However, despite our best efforts, some students continue to engage in unsafe behavior, take dangerous risks with drugs, and possess drugs on school grounds.

Therefore, working in collaboration with the New Milford Police Department, school administrators will periodically invite a canine unit trained in the detection of drugs onto school campuses. It is our intention to use the canine unit to conduct sweeps through the hallways, bathrooms, common areas, lockers and locker rooms, and the parking lot. During this procedure students will remain in their classrooms, much as they do when we practice an emergency drill. The canine unit will not be used in rooms occupied by students, nor will it be used to sniff students. If the canine unit detects an illicit substance in a student locker or vehicle, the student who is responsible for that locker or vehicle shall be called to witness any search. The student will be brought to an administrative office, questioned and possibly searched by a school administrator. Students who are discovered to be in possession of illegal drugs will be subject to disciplinary consequences including suspension and expulsion from school as well as possible arrest.

Transportation Complaints

PROCEDURE FOR FILING REQUESTS/COMPLAINTS/CONCERNS REGARDING SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

- I. Immediate Safety Concerns, Clarification of Existing Routes/Schedules and Complaints Regarding Existing Transportation Services:**
 - These requests can be made via telephone to All-Star Transportation Dispatch Office at 860-350-2880.
- II. Requests for extensions and alterations of service during the school year:**

- These requests should be made in writing to the New Milford Public Schools, Director of Fiscal Services and Operations, 50 East Street, New Milford, CT 06776.
- Upon receipt of your request, you will be contacted within fifteen (15) business days regarding the disposition of the matter. Typically, these requests are not of an immediate or time-sensitive nature.

III. Requests for extensions and alterations of service during the summer:

During the summer, requests for alterations of service received on or before August 15 will be handled within ten business days prior to the opening of school. Requests received after August 15 will be processed within fifteen business days of the request.

IV. Student Discipline Issues:

- All student discipline issues should be addressed with the school principal or designee.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Policy 5114 Removal/Suspension/Expulsion

SECTION I DEFINITIONS

- A. "Bullying"** is defined as an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive, which (A) causes physical or emotional harm to an individual, (B) places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or (C) infringes on the rights or opportunities of an individual at school. Bullying shall include but not be limited to a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socio-economic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical developmental or sensory disability or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.
- B. "Cyberbullying"** is 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.
- C. "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 motor vehicle and a dog that has been commanded to attack.
- D. "Days"** is defined as days when school is in session.
- 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.
- F. "Emergency"** is defined as a situation under which the continued presence of the student in the school imposes 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.

- G. **"Exclusion"** is defined as any denial of public school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.
- H. **"Expulsion"** is defined as an exclusion 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, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond a period of one (1) calendar year. Such period of exclusion may extend to the school year following the school year in which such exclusion was imposed.
- I. **"Firearm"** means 1) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; 2) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; 3) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or 4) any destructive device. Firearm does not include any antique firearm. For purposes of this definition "destructive device" means any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than 4 ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than 1/4 ounce, mine, or device similar to any of the weapons described herein.
- J. **"In-school suspension"** is defined as an exclusion from regular classroom activity for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, but not an exclusion from school, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such in-school suspension was imposed. An in-school suspension may be served in the school that the pupil attends, or in any school building under the jurisdiction of the Board. An in-school suspension may include reassignment to a regular classroom program in a different school in the school district; such reassignment shall not constitute a "suspension" or "expulsion" under this policy.
- K. **"Martial arts weapon"** means a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or chinese star.
- L. **"Possess"** means to have physical possession or otherwise to exercise dominion or control over tangible property.
- M. **"Removal"** is defined as an exclusion from a classroom for all or part of a single class period, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond 90 minutes.
- N. **"School sponsored activity"** is defined as any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board and includes activities conducted on or off school property.
- O. **"Suspension"** is defined as an exclusion from school privileges and/or from transportation services for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension was imposed.

Suspensions shall be in-school suspensions except the Board of Education may authorize the administration of schools under its direction to impose an out-of-school suspension on any pupil in (1) grades three to twelve, inclusive, if, during the suspension hearing, (A) the administration determines that the pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the pupil shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension, or (B) the administration determines that an

out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence of (i) previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such pupil, and (ii) efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive behavioral support strategies; or (2) grades preschool to two, inclusive, if during the hearing, the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence that such pupil's conduct on school grounds is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.

- P.** "Vehicle" means a "motor vehicle" as defined in Section 14-1 of the Connecticut General Statutes, snow mobile, any aircraft, or any vessel equipped for propulsion by mechanical means or sail.

SECTION II REMOVAL FROM CLASS

- A.** Each teacher shall have the authority to remove a student from class when such student deliberately causes a serious disruption of the educational process within the classroom, provided that no student shall be removed from class more than six times in any year, nor more than twice in one week unless such student is referred to the building principal, or his/her designee, and granted an informal hearing as set forth in section IV C of this policy.
- B.** Whenever any teacher removes a student from the classroom, such teacher shall send the student to a designated area and shall immediately inform the building principal or his/her designee as to the name of the student against whom such disciplinary action was taken and the reason therefore.

SECTION III STANDARDS GOVERNING SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

- A.** Conduct on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity may be cause for suspension when such conduct:
1. Violates a publicized policy; or
 2. Seriously disrupts the educational process; or
 3. Endangers persons or property.
- B.** Conduct off school grounds below may be cause for suspension when such conduct:
1. Violates a publicized policy of the Board and;
 2. Seriously disrupts the educational process.
- C.** Conduct on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity may be cause for expulsion when such conduct:
1. Violates a publicized policy; and
 2. Seriously disrupts the educational process; or
 3. Endangers persons or property.
- D.** Conduct off school grounds may be cause for expulsion when such conduct:

1. Violates a publicized policy; and
 2. Seriously disrupts the educational process.
- E.** The following conduct is prohibited and will be considered cause for suspension and/or expulsion:
1. Threatening, harassing or intimidating another member of the school community in any manner, including orally, in writing, via electronic communication, or by gestures or other physical behavior such as stalking. Members of the school community include any school employee, fellow student, consultant, volunteer, or visitor to a school;
 2. Use of physical force against another person which is not reasonably necessary for self-defense;
 3. Theft of personal or school property, or taking or attempting to take personal property or money from another person, or from his/her presence, by means of force or fear;
 4. Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, damage to school property;
 5. Possession, use, transmission or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, performance enhancing drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, cocaine, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind including inhalants, prescription drugs for which the possessor, user or transmitter has no legal prescription, or drug paraphernalia;
 6. Possession or transmission of a facsimile of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, or marijuana;
 7. Knowingly being in the presence of those who are in possession of, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind;
 8. Possession or transmission of any weapon, including but not limited to any firearm, deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, martial arts weapon, knife, box cutter, razor, blade, chemical sprays, electroshock weapons or facsimile of any weapon or instrument;
 9. Using or copying the academic work of another and presenting it as his/her own without proper attribution;
 10. Possessing, smoking or consuming tobacco products or using vapor products and electronic devices that simulate smoking by delivering nicotine or other substances by the inhalation of a vapor on school grounds;
 11. Open defiance of the authority of any teacher or person having authority over the student, including verbal abuse;
 12. Intentional and successful incitement of truancy by other students;
 13. Bullying or cyberbullying, including such conduct that may occur outside of the school setting if such bullying (1) creates a hostile environment at school for the

victim; (2) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (3) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;

14. Any violation of the Boards policies prohibiting sexual, racial and other unlawful harassment including any act of harassment based on an individual's race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression or religion;
 15. Intentional incitement which results in an unauthorized occupation of any part of a school or other facility owned by any school district;
 16. Participation in an unauthorized occupancy of any part of any school or school premises or other building owned by any school district and failure to leave such school premises or other facility promptly after having been directed to do so by the principal or other person in charge of such building or facility;
 17. Making false bomb threats or other threats to the safety of students, staff members and/or other persons;
 18. Unauthorized use of any school computer, computer system, computer software, Internet connection or similar school property system or the use of such property or system for unauthorized or non-school related purposes;
 19. Creating, using, accessing, uploading, downloading, possessing, transmitting or distributing profane, pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, harassing, threatening or illegal material or communications including but not limited to electronic data and communications;
 20. Violation of any other Board policy, rule, agreement, or directive dealing with student conduct, including that dealing with conduct on school buses and the use of school district equipment and;
 21. Violation of any federal or state law which would indicate that the violator presents a danger to any person in the school community or to school property.
- F.** Expulsion proceedings pursuant to section V, shall be required whenever there is reason to believe that any student 1) was in possession of a firearm, deadly weapon, dangerous instrument or martial arts weapon, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity; 2) off school grounds, did possess a firearm in violation of Connecticut General Statutes §29-35, or did possess and use such a firearm, dangerous instrument, deadly weapon or martial arts weapon in the commission of a crime; or 3) on or off school grounds, offered for sale or distribution a controlled substance as defined in Connecticut General Statutes, §21a-240(9), whose manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting or possessing with intent to sell or dispense, offering or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Connecticut General Statutes §§21a-277 and 21a-278. A student shall be expelled for a period of one calendar year if the Board of Education finds that the student engaged in any of the conduct described herein, provided the period of expulsion may be modified on a case-by-case basis.

In the event it is determined by the Superintendent that a student issued a threat against a member of the school community as described in paragraph C.1., above, the matter shall be referred to law enforcement officials for possible criminal prosecution and the Superintendent shall take all available measures to ensure the safety of persons in the

school community in the event of the student's return to school.

- G. Students in kindergarten, first and second grade may not be expelled except for mandatory reasons as described in the previous paragraph and in section V below.

SECTION IV SUSPENSION PROCEDURE

- A. The administration of each school is authorized to invoke suspension for a period of up to ten (10) days, or to invoke in-school suspension for a period of up to ten (10) days, of any student for one or more of the reasons stated in section III, above, in accordance with the procedure outlined in Paragraph C of this section. Moreover, the administration is authorized to suspend a student from transportation services whose conduct while receiving transportation violates the standards set forth in section III, above. The school administration is authorized to immediately suspend any student when there is an emergency as defined in section I, above.

Suspensions shall be in-school suspensions, except an out-of-school suspension may be imposed if (A):

GRADES K to 2:

the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence that such pupil's conduct on school grounds is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.

GRADES 3-12:

the administration determines that the pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the pupil shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension, or (B) the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence of (i) previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such pupil, and (ii) efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive behavioral support strategies.

- B. In the case of suspension, the school administration shall notify the Superintendent within twenty-four (24) hours of the suspension as to the name of the student who has been suspended and the reason for suspension. Any student who is suspended shall be given an opportunity to complete any class work including but not limited to examinations missed during the period of his/her suspension.
- C. Except in the case of an emergency as defined in section I, above, a student shall be afforded the opportunity to meet with a member of the administration and to discuss the stated charges prior to the effectuation of any period of suspension or in-school suspension. If at such a meeting the student denies the stated charges he/she may at that time present his/her version of the incident(s) upon which the proposed suspension is based. The school administration shall then determine whether or not suspension or in-school suspension is warranted. In determining the length of a suspension period, the school administration may receive and consider evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to removal from a classroom, in-school suspension, suspension or expulsion.
- D. 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 a hearing as provided in

section V(B) of this policy is first granted.

- E. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, unless a hearing as provided in section V(B) of this policy is first granted.
- F. Whenever a student is suspended, notice of the suspension and the conduct for which the student was suspended shall be included on the student's cumulative educational record. Such notice shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school.
- G. The administration may shorten or waive the suspension period of a student who is suspended for the first time and who has never been expelled if the student successfully completes a program and any other conditions specified by the administration. Any such program shall be at no expense to the student or his/her parents/guardians. For a student whose suspension period is shortened or waived, the notice of the disciplinary action must be expunged from the cumulative education record if the student graduates from high school or, if the administration chooses, at the time the student completes the specified program and any other conditions required by the administration, whichever is earlier.

SECTION V EXPULSION PROCEDURES

The Board of Education may expel any student in grades three to twelve, inclusive, for one or more of the reasons stated in section III if, in the Superintendent's judgment, such disciplinary action is in the best interests of the school system. An expulsion hearing is required in any instance in which the Superintendent has reason to believe a student in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive has engaged in the conduct described in section III (F). The procedures outlined in Paragraphs A and B, below, shall be followed prior to the effectuation of any expulsion unless an "emergency" as defined in section I, above, exists. If an emergency exists, such a hearing shall be held as soon after the expulsion as possible.

- A. The Board of Education shall notify the student concerned and his/her parents, or the student if he/she has attained the age of eighteen (18), that expulsion is under consideration. Such notice shall contain the information required under Paragraph B of this section, and shall be given at least five (5) business days before the hearing. Three members of the Board of Education shall constitute a quorum for an expulsion hearing. A student may be expelled if a majority of the Board members sitting in the expulsion hearing vote to expel, except that when only three Board members are presiding at the hearing, a unanimous vote shall be required for expulsion.
- B. The procedure for any hearing conducted under this section shall be determined by the hearing officer or Board chairperson, as appropriate, but shall include the right to:
 - 1. Notice of the proposed hearing which shall include:
 - a. a statement of the time, place, and nature of the hearing;
 - b. a statement of the legal authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held;
 - c. reference to the particular sections of the Connecticut General Statutes or school policies involved;

- d. a short and plain statement of the matters asserted, if such matters have not already been provided in a statement of reasons requested by the student; the statement so provided may be limited to a statement of the issues involved if it is not possible to state the issues in detail at the time such notice is served. Upon request from the student concerned a more definite and detailed statement of the issues shall be furnished;
 - e. a statement, where appropriate, that the Board is not required to offer an alternative educational opportunity to any student between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who has been expelled previously or;
 - f. information concerning the parent's or guardian's and the student's legal rights and legal services provided free of charge or at a reduced rate that are available locally and how to access such services;
2. The opportunity to be heard;
 3. The opportunity to present witnesses and introduce documentary evidence;
 4. The opportunity to cross-examine adverse witnesses and challenge the introduction of documentary evidence;
 5. The opportunity to be represented by an attorney or other advocate; the parent or guardian of the pupil shall 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; and
 6. Prompt notification of the decision of the Board of Education which decision shall be in writing if adverse to the student concerned.
- C. The record of any hearing held in an expulsion case shall include the following:
1. All evidence received or considered by the Board of Education, including a copy of the initial letter of notice of proposed expulsion, if any, and a copy of all notices of hearing;
 2. Questions and offers of proof, objections and rulings on such objections;
 3. The decision of the Board of Education rendered after such hearing; and
 4. The official transcript, if any, of proceedings relating to the case or, if these are not transcribed, any recording or stenographic record of the proceedings.
- D. Rules of evidence at expulsion hearings shall include the following:
1. Any oral or documentary evidence may be received by the Board of Education, but as a matter of policy irrelevant, immaterial or unduly repetitious evidence shall be excluded;
 2. The Board of Education shall give effect to the rules of privilege recognized by law;
 3. In order to expedite a hearing, evidence may be received in written form, provided

the interest of any party is not substantially prejudiced thereby;

4. Documentary evidence may be received in the form of copies or excerpts if the original is not readily available provided, however, that any party to a hearing shall be given an opportunity to compare the copy with the original;
 5. A party to an expulsion hearing may conduct cross-examination of witnesses where examination is required for a full and accurate disclosure of the facts;
 6. The Board of Education may take notice of judicially cognizable facts in addition to facts within the Board's specialized knowledge provided, however, the parties shall be notified either before or during the hearing of material noticed, including any staff memoranda or data, and an opportunity shall be afforded to any party to contest the material so noted;
 7. A record of any oral proceedings before the Board of Education at an expulsion hearing shall be made. A transcript of such proceedings shall be furnished upon request of a party with the cost of such transcript to be paid by the requesting party.
- E.** In determining the length of an expulsion, the Board of Education may receive and consider evidence of past disciplinary problems, which have led to removal from a classroom, in-school suspension, suspension, or expulsion.
- F.** Decisions shall be in writing if adverse to the student and shall include findings of fact and conclusions necessary for the decision. Findings of fact made by the Board after an expulsion hearing shall be based exclusively upon the evidence adduced at the hearing.
- G.** Except as provided for in Section VII, any student who is expelled shall be offered an alternative educational opportunity consistent with the requirements of state law.
- H.** Whenever a student is expelled pursuant to the provisions of this policy, notice of the expulsion and the conduct for which the student was expelled shall be included on the student's cumulative educational record. Such notice shall not be expunged at any time if the expulsion was based upon possession of a firearm or deadly weapon and the student was in grade nine through twelve. Such notice shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school. The expulsion notice may be expunged from the student's record prior to graduation if the student has demonstrated to the Board that his/her conduct and behavior in the years following the expulsion warrants expungement.
- I.** Whenever a student against whom an expulsion hearing is pending withdraws from school after notification of such hearing but before the hearing is completed and a decision rendered, notice of the pending expulsion hearing shall be included on the student's cumulative educational record and the Board shall complete the expulsion hearing and render a decision.
- J.** Except in cases where an expulsion is based upon the possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, the Board of Education may shorten the length of or waive the expulsion period of a student who is expelled for the first time and who has never been suspended if the student successfully completes a program and any other conditions specified by the Board. Any such program shall be at no expense to the student or his/her parents/guardians. For a student whose expulsion period is shortened or waived, the notice of the disciplinary action must be expunged from the cumulative education record if the student graduates from high

school or, if the Board chooses, at the time the student completes the specified program and any other conditions required by the administration, whichever is earlier. Nothing herein shall be deemed to restrict the ability of the Board to shorten or waive the expulsion period, based upon completion of any program or meeting of conditions, for students who have been previously suspended or expelled, as may be permitted by law and as provided in Subsection L, below.

- K.** The Board of Education may adopt the decision of a student expulsion hearing conducted by another school district, provided that the Board shall hold a hearing pursuant to this policy which shall be limited to a determination of whether the conduct which was the basis for the expulsion would also warrant expulsion under the policies of the Board. 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 and this policy.
- L.** In addition to such rights specified in Section J, above, an expelled pupil may apply for early readmission to school. Such readmission shall be at the discretion of the Board of Education; however, the Board may delegate authority for readmission decisions to the Superintendent. If the Board delegates such authority, readmission shall be at the discretion of the Superintendent. The Board or Superintendent, as appropriate, may condition such readmission on specified criteria.
- M.** A student requiring special education and related services as described in Connecticut General Statutes §10-76a(5)(A) shall not be referred to an expulsion hearing until a planning and placement team is convened to determine whether the misconduct was caused by the student's disability. If it is determined that the misconduct was caused by the child's disability, the child shall not be referred to an expulsion hearing and shall not be expelled.

The planning and placement team shall reevaluate the child for the purpose of modifying the child's individualized education program to address the misconduct and to ensure the safety of other children and staff in the school. If it is determined that the misconduct was not caused by the student's disability, the student may be expelled in accordance with the provisions of this section applicable to children who do not require special education and related services. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section VII, below, whenever a student requiring such special education and related services is expelled, an alternative educational opportunity, consistent with such child's educational needs shall be provided during the period of expulsion.

- N.** Any student who commits an expellable offense and is subsequently committed to a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement for such offense may be expelled using the procedures of this policy. The period of expulsion shall run concurrent with the period of commitment. If a student who committed an expellable offense seeks to return to the school district after participating in a diversionary program or having been detained in a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement and the student has not been expelled for such offense, the district shall allow such student to return and may not expel the student for additional time for such offense.
- O.** A student who has been identified as eligible for school accommodations pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, shall not be referred to an expulsion hearing until the student's Section 504 Team is convened to determine whether the misconduct was caused by the student's disability. If it is determined that the misconduct was caused by the

child's disability, the child shall not be referred to an expulsion hearing and shall not be expelled. Where appropriate, the Section 504 Team shall modify and otherwise review the student's accommodations plan to address the misconduct and to ensure the safety of other children and staff in the school. If it is determined that the misconduct was not caused by the student's disability, the student may be expelled in accordance with the provisions of this section applicable to non-disabled students.

SECTION VI NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS OR GUARDIAN

The parents or guardians of any minor student against whom disciplinary action is taken under this policy shall be given notice of such disciplinary action within twenty-four (24) hours of the time the student was excluded.

SECTION VII ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The Board of Education recognizes its obligation to offer any student under the age of sixteen (16) who is expelled an alternative educational opportunity during the period of expulsion, in accordance with the law and applicable State guidelines. Any parent or guardian of such a student who does not choose to have his or her child enrolled in an alternative program shall not be subject to the provisions of section 10-184 of the General Statutes. Any expelled student expelled for the first time who is between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) and who wishes to continue his or her education shall be offered an alternative educational opportunity if he or she complies with conditions established by the Board of Education. Such alternative may include, but shall not be limited to, the placement of such student in a regular classroom program of a school other than the one from which the student has been excluded and, for students at least sixteen (16) years of age, placement 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. In determining the nature of the alternative educational opportunity to be offered under this section the Board of Education may receive and consider evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to removal from a classroom, suspension, or expulsion.

State statutes do not require the Board of Education to offer an alternative educational opportunity to a student between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) who has been expelled previously. If the Board expels a student for the sale or distribution of such a controlled substance as defined in Connecticut General Statutes § 21a-240(9), whose manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting or possessing with intent to sell or dispense, offering or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Connecticut General Statutes §§ 21a-277 and 21a-278, the Board shall refer the student to an appropriate state or local agency for rehabilitation, intervention or job training, or any combination thereof, and inform the agency of its action. If the Board expels a student for possession of a firearm, the Board shall report the violation to the local police department. The Board shall give the name of the student, and a summary of the Board's action in so referring the student, to the Commissioner of Education within thirty (30) days after the student is expelled. The provisions of this section shall not apply to students requiring special education who are described in subdivision (1) of subsection (e) of Connecticut General Statutes §10-76a.

SECTION VIII GUN FREE SCHOOLS ACT

The Board of Education shall submit to the Commissioner of Education such information on expulsions for the possession of weapons as is required for purposes of the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, 20 U.S.C. §7151, et seq.

SECTION IX PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

- A.** As used in this section, "preschool program provider" means a local or regional board of education, state or local charter school or interdistrict magnet school that offers a preschool program. No preschool program provider shall expel any child enrolled in such provider's preschool program, except an expulsion hearing shall be conducted, in accordance with the provisions of subsection B, below, whenever there is reason to believe that any child enrolled in such preschool program was in possession of a firearm, on or off school grounds or at a preschool program-sponsored event. Such child shall be expelled for one calendar year if, at the expulsion hearing it is determined, that the child did so possess such a firearm. A preschool program provider may modify the period of expulsion for a child on a case-by-case basis.
- B.** An expulsion hearing required under this subsection shall be conducted by (1) the program provider, as set forth above, or (2) the board of education, in accordance with section V above, if (a) the preschool program provider is the board of education, or (b) the preschool program provider is a regional educational service center or a state or local charter school pursuant to an agreement between such preschool program provider and the board of education. Unless an emergency exists, as set forth in section I, above, no child shall be expelled under this subsection without a formal hearing held pursuant to section V. If an emergency exists, such hearing shall be held as soon after the expulsion as possible.
- C.** No preschool program provider may authorize a suspension of a child enrolled in such provider's preschool program, unless the suspension is an in-school suspension. Except that an out-of-school suspension may be imposed if the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence that such pupil's conduct on school grounds is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.

Policy 5131 Student Conduct

I. Philosophy of Discipline

Discipline begins in the home with the responsibility of parents to develop a positive attitude towards study and behavior. No code established or action taken by school officials can be effective without parental acceptance of this primary responsibility. Discipline continues in the classroom with the relationship between the teacher and the student.

The school district is unequivocally committed to the principle that disorderly and disruptive behavior should not be permitted to interfere with the right of other students to pursue an education. While most discipline problems should be handled by the teacher, student and parent, the Administration and the Board of Education have the responsibility to support and maintain the enforcement of discipline within the building.

All students shall be required to conduct themselves at all times in accordance with established codes of student conduct. Every reasonable effort will be made to keep students within the school's sphere of influence, using suspension and/or expulsion only where appropriate according to established school policy. In this connection, students are reminded that:

1. The exercise of any of the student's rights must be weighed against the rights of another individual or group.

2. No student has the right to disrupt the educational process within a school.
3. All students will have the right to due process procedures in matters of suspension, transfer, and expulsion.

II. Areas of Responsibility

A. Board of Education

The Board of Education holds the certified personnel responsible for the implementation of these rules with respect to students who are legally under the supervision and jurisdiction of the school and charges the Superintendent to see that such responsibility is effectively carried out.

B. Principal

The Principal shall implement immediate and necessary procedures and rules to render effective the policies of the Board of Education relating to standards of student behavior. The Principal may involve representatives of all areas of school personnel, students, parents and citizens of the community to this end.

C. Teachers

Teachers shall be responsible for the instruction of students in rules and regulations of proper conduct, as well as be responsible for assisting in the implementation of these rules and regulations. The responsibility and authority of any teacher extends to all students of the school district under the assigned supervision of the teacher and to other students so situated with respect to the teacher as to be subject to the teacher's control.

D. Parents

Parents shall be expected to cooperate with school authorities regarding the behavior of their children. Parents shall be held responsible for the willful misbehavior of their children.

E. Students

Each student is expected to act in accordance with the school behavior code, which emphasizes respect, cooperation, honesty, caring and responsibility. In doing so, students will develop life-long social and decision-making skills.

III. Student Behavior

Students shall be properly instructed in rules and regulations of acceptable conduct; they shall then be responsible for understanding and complying with the standards of behavior described therein. Any student who fails to comply with these laws and rules concerning student behavior is liable to suspension, exclusion or expulsion. Physical endangerment of another student or person shall be treated with especial strictness.

Policy 5131.1 Student Behavior on School Transportation

It is the responsibility of the Board, within the limits of the law, to ensure that the behavior of students on school vehicles or at school bus stops will promote the environment necessary for the safe transportation of students.

The New Milford Board of Education directs the Superintendent of Schools to establish and enforce uniform rules and procedures that will govern the behavior of students who are transported by a school vehicle to and from school and/or to and from a school sponsored activity. The rules and procedures shall be in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes and the guidelines set forth in this policy.

Parents or guardians are responsible for the behavior and safety of a student while on route to, from, and at the bus stop. Students at the bus stop shall behave in a manner that does not endanger the physical or emotional safety of self or others. Students who misbehave at a bus stop may, as a result, have the privilege of bus transportation denied as outlined in state statutes.

The Board of Education is responsible for student safety while students are in the Board's custody, that is, from the time a student boards the bus and until the student is discharged at the bus stop. The Board shall expect that the following general regulations will be followed:

1. The bus driver shall be in charge and treated respectfully by the students. All reasonable requests by the bus driver shall be obeyed.
2. Students shall remain seated until the bus is stopped at its destination and it is time for a student or students to leave the bus.
3. Students shall not tamper with any equipment that is part of the vehicle, including the rear exit door which is to be used only in an emergency.
4. All articles belonging to students, such as athletic equipment, books and backpacks, musical instruments, etc. shall not be placed in the aisle, in the driver's compartment, in the stairwell of the bus, or blocking any door.
5. Except for service animals that are individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability, animals of any kind shall not be allowed on school vehicles.
6. Disruptive behavior shall not be permitted and shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion, suspension from school or suspension of transportation privileges; as well as payment for damage to a school vehicle as a result of the disruptive behavior.

The Superintendent shall establish the "Rules for Student Behavior on School Transportation" (5131.1); which shall be distributed to parents and students by the beginning of the school year.

Policy 5131.8 Out of School Misconduct

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion, for misconduct that occurs off school property, even when it is outside the school day, if the misconduct constitutes a violation of a publicized Board policy and is seriously disruptive of the educational process. Disciplinary action may result, whether (1) the incident was initiated on school property, or (2)

was initiated off-school property, whether during school time, or not.

The Board considers conduct which is "severely disruptive of the educational process" to be conduct that "markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operations of a school." In making the determination as to whether conduct is "seriously disruptive of the educational process," the administration may consider, but shall not be limited to, the following factors: (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school; (2) whether other students were involved, whether gang related or otherwise; (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 or illegal drugs.

Examples of out-of-school misconduct that may result in discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion, include but are not limited to:

1. A bomb threat;
2. A threat to cause death or physical injury to an administrator, teacher, school employee, student, or other member of the community;
3. Use, possession, sale, or distribution of firearms, deadly weapons, dangerous weapons or dangerous instruments, as defined in Connecticut General Statutes Sections 29-35, 53-206 and 53a-3, for which expulsion is not otherwise mandatory;
4. Use, possession, sale or distribution of alcohol;
5. Use or possession of illegal drugs, including medications for which the student does not possess a valid prescription;
6. Violent conduct;
7. A pattern of conduct that constitutes bullying, harassment, or stalking of another student.

Mandatory Expulsions for Out-of-School Misconduct

Students shall be referred to an expulsion hearing and shall be expelled for one calendar year, provided that the Board may modify the period of expulsion on a case-by-case basis, if it is found that:

1. The student, off school grounds, did possess a firearm in violation of Connecticut General Statutes Section 29-35, or did possess and use such a firearm, instrument or weapon in the commission of a crime under Chapter 952 of the Connecticut General Statutes, Sections 53a-24, *et seq.*
2. The student, off school grounds, offered for sale or distribution a controlled substance, as defined Connecticut General Statutes Section 21a-240(9), whose manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting or possessing with intent to sell or dispense, offering, or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Sections 21a-277 and 21a-278.

Policy 5144 Discipline

The policy of the New Milford Board of Education is to maintain an orderly environment in which teaching and learning can take place, to encourage students to respect the need for authority reasonably exercised and accept responsibility for their own actions, and to help them develop self-discipline consistent with the needs and expectations of the educational system and the society at large.

Student Behavior

Appropriate behavior is expected from all students at all times. The Board realizes that appropriate behavior is not always automatic or easy. Often mistakes are made as students learn to be responsible for their own actions. Therefore, it is expected that each Principal and each teacher will have guidelines that will maintain discipline without inhibiting growth. The guidelines should be consistent with this policy while allowing for individual application reflecting the differences among administrators, teachers, students, grade levels, and circumstances.

Self Discipline

The ultimate goal of school discipline should be to help students develop self-discipline, a capacity for personal restraint in view of the needs and rights of themselves and others that will guide them throughout life. Students should learn the meaning and value of deferred rewards.

Preventive Discipline

The Board of Education believes that when certain conditions exist in a school many discipline problems will be prevented. These conditions, which each school should attempt to establish as part of a preventive discipline program, include:

1. A consistent application of reasonable rules and procedures beginning in the primary grades.
2. Adequate instruction at appropriate levels by competent teachers who are well-prepared in their subject matter areas.
3. Varied instructional and activity programs.
4. Sincere attempts to communicate with the home.
5. Genuine concern by the staff for individual student problems and growth.
6. Student involvement as appropriate in formulating rules and behavior standards.

Discipline should be a cooperative effort between home and school. It must begin at home and be reinforced in the schools. School discipline must be supported by parents. To secure maximum cooperation and support, the schools should inform parents about school discipline policies and about their child's behavior, and consult them promptly in the event of serious and/or persistent disciplinary problems.

Corrective Discipline

When student behavior disrupts the learning environment, infringes on the rights of others, or endangers the student or other individuals, the educational system cannot achieve its purpose. Teachers and administrators may employ appropriate disciplinary measures as needed to control and correct inappropriate behavior. The measures should be consistent with this policy and appropriate to the student's age and the nature and seriousness of the behavior.

The Board of Education does not consider mass punishment or corporal punishment acceptable disciplinary measures. The Board does recognize that it may occasionally be necessary for a staff member to restrain a student or to use force to break up physical conflicts.

When persistent disciplinary problems occur, every effort should be made to resolve them through

conferences with the student and the parents with the assistance of administrators and student personnel services. Although it may sometimes be necessary to temporarily remove a student from regular classes to help resolve personal problems that are causing misbehavior, the objective should be to help the learner to function constructively and responsibly in the normal school environment.

Students with Special Health Care Needs - Policy 5141.25

Accommodating Students with Special Dietary Needs

The Board of Education believes all students, through necessary accommodations where required, shall have the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities.

In some cases, a student's disability may prevent him/her from eating meals prepared for the general school population.

Substitutions to the regular meal will be made for students who are unable to eat school meals because of their disabilities, when that need is certified in writing by a physician. Meal service shall be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the disabled student.

The nature of the student's disability, the reason the disability prevents the student from eating the regular school meals, including foods to be omitted from the student's diet, indication of the major life activity affected by the disability, the specific diet prescription along with the substitution(s) needed will be specifically described in a statement signed by a licensed physician. The district, in compliance with USDA Child Nutrition Division guidelines, will provide substitute meals to food-allergic students based upon the physician's signed statement.

Management of Life Threatening Food Allergies

The New Milford Board of Education recognizes the importance of developing and implementing a plan for the management of food allergies in the student population. This plan must provide a balance between the health, social normalcy and safety needs of students with life-threatening food allergies and the educational, health and safety needs of all students.

Food Allergy Management Team

The Board of Education delegates the responsibility for developing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing and revising the school district's Guidelines for Food Allergy Management to a multidisciplinary food allergy management team. The district's wellness advisory council is the designated food allergy management team and should include the following members: Superintendent or designee, building administrator, medical advisor or designee, school nurse, director of pupil personnel and special services, food and nutrition services director, teacher representative, parent representative, student representative, transportation coordinator, supervisor of custodial staff, other school personnel or community representatives as appropriate.

Guidelines established by the food allergy management team shall address the following areas:

1. The process for identifying students with life-threatening food allergies including provisions for parents/guardians to provide adequate medical documentation
2. The process for developing individual health care plans for students with life-threatening allergies consistent with applicable state and federal law

3. Strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to life-threatening food allergens in school buildings
4. Provisions for the ongoing education of school personnel and the school community regarding the management of life-threatening food allergies
5. Emergency medical response plan including communication strategies between individual schools and local providers of emergency services
6. A method for monitoring and assessing of the food allergy management plan on at least an annual basis.

The Guidelines for Food Allergy Management shall be posted on the Board's website or the website of each school under the Board's jurisdiction. Parents and guardians shall be provided notice of the District's food allergy management plan annually, at the beginning of each school year in conjunction with the provision of the written statement of the Board's pesticide application policy.

Administration of Epinephrine for Emergency First Aid

Connecticut law requires school nurses and other qualified and trained school employees in each public school to maintain epinephrine in cartridge injectors (often referred to as "EpiPens") for the purpose of administering emergency first aid to students who experience allergic reactions and do not have a prior written authorization of a parent or guardian or a prior written order of a qualified medical professional for the administration of epinephrine. This law serves to permit schools to provide emergency first aid to a student who experiences an allergic (and potentially life threatening) reaction even if the student does not have a prior written authorization for the administration of epinephrine. However, this same law permits the parent or guardian of a student to submit a written directive to the school nurse (or school medical advisor) that epinephrine shall not be administered to the student in emergency situations. **If a parent wishes to so prohibit the emergency use of epinephrine, or has any questions with regard to the emergency use of epinephrine and the parental ability to prohibit its use, then please contact the school nurse.**

Student Nutrition and Physical Activity (School Wellness) – Policy 6142.2

The New Milford Board of Education shall use a coordinated school health model in order to make wellness a cornerstone of our educational program. This well-rounded approach to school health connects the various components of health education, physical education, nutrition services, health promotion activities for staff, school health services, counseling and psychological support services, a safe and healthy school environment, and parent and community involvement. The teamwork that is inherent in this comprehensive model is intended to build momentum toward a program that supports positive dietary and lifestyle practices that are essential for students to achieve their academic potential, full physical and mental growth and lifelong health and well-being.

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence the student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity.

Guiding Principles:

- The Board of Education delegates the responsibility for developing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing and revising the school district's wellness policy guidelines (administrative regulations) to a Wellness Advisory Council comprised of the following members: parents, students, school food service personnel, members of the board of education, administrators, the public, school nurse, physical education teacher, health

education teacher and any other person that the team wishes to invite to help achieve its goals.

- The Wellness Advisory Council will create a wellness plan that addresses goals and standards for nutrition promotion and education, physical education and physical activity, school meals, beverages and other food, communication and promotion and measurement and evaluation of the plan.
- During the regular school day, all students will be provided with opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active. Physical activity shall not be used as a form of discipline. Preventing elementary students from participating in the time devoted to physical exercise shall not be used as a form of discipline.
- Curriculum:
 - The physical education program shall be a standards-based, sequential physical education curriculum taught in grades K-12 by qualified physical education teachers. A key component of this program is to teach students how to achieve and maintain a healthy level of personal fitness.
 - Nutrition education shall be offered in grades K-12 as part of a planned, sequential, standards-based comprehensive health education program taught by highly qualified teachers.
- Foods and beverages sold or served under school auspices during the instructional school day will meet or exceed the nutrition recommendations of the *USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day shall meet or exceed state and federal nutrition standards.
- Foods and beverages marketed to students during the school day shall meet or exceed federal Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.
- The District shall provide meals that follow the USDA requirements for Federal School Meal Programs under 7CFR Part 210 and 220.
- Highly qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs, and will provide affordable, nutrient-dense foods. Guidelines for age-appropriate portion size and maximum amount of fat, sodium, sugar and other additives in foods served and sold will be established and reviewed according to current scientific and medical research.
- Meals will be served in a relaxed, enjoyable climate, with adequate clean, safe space for eating.
- School menus shall be planned in order to meet or exceed state and national nutritional standards. Nutritious and healthy foods, such as fresh or dried fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods, whole grains, and 100% natural fruit and vegetable juices and water, shall be made available wherever food is sold in the District.
- Healthy foods and beverages shall be encouraged at school sponsored activities, such as fundraisers, parties and sporting events. In addition, the District will only permit those

foods and beverages that are permitted under state law (in particular, Connecticut General Statutes §§ 10-221p and 10-221q and the guidelines established by the State Department of Education) to be sold to students.

- The district highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and shall plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff members to maintain a healthy lifestyle and that encourage staff members to serve as role models.
- Measurement and evaluation:
 - Establish a baseline of school wellness in each school by conducting a self-assessment using standard instruments.
 - Assign school-based leadership and responsibility in each site to monitor compliance to achieve policy goals.
 - The Superintendent and/or his/her designee is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the District's wellness policy.

Every Student Succeeds Act Notices (ESSA)

Title I Programs – Policy 6172.41

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall pursue funding under Title I, Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to supplement instructional services and activities in order to improve the educational opportunities of educationally disadvantaged or deprived children.

Comparability of Services

In order to fulfill the fiscal mandates of Title I, the Board of Education affirms that state and local funds will be used in Title I schools to provide services that, taken as a whole, are at least comparable to services in schools that do not receive Title I funds. In other words, the district will equalize the provision of educational services among its schools before it supplements its Title I schools with federal funds.

The Superintendent shall ensure comparability among schools by:

1. Maintaining a district-wide salary schedule.
2. Providing equivalence among schools in teachers, administrators, and other staff
3. Providing equivalence among schools in the provision of curriculum materials and instructional supplies.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall maintain records that are updated at least biennially to document the District's compliance with this requirement and provide written assurances regarding comparability to the State Department of Education as required by law.

Title I Parental Involvement

The District maintains programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents/guardians of students receiving services, or enrolled in programs, under Title I. These programs, activities, and procedures are described in District-level and School-level compacts.

District-Level Parental Involvement Compact

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall develop a District-Level Parental Involvement Compact according to Title I requirements. The District-Level Parental Involvement Compact shall contain: (1) the District's expectations for parental involvement, (2) specific strategies for effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, and (3) other provisions as required by federal law. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the Compact is distributed to parents/guardians of students receiving services, or enrolled in programs, under Title I.

School-Level Parental Involvement Compact

Each Building Principal or his/her designee shall develop a School-Level Parental Involvement Compact according to Title I requirements. This School-Level Parental Involvement Compact shall contain: (1) a process for continually involving parents/guardians in its development and implementation, (2) how parents/guardians, the entire school staff, and students share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement, (3) the means by which the school and parents/guardians build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards, and (4) other provisions as required by federal law. Each Building Principal or designee shall ensure that the Compact is distributed to parents/guardians of students receiving services, or enrolled in programs, under Title I.

District Report Card

To view the most recent District Profile and Performance Report for New Milford Public Schools, go to <http://edsight.ct.gov/SASPortal/main.do>

Parents Right to Know – Teacher and Paraprofessional Qualifications

As a parent or guardian of a student enrolled in the New Milford Public Schools you have a right to know the following information concerning the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher and any paraprofessionals who may work with your child:

1. Whether your child's teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. Whether your child's teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualifications or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. Whether your child's teacher is teaching in the field or discipline of his or her certification; and
4. Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals, and, if so, the paraprofessionals' qualifications.

If you wish to obtain this information, please contact the district's Human Resources Office at (860) 210-2200.

Green Cleaning Program

The New Milford Public Schools has initiated a Green Cleaning Program, in order to reduce the chance of exposure for anyone using NMPS facilities, from products that might adversely affect human health and the environment.

As part of this ongoing effort, NMPS will work to eliminate any cleaning products brought in from the outside. Consistent with state law, no person shall use a cleaning product inside a school unless such cleaning product meets guidelines on environmental standards approved by the Department of Administrative Services, in consultation with the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection. Such cleaning product shall, to the maximum extent possible, minimize the potential harmful impact on human health and the environment. Furthermore, no parent, guardian, teacher or staff member may bring into the school facility any consumer product which is intended to clean, deodorize, sanitize or disinfect. Custodial staff will be provided with regular training in order for them to be knowledgeable in green cleaning procedures, to comply with Public Act 09-81, and to provide a safe and clean environment for all.

The components of our Green Cleaning Program, as required by Connecticut law, include the following:

- A description and names of environmental, preferable cleaning products being used in the schools.
- The location(s) and application of where cleaning products are used.
- The schedule and/or frequency of when these cleaning products are used.
- Eliminating and monitoring cleaning products being brought in from outside sources as required by law.
- The manufacturer name and website information.
 - M.D. Stetson Co. Inc., 92 York Ave., Randolph, MA, 02368, Phone # 800-255-8651. Web site: www.mdstetson.com
- Names and designees who may be contacted for further information.
 - Kevin Munrett, Facilities Director (860) 354-6265
 - Nestor Aparicio, Asst. Facilities Director (860) 354-6265

GREEN SEAL CERTIFIED PRODUCTS - Manufactured by M.D. Stetson			
Product Name:	Product Description:	Location/Area:	Frequency:
PC101	Neutral & Glass Cleaner	Daily Tile Floor Cleaning, Mirrors, Glass	Daily
PC108	Spray & Wipe Cleaner	All Surfaces, Desks, Tables, Etc.	Daily
PC113	Carpet Spot Remover	Carpets, Upholstery	As Needed
PC116	Non-Acid Rest Room Cleaner	All Restroom Fixtures, Showers	Daily
PC120	Peroxide Multi-Cleaner	Restroom & Kitchen Floors	Daily
PRODUCTS NOT COVERED BY THIS LAW:			
Product Name:	Product Description:	Location/Area:	Frequency:
PC103	Disinfectant 256 HBV	Restrooms, Nurses' Offices, Hard Surfaces	Daily & As Needed

Pesticide Management Program - Policy 3524.1

The Board of Education believes that structural and landscape pests can pose significant hazards to people, property and the environment. Pests are living organisms such as plants, animals or microorganisms, that interfere with human uses for the school site. Strategies for managing pest populations will be influenced by the pest species and the degree to which that population poses a threat to people, property or the environment. Further, the Board also believes that pesticides can

also pose hazards to people, property and the environment. The intent of this policy is to ensure the health and safety of students, teachers, staff and all others using district buildings and grounds.

The goal of this pest management program is to manage pests in order to:

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

The school district shall incorporate Integrated Pest Management procedures (IPM) to manage structural and landscape pests and the toxic chemicals for their control in order to alleviate pest problems with the least possible hazard to people, property and the environment. In addition, staff and parents or guardians of students shall be given notice, at least annually, of the IPM policies and procedures to be used to achieve the desired pest management objectives. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is the use of all available pest control techniques including judicious use of pesticides, when warranted, to maintain a pest population at or below an acceptable level, while decreasing the unnecessary use of pesticides. It is a plan consistent with an applicable model plan provided by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection pursuant to Connecticut state law.

IPM procedures will determine when to control pests and whether to use mechanical, physical, chemical, cultural or biological means. Chemical controls shall be used as a last resort. The Board establishes that the school district shall use pesticides only after consideration of the full range of alternatives, including no action, based upon an analysis of environmental effects, safety, effectiveness and costs. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be responsible to implement Integrated Pest Management (IPM) procedures and to coordinate communications with members of the staff who are responsible for pest control, such as maintenance personnel and custodians, and hired contractors when utilized by the district to control a pest problem. The Maintenance Supervisor/Head Custodian shall be designated as the IPM supervisor and shall direct and supervise all IPM procedures to be carried out by assigned maintenance and/or custodial staff.

Consistent with state law, no person, other than a pesticide applicator with supervisory certification under Connecticut General Statutes § 22a-54 or a pesticide applicator with operational certification under § 22a-54 under the direct supervision of a supervisory pesticide applicator, may apply pesticide within any building or on the grounds of any school. This section shall not apply in the case of an emergency application of pesticide to eliminate an immediate threat to human health where it is impractical to obtain the services of any such applicator provided such emergency application does not involve a restricted use pesticide.

No person shall apply a lawn care pesticide on the grounds of any preschool or school with students in grade eight or lower, except that an emergency application of a lawn care pesticide may be made to eliminate a threat to human health, as determined by the local health director, the Commissioner of Public Health, the Commissioner of Environmental Protection or the Superintendent of Schools

All district employees who use chemicals to control a pest problem must be trained and shall follow all precautions and application regulations. The District will only employ certified pesticide applicators for any necessary and non-emergency pesticide use in school building or on school

grounds. Contractors hired to do this work shall give evidence of appropriate training and certification in the proper use of pesticides. Pest control contractors shall be utilized, when deemed necessary, to inspect for conditions conducive to pest problems and to develop appropriate prevention measures. Pest control contractors will be expected to write recommendations for structural improvements or repairs and housekeeping and sanitation measures required to reduce or prevent recurrence of pest problems.

Whenever it is deemed necessary to use a chemical substance, that school must provide notification to all parents and staff who have registered for advanced notification in conformity with state statutes. Parents/guardians and staff requesting advanced notification must be notified on the day of such use by any method practicable. Except for emergency applications, notices shall also be posted in designated areas at school at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the application. The notice shall include 1) the name of the active ingredient of the pesticide being applied to the target/pest; 2) the target pest; 3) the location of the application on the school property; 4) the date of the application; and 5) the name of the school administrator or designee who may be contacted for further information.

Notice of policy

At the beginning of each school year and at the time a student is registered, parents/guardians shall be informed of the District's pest management policy. Those parents/guardians and staff who register a request shall be notified prior to every pesticide application. Notice of any modification of the pesticide application policy shall also be sent to any person who registers for this notice.

Website Notice of Applications

The school district's home page must indicate how parents may register for prior notice of pesticide applications. Notice of pesticide applications shall be posted not less than twenty-four hours prior to such application through (A) the home page of the Internet website for the school where such application will occur, or, in the event such school does not have a website, on the home page of the Internet website for the Board, and (B) the primary social media account of such school or the Board.

Information regarding pesticides used and areas treated shall be maintained for a period of five years at the school site and available to the public and staff upon request. The district shall establish and maintain accurate records of all chemical use and their location. In addition, records of all pest control actions including information on indicators of pest activity that can verify the need for action.

Summary of Applications Notice

By March 15th of each year, the Board shall send an annual notice via e-mail notification or alert system for applications made since January first of such year and a listing of such notices for applications made during the March fifteenth through December thirty-first timeframe from the preceding calendar year. This annual summary of applications shall also be published in parent handbooks, manuals or annual notices.

Pesticide applications shall be limited to non-school hours and when activities are not taking place, except that an emergency application of a lawn care pesticide may be made to eliminate a threat to human health, as determined by the Superintendent.

Pesticide applications made during the previous school year			
Product Name:	Manufacturer:	Location/Area:	Frequency:
Tick Free Organic Insect Control	Garden Girls Repellents LLC	Playgrounds	Sept/Oct/June

Asbestos Management Plan

The New Milford Board of Education, in compliance with federal law, has developed a formal asbestos management plan, concerning the presence or suspected presence of asbestos-type materials within district school buildings, and required inspections and preventative measures related to those materials to ensure that there is no exposure hazard to the students, faculty or staff.

In accordance with federal law, members of the public, including parents, teachers and other employees, shall be permitted access to the asbestos management plan of the New Milford Board of Education. Upon request, the district shall permit members of the public, including parents, teachers and other employees, to inspect any asbestos management plan for any building so desired. The district shall grant access to such management plans within a reasonable period of time after a request from a member of the public is received.

The Facilities Department is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of our asbestos management program are properly implemented. All requests will be routed through them.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) About Free and Reduced-price School Meals for Districts Participating in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for School Year 2021-22

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Good news! For school year 2021-22, the **New Milford Public Schools** has opted to participate in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the National School Lunch Program. This means that all students enrolled in the **New Milford Public Schools** will receive breakfast and lunch free of charge. However, it remains critical that you complete and submit your free and reduced-price meal application to **New Milford Public Schools** in order to determine eligibility for other programs, like the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT), discounted technology and WiFi programs, and more. Applications for free and reduced-price school meals with detailed instructions are available online at:

www.myschoolapps.com/Home/DistrictRedirect/NEWMILFORDPS_CT?langid=1

Paper applications are available at each school.

Note: Children receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) or Medicaid (HUSKY A) benefits *may* be directly certified and automatically eligible for free meals without applying for benefits. (Some children who receive Medicaid (HUSKY A) benefits **may** also be directly certified and automatically eligible for *reduced-price* meals.) Questions regarding SNAP/TFA/Medicaid and direct certification should be sent to the determining official, **Charlene Kirkwood**, kirkwoodc@newmilfordps.org 860-354-3712.

If you have received a NOTICE OF DIRECT CERTIFICATION for free or reduced-price meals, **do not** complete the application unless instructed to do so by the district. Let the school know if any children in your household are **not** listed on the **Notice of Direct Certification** letter you received, since free or reduced meal benefits are extended to all children in a household when directly certified.

Additionally, all school-aged students in income-eligible households and students who are determined to be directly certified for free or reduced-price meals, can receive school meal benefits regardless of a student's immigration status and the district/school does not release information for immigration-related purposes in the usual course of operating the Child Nutrition Programs.

The **New Milford Public Schools** comply with the federal requirements for meal modifications for students with special dietary needs. The requirements for meal modifications are different for students with and without disabilities. For more information, please contact the food service director, **Sandra Sullivan** at 860-354-3712.

FAQs About Free and Reduced-price School Meals for Districts Participating in the SSO for School Year 2021-22

The answers to the common questions below can help you with the application process.

1. Who can get free or reduced-price meals?

- All students residing in households where any member of the household receives SNAP or TFA benefits are eligible for free school meals. Note: *Some* students receiving Medicaid (HUSKY A) benefits are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.
- Foster children that are under the **legal** responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals. (Note: A foster child is categorically eligible for free meals and may be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits for other children. Including children in foster care as members of the household may help other children in the household qualify for benefits. If non-foster children in a foster family are not eligible for free or reduced-price meal benefits, an eligible foster child will still receive free benefits.)
- Students participating in their school’s Head Start program are eligible for free meals.
- Students who are designated as homeless or runaway are eligible for free meals.
- Students may receive free or reduced-price meals if your household’s income is at or below the limits of the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals if your household income falls at or below the limits on this chart:

Reduced Federal Eligibility Income Chart (Effective 7/1/2021 to 6/30/2022)			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	23,828	1,986	459
2	32,227	2,686	620
3	40,626	3,386	782
4	49,025	4,086	943
5	57,424	4,786	1,105
6	65,823	5,486	1,266
7	74,222	6,186	1,428
8	82,621	6,886	1,589

FAQs About Free and Reduced-price School Meals for Districts Participating in the SSO for School Year 2021-22

Each additional family member	+ 8,399	+ 700	+ 162
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2. **How do I know if my children qualify as homeless or runaway?** Do the members of your household lack a permanent address? Are you staying together in a shelter, hotel, or other temporary housing arrangement? Does your family relocate on a seasonal basis? Are any children living with you who have chosen to leave their prior family or household? If you believe children in your household meet these descriptions and you have not been told your children will get free school meals, please call or e-mail **Ms. Holly Hollander**, hollanderh@newmilfordps.org or 860-354-3235.

3. **Do I need to fill out an application for each child?** No. Use **one** *Free and Reduced-price School Meals Application* for all students in your household. We cannot approve an application that is not complete, so be sure to fill out all required information. Return the completed application to **Charlene Kirkwood**, kirkwoodc@newmilfordps.org or **Food & Nutrition Department, 22 Hipp Road, New Milford, CT 06776, 860-354-3712** or fax to 860-354-2118.

4. **Should I fill out an application if I received a letter this school year saying my children are already approved for free or reduced-price meals?** No, but please read the letter carefully and follow the instructions. If any students in your household were missing from your eligibility notification, contact **Charlene Kirkwood**, kirkwoodc@newmilfordps.org **Food & Nutrition Department, 22 Hipp Road, New Milford, CT 06776** or 860-354-3712 immediately.

5. **Can I apply online?** Yes. You are encouraged to complete the electronic online application for free and reduced-price school meals instead of a paper application when possible. The online application has the same requirements as the paper application and will ask you for the same information. Visit https://www.myschoolapps.com/Home/DistrictRedirect/Newmilfordps_CT?langid=1 to begin or to learn more about the online application process. Contact **Charlene Kirkwood**, kirkwoodc@newmilfordps.org **Food & Nutrition Department, 22 Hipp Road, New Milford, CT 06776** or 860-354-3712 if you have any questions about the online application.

6. **My child's application was approved last year. Do I need to fill out a new one?** Yes. Your child's application is only good for that school year and for up to 30 operating days into the new school year (or until a new eligibility determination is made, whichever comes first).

FAQs About Free and Reduced-price School Meals for Districts Participating in the SSO for School Year 2021-22

When the carryover period ends, unless you are notified that your children are directly certified or you submit an application that is approved, your children's meals must be claimed at the paid rate. Though encouraged to do so, the LEA is not required to send a reminder or a notice of expired eligibility. Even if your school is offering meals at no cost, it is important that you submit an application to ensure that in the subsequent school year, your child will remain eligible for free or reduced-price meals for up to 30 operating days.

7. **If I get Special Supplemental Program for Women Infants and Children (WIC) benefits, can my children get free meals?** Students in households participating in WIC may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Please send in an application.
8. **Will the information I give be checked?** Yes. We may also ask you to send written proof of the household income you report.
9. **If I don't qualify now, may I apply later?** Yes, you may apply at any time during the school year. For example, children with a parent or guardian who becomes unemployed may become eligible for free and reduced-price meals if the household income drops below the income limit.
10. **What if I disagree with the school's decision about my application?** You should talk to school officials. You also may ask for a hearing by calling or writing **Ms. Alisha DiCorpo**, dicorpoa@newmilfordps.org 50 East Street, New Milford, CT 06776 or 860-355-8406.
11. **May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen?** Yes. You, your children or other household members do not have to be U.S. citizens to apply for free or reduced-price school meals.
12. **What if my income is not always the same?** List the amount that you **normally** receive. For example, if you normally make \$1,000 each month, but you missed some work last month and only made \$900, put down that you made \$1,000 per month. If you normally get overtime, include it, but do not include it if you only work overtime sometimes. If you have lost a job or had your hours or wages reduced, use your current income.
13. **What if some household members have no income to report?** Household members may not receive some types of income we ask you to report on the application, or may not receive income at all. When this happens, please write "0" in the field. However, if any income fields are left empty or blank, those will **also** be counted as zeroes. Please be careful when leaving income fields blank, as we will assume you **meant** to do so.

FAQs About Free and Reduced-price School Meals for Districts Participating in the SSO for School Year 2021-22

14. **We are in the military. Do we report our income differently?** Your basic pay and cash bonuses must be reported as income. If you get any cash value allowances for off-base housing, food or clothing, or receive Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance payments, these must also be included as income. However, if your housing is part of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, do not include your housing allowance as income. Any additional combat pay resulting from deployment is also excluded from income.
15. **What if there isn't enough space on the application for my family?** List any additional household members on a separate piece of paper and attach to your application. Contact **Charlene Kirkwood**, kirkwoodc@newmilfordps.org, **Food & Nutrition Department, 22 Hipp Road, New Milford, CT 06776 or 860-354-3712** to receive a second application.
16. **My family needs more help. Are there other programs we might apply for?** To find out how to apply for SNAP benefits and to contact the Department of Social Services office in your town, contact United Way's free referral number **2-1-1** (free call, statewide).

If you have other questions or need help, call **860-354-3712**.

Sincerely,



Ms. Alisha DiCorpo
Superintendent of Schools

FAQs About Free and Reduced-price School Meals for Districts Participating in the SSO for School Year 2021-22

Nondiscrimination Statement: This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Addendum C: Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Dear Parent/Guardian:

If your children qualify for free school meals or milk, you might also qualify for **SNAP** (formerly called Food Stamps). SNAP helps people buy food for themselves and their families. SNAP benefits are issued each month on plastic debit cards. You can use SNAP benefits to buy food at major supermarkets, neighborhood grocery stores, and some farmers' markets authorized to accept SNAP.

How to Qualify

If and how much SNAP you qualify for depends on:

- your household's income;
- allowable deductions to your household's income (examples include monthly shelter expenses, medical bills, and court ordered child support);
- your household size; and
- at least 5 years U.S. residency for qualified non-citizens.

If you have access to the Internet, you can go online to see if you may be eligible for SNAP. Go to

www.connect.ct.gov and click "Am I Eligible?"

Owning your own home or owning a car will not prevent you from being eligible for SNAP.

Effective October 1, 2020		
Household size	Gross monthly income	Gross annual income
1	\$1,968	\$23,606
2	\$2,658	\$31,894
3	\$3,349	\$40,128
4	\$4,040	\$48,470
5	\$4,730	\$56,758
6	\$5,421	\$65,046
7	\$6,112	\$73,334
8	\$6,802	\$81,622
For each additional member	+691	+8,288
Larger households = higher incomes		

To Apply or Get More Information

- To find your local Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) office, call **United Way's free referral number 2-1-1** (free call statewide).
- You can find a list of all **Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS)** offices, or you can apply online at <https://www.connect.ct.gov/access/jsp/access/Home.jsp> (click "Apply for Benefits"). You can get the paper SNAP application in English at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DSS/Common-Applications/W-1E.pdf> and in Spanish at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DSS/Common-Applications/W-1ES.pdf>.
- The following two organizations conduct outreach for DSS and can assist with applying for SNAP benefits:
 1. **End Hunger CT!** provides a SNAP outreach call center (866-974-SNAP (7627)) to assist in applying for as well as maintaining eligibility for SNAP benefits. If you are eligible for SNAP, you will stretch your food dollars, support your school and community, and your kids get school meals at no cost. Many families are surprised they qualify – it is quick, easy and confidential to check by calling one of our trained associates
 2. **The Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA)** works with community action agencies that will help you enroll in SNAP (see table on page 2):

Addendum C: Information on SNAP

Agency	Phone number	Areas served
The Access Community Action Agency (Access)	860-450-7400	Windham and Tolland Counties
Alliance for Community Empowerment (Alliance)	203-366-8241	Greater Bridgeport Area and Upper Fairfield County
Community Action Agency of New Haven, Inc. (CAANH)	203-387-7700	Greater New Haven Area
The Community Action Agency of Western Connecticut, Inc. (CAAWC)	203-744-4700	Northwestern CT and Lower Fairfield County
Community Renewal Team, Inc. (CRT)	860-560-5600	Hartford and Middlesex County
Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc. (HRA)	860-225-8601	New Britain and Bristol Areas
New Opportunities, Inc. (NOI)	203-575-9799	Greater Waterbury, Meriden, and Torrington Areas
Thames Valley Council for Community Action, Inc. (TVCCA)	860-889-1365	Southeastern CT- New London County
Training Education and Manpower, Inc. (TEAM)	203-736-5420	Naugatuck Valley

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

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- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, levy.gillespie@ct.gov.

This document is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Forms/FreeRed/AddendumC.pdf>.