

# Stevens School

## STUDENT HANDBOOK



**2023-2024**

**322 Orchard St.  
Rocky Hill, CT**

**[www.rockyhillps.com](http://www.rockyhillps.com)**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| A Message from the Principal                                | 2     |
| A Message from the Stevens P.T.O.                           | 2     |
| Absences  | 3     |
| Bicycles  | 4     |
| Bullying  | 4     |
| Bus Transportation Rules and Regulations                    | 25    |
| Cafeteria   | 25    |
| Conduct   | 25    |
| Confidentiality of Education Records                        | 26    |
| Deadly Weapons/Dangerous Instruments                        | 26    |
| Delayed Openings, School Cancellations, & Emergency Closing | 27    |
| Early Dismissal Days  | 27    |
| Early Dismissal Requests                                    | 27    |
| Field Trips   | 27    |
| General School Rules  | 28    |
| Health and Safety   | 28    |
| Homework  | 29    |
| Late Arriving Students                                      | 30    |
| Lost and Found  | 30    |
| Parent Pick-Up Procedures                                   | 30    |
| Parent/Teacher Conferences                                  | 30    |
| Physical Education  | 30    |
| Report Cards  | 31    |
| Safety Regulations  | 31    |
| School Hours  | 31    |
| School Property   | 31    |
| Sexual Harassment   | 31-32 |
| Smoking   | 33    |
| Student Attire  | 33    |
| Student Behavior  | 33    |
| Student Information   | 38    |
| Technology and Instruction                                  | 38    |
| Visitors  | 41    |

### **Rocky Hill Public Schools Notice of Non-Discrimination**

The Rocky Hill Board of Education prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, military or veteran's status, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation and past or present learning disability, physical disability or mental disorder. The Rocky Hill Board of Education provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The Rocky Hill Board of Education guarantees compliance under Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments Acts of 1973, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the American with Disabilities Act of 1991 and Connecticut General Statutes 46a-60. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Amy Stevenson, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services, 761 Old Main St., Rocky Hill, CT 06067, 860-258-7701. For further information on non-discrimination, visit: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/about/rgn-hqaddresses.html> for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Student,

September 2023

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year. Your teachers and I have worked very hard this summer to prepare to make your learning experience safe, fun, and engaging. Our lobby and front entrance received a facelift which we look forward to sharing with you. In addition, the custodians and secretaries have worked diligently to clean, paint, organize, and create a welcoming facility. This year we will work to make our mission come alive by respecting ourselves, each other, and our school. We are so proud of the work you did last year and are looking forward to building on your skills.

---

Dear Families,

The Stevens School staff is ready to welcome your children to the 2023-2024 school year. The entire staff is prepared to provide all of our students with a safe, inviting, and challenging learning environment during these continued challenging times. Together, we can provide your children with the means to continuously grow and reach their highest potential. This handbook contains important information for you and your child. We encourage you to support us and your child by reviewing it carefully.

Sincerely,

Wendy Durand  
Principal

### THE STEVENS SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

Our school is a safe and caring community of lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

We aim to respect ourselves, we respect others, and we respect our school.

Dear Students & Families,

The Myrtle H. Stevens School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) would like to welcome you to the 2023/2024 school year!

As your PTO, we are committed to making your time at Stevens School fun as well as educational. We are looking forward to bringing you exciting opportunities and fun events this year!

We hope to make this year a memorable one, filled with plenty of fun activities!

Families: We need your support! By volunteering or becoming a member, you can assist with fundraising and enrichment efforts that will help bring some upgrades to the school and enrichment activities! Be on the lookout for more information on how you can contribute! Like & Follow our Facebook Page (@MHSPTO) for the most up to date information!

-Myrtle H. Stevens School PTO

## **ABSENCES: ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS**

A pattern of excellent attendance is one of the best indicators for success in school and in later years. However, if the absence is unavoidable on a given day, a parent/guardian should call the school by 9:00 a.m. - (860-258-7751-main office). An answering machine is available from 4:30 p.m. through 8:00 a.m. to record messages concerning your child's absence. An automated phone call will be sent by 10:00 a.m. if we have not heard from parents. The phone call will occur regardless of parents calling the school to report an absence, it serves as an extra safety measure. Students may not participate in extracurricular or evening activities on the day(s) of absence unless permission is granted by administration.

The Board of Education discourages, and would prohibit if it could, the departure of students for any reason while school is in session. In those situations where there is no alternative, you are allowed one school day for each day you are absent to make up work. If the absence is planned and will extend beyond one day, a letter to the principal is required.

In keeping with the Connecticut State Board of Education Policy 10-198b: 5113:

**Excused Absences:** A student's absence 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 and meets the following criteria:

A. For absences 1 – 9, 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 10<sup>th</sup> absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons: 1.) student illness (Note: all student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of length of absence); 2.) student's observation of a religious holiday; 3.) death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family; 4.) mandated court appearance; 5.) 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); 6.) extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with CT State Department of Education guidance.

**Unexcused Absences:** A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the following criteria: A.) the absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including documentation requirements); and B.) the absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence.

Please be aware that excessive absences and/or tardies could result in administrative action.

## **BICYCLES**

Students wishing to ride a bicycle may request permission to do so by completing a form available from the school office. The form is signed by the parent and then given to principal for authorization. Students permitted to ride bicycles to school must park them immediately upon arrival. Bicycle riding on the school grounds is not permitted. Students should use locks to secure the bicycle to the rack. The school is not responsible for bicycles brought to school, and the family of the student assumes all liability for the child's safety. The privilege of riding a bicycle may be revoked at any time per the decision of the principal.

## **BULLYING BEHAVIOR IN THE SCHOOLS: District Policy**

The Board of Education (Board) promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

The Board believes that a school environment in which students feel safe, supported, engaged and helpfully challenged is optimal for learning and healthy development. The Board seeks an environment in which students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe; an environment that is free of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

#### **Definitions**

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

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a 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, 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. *(The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.)*

**“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 have recently been in a dating relationship.

**“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.

**“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.

**“Electronic communication”** means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.

**“Hostile environment”** means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate;

**“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.

**“School employee”** means (a) 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 (b) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of education.

“**School climate**” means the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults. (and reflects norms, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures.)

#### **Examples**

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs
3. threats and intimidation
4. extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
5. exclusion from peer groups within the school
6. The misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing\* other students within school or out of school (“cyberbullying”)
7. Targeting of a student based on the student’s actual or perceived “differentiating” characteristics such as race; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; socioeconomic or academic status; physical appearance; or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability.

Such conduct is disruptive of the educational process and, therefore, bullying is not acceptable behavior in this district and is prohibited.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, 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 the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and 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,

are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

A comprehensive program, to improve the school climate, involving everyone in the schools and the community, to address bullying at all school levels is essential to reducing incidences of bullying. Such a program must involve interventions at all levels, school wide, classroom and individual.

**\*Board of Education Policy on Sexual Harassment: Policy #0521.1 – Compliance Statement – Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures; 4118.112(a) – Personnel – Sexual Harassment; 5145.5 (a) – Students – Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment**

**The District’s Program:** (Also outlined in the section pertaining to the “Safe School Climate Plan.”)

1. Requires the development and implementation of a safe school climate plan by the Board of Education to address the existence of bullying and teen dating violence in its schools and requires at the beginning of each school year that students and their parents/guardians be notified of the process by which students may make such reports;

2. Permits anonymous reports of bullying or teen dating violence by students to school employees and written reports of suspected bullying or teen dating violence by parents/guardians and requires at the beginning of each school year that students and their parents/guardians be notified of the process by which students may make such reports;
3. Requires school employees who witness acts of bullying or teen dating violence or receive reports of bullying or teen dating violence 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 an oral report;
4. Requires the safe school climate specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying or teen dating violence and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written report, and that the parents/guardians of the student alleged to have committed an act or acts of bullying or teen dating violence and the parents/guardians of the student against whom such alleged act or acts were directed receive prompt notice that such investigation has commenced;
5. Requires the safe school climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
6. Requires each school to have a prevention and intervention strategy, as defined by statute, as amended, for school employees to deal with bullying or teen dating violence, including language about bullying and teen dating violence in student codes of conduct and in all student handbooks;
7. Provides for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying and teen dating violence;
8. Requires each school to notify parents/guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying or teen dating violence not later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation. The notice shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and to the other parent/guardian if requested. The notice must describe the school's response and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying or school dating violence;
9. Requires each school to invite the parents/guardians of a student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate to such parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the students against whom such act of bullying or teen dating violence was directed and the policies and procedures in place to prevent further acts of bullying and teen dating violence;
10. Requires each school to invite the parents/guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying or teen dating violence to a meeting, separate and distinct from the meeting of the parents/guardians of the student against whom the act of bullying or teen dating violence was directed, to discuss specific interventions undertaken by the school to prevent further acts of bullying and teen dating violence;
11. Establishes a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in such school and make such list publicly available; and report such number to the Department of Education and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;

12. Requires the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing reported incidents of bullying or teen dating violence against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;
13. Prohibits discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying or teen dating violence;
14. Requires the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying or teen dating violence was directed that addresses safety measures the school will take to protect such students against further acts of bullying or teen dating violence;
15. Requires the principal of a school or the principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such principal or the principal's designee believes that any acts of bullying or teen dating violence constitute criminal conduct;
16. Prohibits bullying and teen dating violence (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the local or regional board of education, and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying or teen dating violence (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying or teen dating violence was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying or teen dating violence was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;
17. Requires, at the beginning of each school year, for each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan, and
18. Requires all school employees to annually complete the training required by C.G.S. 10-220a, as amended. Such training shall include identifying and responding to bullying and preventing and responding to youth suicide;

*Note: Certified employees are required to complete annual training on the prevention and identification of bullying and response to bullying and the prevention and response to youth suicide.*

*The State Department of Education, within available appropriations, is required to provide annual training to non-certified school employees.*

19. Requires students and the parents/guardians of students to be notified at the beginning of the school year of the process by which they may make reports of bullying or teen dating violence;
20. As required, the Board of Education shall approve the safe school climate plan developed pursuant to statute and submit such plan to the Department of Education for its review, analysis, and cooperative assistance and approval not later than July 1, 2014; and
21. Requires that not later than thirty calendar days after approval by the State Department of Education, the safe school climate plan shall be made available on the Board's and each individual school in the District's Internet website and such plan is to be included in the District's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

The Board expects prompt and reasonable investigations of alleged acts of bullying and teen dating violence. The safe school climate specialist of each school is responsible for handling all complaints of alleged bullying and teen dating violence. The safe climate specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation



of all reports of bullying and teen dating violence promptly.

In addition, the norms that are established by adults through consistent enforcement of all policies pertaining to conduct and modeling appropriate behavior at school and at home will reduce the instances and damage of bullying and teen dating violence. It is necessary for students to promote the concept that caring for others is a valued quality, one that is accepted and encouraged.

### **Prevention and Intervention Strategy**

The District shall implement, as required by C.G.S. 10-222d, as amended, a prevention and intervention strategy which may include, but is not limited to:

1. Implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying and teen dating violence identified by the 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 or 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 or student who commits teen dating violence, parents and school employees and interventions with the students against whom the acts of bullying and teen dating violence are directed, 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 focusing on social-emotional learning, self-awareness and self-regulation.

*Note: Funding for the school-based bullying intervention and school climate improvement may originate from public, private, or philanthropic sources. For purposes of this section, "interventions with the bullied child" includes 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 child.*

### **District Safe School Climate Coordinator**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Superintendent of Schools shall appoint, from among existing District staff, a District Safe School Climate Coordinator.

#### **The Coordinator shall:**

1. Implement the District's safe school climate plan;
2. Collaborate with safe school climate specialists, the Board, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying and teen dating violence in the schools of the district.
3. Provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education;
4. Respond to bullying and teen dating violence in District schools;
5. Meet with the safe school climate specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss bullying and teen dating violence issues in the District and make recommended changes to the District's safe school climate plan;
6. Successfully complete, for the school year commencing July 1, 2014 the mental health first aid training provided by the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services. (Such training only required once.)

### **District Safe School Climate Specialist**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, each school Principal shall serve, or designate someone to serve, as the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school.

**The Specialist in each school shall:**

1. Investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying or teen dating violence in the school in accordance with the District's Safe School Climate Plan;
2. Collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in the school; and
3. Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying and teen dating violence reports in the school.

**Safe School Climate Committee**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Principal of each District school shall establish a new committee or designate at least one existing committee that is responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying and teen dating violence in the school. The committee must include at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, appointed by the Principal.

**The Safe School Climate Committee shall:**

1. Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying and teen dating violence;
2. Identify and address patterns of bullying and teen dating violence among students in the school;
3. Implement the provisions of the school security and safety plan, (developed pursuant to Section 87 of PA 13-3) regarding the collection, evaluation and reporting of information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying or teen dating violence (defined in Connecticut General Statutes 10-222d) and report such information, as necessary, to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator and to the school's security and safety committee;
4. Review and amend school policies relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
5. Review and make recommendation to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator regarding the District's Safe Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
6. Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
7. Collaborate with the District Safe School Climate Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying and teen dating violence; and
8. Perform any other duties as determined by the School Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and teen dating violence for the school.

Parent members of the Safe School Climate Committee are excluded from activities #1 and #3 or any other activity that may compromise the confidentiality of a student.

**Safe School Climate Plan and Assessment**

The Board of Education shall develop and implement a Safe School Climate Plan to address the existence of bullying and teen dating violence in its schools. Such plan shall:

1. Enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying and teen dating violence to school employees and require students and the parents/guardians of students to be notified annually of the process by which they may make such reports;
2. Enable the parents/guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying and teen dating violence;
3. Require school employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying or teen dating violence 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 or teen dating violence, and to file a written report not later than two school days after making such oral report;

4. Require the Safe School Climate Specialist to investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying or teen dating violence and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports made under this section;
5. Require the Safe School Climate specialist to review any anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
6. Include a prevention and intervention strategy for school employees to deal with bullying and teen dating violence;
7. Provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying and teen dating violence;
8. Require each school to notify the parents/guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence 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. The required notification and invitation 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 and teen dating violence;
9. Require each school to invite the parents/guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying or teen dating violence and the parents/guardians of the student against whom such act was directed, to a meeting to communicate to such parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying or teen dating violence;
10. Establish a procedure for each school to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying in such school and to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection, and annually report such number to the Department of Education, and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;
11. Direct the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;
12. Prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;
13. Direct the development of student safety support plans for students against whom an act of bullying was directed that addresses safety measures the school will take to protect such student against further acts of bullying;
14. Require the Principal of a school, or the Principal's designee, to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such Principal, or the Principal's designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct;
15. Prohibit bullying (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile

device owned, leased or used by the Board and (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;

16. Require, at the beginning of each school year, each school to provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's Safe School Climate Plan; and
17. Require that all school employees annually complete the training described in C.G.S. 10-220a, as amended.

#### **Safe School Climate Plan and Assessment**

As part of this policy, the Board of Education shall develop and implement a Safe School Climate Plan to address the existence of bullying and teen dating violence in its schools. Such plan shall establish deadlines for reporting, investigating, and notifying parents/guardians about bullying and/or teen dating violence incidents; prohibit retaliation against those who report bullying and/or teen dating violence; and require school officials to notify law enforcement officials when it is believed that bullying or teen dating violence conduct constitutes a crime.

The Board requires each school in the District, after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, to complete an assessment using school climate assessment instruments, including uniform surveys that collect information about students' perspectives and opinions about school climate at the school and allow students to complete and submit such surveys anonymously, approved and disseminated by the Department of Education pursuant to C.G.S. 10-222h, as amended by PA 11-232. The Board will collect the school climate assessments of each District school and submit them to the Department of Education.

*Note: The Department of Education, within available appropriations, is required by the amended C.G.S. 10-222h, to approve in collaboration with the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), and disseminate to all public schools grade-level appropriate school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, to be used by Boards of Education for the purpose of collecting information pertaining to a district's "prevention and intervention strategy" in order to enable the Department to monitor bullying efforts over time and to compare each district's progress to state trends.*

*A safe school climate resource network is to be established by the Department of Education, in consultation with the State Education Resource Center, the Governor's Prevention Partnership and the Commission on Children, within available appropriations, for the identification, prevention, and education of school bullying in the state. This network will make available to all schools information, training opportunities and resource materials to improve school climate to diminish bullying.*

The Superintendent shall develop rules and procedures, which carry out the provisions of this policy. *[In designing administrative regulations, the Superintendent should consult with the greater school community, including students.]* In addition, the Superintendent shall provide that students and parents/guardians of students are notified of this prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by ensuring the posting of such information at each school and by ensuring inclusion of such information in student and parent handbooks.

This policy shall not be interpreted to prohibit a reasonable and civil exchange of opinions, or debate that is protected by state or federal law.

(cf. 0521 - Nondiscrimination)

- (cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
- (cf. 5114 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
- (cf. 5131 – Conduct)
- (cf. 5131.21 – Violent and Aggressive Behavior)
- (cf. 5131.8 – Out-of-School Misconduct)
- (cf. 5131.912 – Aggressive Behavior)
- (cf. 5131.913 – Cyberbullying)
- (cf. 5131.91 – Hazing)
- (cf. 5144 – Discipline/Punishment)
- (cf. 5145.4 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.51 – Peer Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 6121 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 6121.1 – Equal Educational Opportunity)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

- 10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student’s records. Inspection and subpoena of school or student records.
- 10-222d Policy on bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160 and PA 11-232 and P.A. 14-172.
- P.A. 06-115 An Act Concerning Bullying Policies in Schools and Notices Sent to Parents or Legal Guardians.
- P.A. 11-232 An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws.
- P.A. 13-3 An Act Concerning Gun Violence Protection and Safety
- P.A. 14-172 An Act Concerning Improving Employment Opportunities through Education and Ensuring Safe School Climates.
- P.A. 14-234 An Act Concerning Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

**Model Safe School Climate Plan**

**Purpose/Priority Statement**

The Rocky Hill District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying and teen dating violence. The goal is the establishment of a positive school climate in which norms, values, and expectations make students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and teen dating violence and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process. The District expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The following plan, “The Rocky Hill Public Schools Safe School Climate Plan (Plan),” addresses the mandated areas of compliance which are required under C.G.S.10-222d as amended by P.A. 11-232. In addition to the following current efforts, the administration, faculty and staff of this District commit to continue to improve, enhance, and update both the Plan and its implementation biennially in order to best serve the students, parents, guardians and the community.

The Board of Education (Board) promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

**I. Prohibition Against Bullying**

The Board of Education (Board) prohibits bullying and teen dating violence (a) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board,

or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board, and (b) outside of the school setting if such bullying or teen dating violence (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, (ii) infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school.

## II. Definitions

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

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a 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, 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. (*The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.*)

**“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.

**“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 have recently been in a dating relationship.

**“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.

**“Electronic communication”** means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.

**“Hostile environment”** means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate.

**“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.

**“School employee”** means (a) 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 (b) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with

students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional Board of Education.

“School climate” means the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults. *(It is based on people’s experiences of school and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures.)*

### **III. Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation (Complaint Process)**

#### **A. Publication of the Prohibition against Bullying and Related Procedures**

The prohibition against bullying and teen dating violence shall be publicized by including the following statement in the student handbook of each of the district schools.

“Bullying behavior and teen dating violence by any student in the Rocky Hill Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. “Bullying” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same district that:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, gender identity, or physical mental, 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.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, 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 the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and 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,

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation (Plan) #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

#### **B. Appropriate School Personnel**

All school employees are charged with the responsibility of taking reports of bullying or teen dating violence or if witnessing acts of bullying or teen dating violence to notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or

another administrator when the Safe School Climate Specialist is not available. Reports shall be appropriately investigated by the Safe School Climate Specialist or another administrator when the Safe School Climate Specialist is not available.

#### **District Safe School Climate Coordinator**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Superintendent of Schools shall appoint, from among existing District staff, a District Safe School Climate Coordinator.

The Coordinator shall:

1. Implement the District's safe school climate plan;
2. Collaborate with safe school climate specialists, the Board, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying and teen dating violence in District schools;

#### **B. Appropriate School Personnel/District Safe School Climate Coordinator**

3. Provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education;
4. Meet with the safe school climate specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss bullying and teen dating violence issues in the district and make recommended changes to the District's safe school climate plan; and
5. Successfully complete, for the school year commencing July 1, 2014, the mental health first aid training provided by the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services. (Such training is only required once.)

#### **Safe School Climate Specialist**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, each school Principal shall serve, or designate someone to serve, as the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school.

The Specialist in each school shall:

1. Investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying or teen dating violence in the school in accordance with the District's Safe School Climate Plan;
2. Collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in the school; and
3. Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying and teen dating violence reports in the school.

#### **C. Annual Notification of the Complaint Process**

The process by which students may make formal, informal, and anonymous complaints as set forth below shall be publicized annually, at the beginning of the school year, in the student handbook of each of the District schools. In addition, this Safe School Climate Plan shall be placed on the District website and the website of each school.

#### **D. Formal Written Complaints**

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file written reports of conduct that they consider to be bullying or teen dating violence. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying or teen dating violence, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying or teen dating violence, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school employee, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator, if the Safe School Specialist is unavailable, for review and action in accordance with Section IV below.

#### **E. Informal/Verbal Complaints by Students**

Students may make an informal complaint of conduct that they consider to be bullying or teen dating violence by verbal report to the Safe School Climate Specialist, or to any school employee, as defined, or administrator. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying or teen dating violence, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying or teen dating violence, and the names of any



potential student or staff witnesses. A school employee, or administrator or the Safe School Climate Specialist who receives an informal complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the information provided. Such written report by the school employee, administrator, if not the Safe School Climate Specialist, shall be promptly forwarded to the Building Principal for review and action in accordance with Section IV below.

**F. Anonymous Complaints**

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school employee who receives the complaint. Should anonymity be requested, the Safe School Climate Specialist, if not the Principal or his/her designee, shall meet with the student to review the request for anonymity and the impact that maintaining anonymity of the complaint may have on the investigation of the complaint and/or possible remedial action. At such meeting, the student shall be given the choice as to whether to maintain the anonymity of the complaint.

Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

**IV. Staff Responsibilities and Intervention Strategies**

**A. Teachers and Other School Staff**

School employees who witness acts of bullying or teen dating violence, as defined above, or who receive reports of bullying or teen dating violence shall promptly 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 employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying or teen dating violence. A written report must be filed not later than two school days after making such an oral report concerning the events witnessed or reported.

School employees who receive student or parent reports of suspected bullying or teen dating violence shall promptly notify the Safe School Climate Specialist of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, such complaint shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a school employee, he or she shall prepare a succinct written report of the informal complaint, which shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable. If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a school employee, this employee shall verbally report the matter to the Safe School Climate Specialist not later than the next school day.

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school employees and other are encouraged to address the issue of bullying or teen dating violence in other interactions with students. Teachers and other professionals may find opportunities to educate students about bullying and teen dating violence and help eliminate bullying behavior and teen dating violence through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially-appropriate behavior. All school employees including teachers and other professional employees should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of "bullying."

**B. Responsibilities of the Safe School Climate Specialist**

**1. Investigation**

The Safe School Climate Specialist shall be promptly notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected bullying or teen dating violence received by any school employee. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying or teen dating violence in the school in accordance with the District's Safe School Climate Plan. All such complaints shall be investigated promptly. Prompt notice must be provided to the parents/guardians of the person bullied or the victim of teen dating violence and the student alleged to have committed the act of bullying or teen dating violence that such investigation has begun. The investigation must be completed promptly after the receipt by the Safe School Climate Specialist of any written report. In order to allow the District to adequately investigate all formal complaints, the parents/guardians of the student suspected of being bullied or being the victim of teen dating violence must complete a consent form that allows their District to release that student's name to those third parties who the District contacts as part of its investigation of that complaint with regard to the investigation of informal complaints, the parents/guardians of the student suspected of being bullied or being the victim of teen dating violence must complete the above-referenced consent form so long as that student has not requested anonymity.

A written report of the investigation shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of bullying or teen dating violence were verified, and, when acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

The school shall notify parents/guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying or teen dating violence not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation. The notice shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and in the case of a divorced/split situation, to the other parent/guardian if requested. The notice must describe the school's response, measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the students against whom such act was directed, and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying or teen dating violence.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complainant. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

## **2. Remedial Actions**

Verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence shall result in intervention by the Building Principal or his/her designee that is intended to address the acts of the perpetrator and the needs of the victim and to assure that the prohibition against bullying behavior or teen dating violence is enforced, with the goal that any such bullying behavior will end as a result.

Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in how serious it is, and what impact it has on the victim and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying" as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (detention, in-school suspension; suspension or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the Building Principal (or responsible program administrator or his/her designee.) The following sets forth possible interventions for building principals to enforce the Board's prohibition against bullying. No disciplinary action may be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.

The following sets forth permissible interventions for building principals (or other responsible program administrators) to enforce the Board's prohibition against bullying or teen dating violence.

**a. Non-disciplinary Interventions**

When verified acts of bullying and teen dating violence are identified early and/or when such verified acts of bullying and teen dating violence do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of bullying or teen dating violence, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered bullying or teen dating violence.

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

In any instance in which bullying or teen dating violence is verified, the building Principal (or other responsible program administrator) shall invite the parents/guardians of the student against whom such act was directed, and the parents/guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying or teen dating violence, to a meeting to communicate to such parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying or teen dating violence. The meeting of parents/guardians of the bullied student or the victim of teen dating violence and the student committing the bullying or teen dating violence shall be separate and distinct from each other.

**b. Disciplinary Interventions**

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

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

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

**c. Interventions for Bullied Students**

The Safe School Climate Specialist/Building Principal (or other responsible program administrator) or his/her designee shall intervene in order to address repeated incidents of bullying or teen dating violence against a single individual. Intervention strategies for a bullied student or student against whom teen dating violence was directed may include the following:

- Counseling;
- Increased supervision and monitoring of student to observe and intervene in bullying or teen dating violence situations;
- Encouragement of student to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization;
- Peer mediation where appropriate.

**3. General Prevention and Intervention Strategies**

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying and teen dating violence and direct intervention when acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified, other District actions may ameliorate

any potential problem with bullying or teen dating violence in school or at school-sponsored activities. A focus will be placed on district and school efforts to improve school climate based upon the National School Climate Standards.

While no specific action is required and school needs for such interventions may vary from time to time, the following list of potential intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators, teachers and other professional staff members in each school:

a. 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 or teen dating violence, including any such program identified by the Department of Education;

b. A safe school climate assessment on or after July 1, 2012 and biennially thereafter to determine the prevalence of bullying or teen dating violence. Such assessments may include, in addition to those approved and disseminated by the State Department of Education, in collaboration with CAS, the National School climate Standards Self-Assessment Tool' and the Connecticut State Department of Education's "Improving School Climate Team Rubric;"

c. Establishment by the school Principal of a Safe School Climate Committee in each District school or the designation of an existing committee that is responsible for fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying and teen dating violence in the school.

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Principal of each District school shall establish a new committee or designate at least one existing committee that is responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying and teen dating violence in the school. The committee must include at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, appointed by the Principal.

The Safe School Climate Committee shall:

1. Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying and teen dating violence;
2. Identify and address patterns of bullying and teen dating violence among students in the school;
3. Implement the provisions of the school security plan and safety plan, (developed pursuant to Section 87 of PA 13-3) regarding the collection, evaluation and reporting of information relating to instances of disturbing or threatening behavior that may not meet the definition of bullying (defined in Connecticut General Statutes 10-222d) and report such information, as necessary, to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator and to the school's security and safety committee.
4. Review and amend school policies relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
5. Review and make recommendation to the District Safe School Climate Coordinator regarding the District's Safe Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
6. Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying and teen dating violence;

7. Collaborate with the District Safe School Climate Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying and teen dating violence; and
8. Perform any other duties as determined by the School Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and teen dating violence for the school.

Parent members of the Safe School Climate Committee are excluded from activities #1 and #3 or any other activity that may compromise the confidentiality of a student.

- d. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying or teen dating violence is likely to occur;
- e. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying and teen dating violence education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school;
- f. Individual interventions with the perpetrator, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied student or student who commits teen dating violence, parents and school employees. Such interventions with the bullied child or victim of teen dating violence may include referrals to a school counselor, psychologist, or other appropriate social or mental health services, and periodic follow-up by the safe school climate specialist with the bullied child or victim of teen dating violence;
- g. School-wide training related to safe school climate;
- h. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying and teen dating violence prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
- i. Respectful responses to bullying and teen dating violence concerns raised by students, parents or staff;
- j. Planned professional development programs addressing bully/victim and teen dating perpetrator/victim problems;
- k. Student peer training, education and support. Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
- l. Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping (e.g., males need to be strong and tough);
- m. Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of staff and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies;
- n. Modeling by all school employees of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;
- o. Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;

- p. Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere;
- q. Utilizing a culturally competent school-based curriculum focusing on social emotional learning, self-awareness and self-regulation.

**V. Reporting Obligations**

**A. Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator**

If after investigation, acts of bullying or teen dating violence by a specific student are verified, not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation, the Building Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall notify the parent or guardian of the perpetrator in writing of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in such notification. In addition, the school shall invite the parent/guardian of a student who commits any verified act of bullying or teen dating violence (after the completion of the investigation) to a meeting to communicate to the parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety and measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying or teen dating violence. Records will be maintained by the School Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist of the bullying and teen dating violence reports, subsequent investigations and parental/guardian meetings.

**B. Reports to the Targeted Student and his/her Parent or Guardian**

If after investigation, acts of bullying or teen dating violence against a specific student are verified, the Building Principal/Safe Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall notify the parent/guardian of the victim of such finding, not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such bullying or teen dating violence. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the perpetrator, as reflected in the student's educational records, shall not be disclosed to the parents/guardian of the victim, except as provided by law (e.g., court order/subpoena). In addition, the school shall invite the parent/guardian of the student against whom the verified act of bullying or teen dating violence was directed, after the completion of the investigation, to a meeting to communicate to the parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety and measures being taken by the school to ensure the targeted student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying or teen dating violence. Records will be maintained by the School Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist of the bullying and teen dating violence reports, subsequent investigations and parental/guardian meetings.

Notices shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and the other parent/guardian if requested. This mailing requirement shall be in effect for as long as the student attends the school in which the original request is made.

**C. List of Verified Acts of Bullying/Teen Dating Violence**

The Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist of each school shall establish a procedure to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in such school and maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying and teen dating violence in the school, and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. The list shall be reported annually to the Department of Education in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education. Given that any determination of bullying or teen dating violence involves repeated acts over time, each report prepared in accordance with Section III (1) above that includes verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence shall be tallied as one verified act of bullying or teen dating violence unless the specific actions that are the subject of the report involve separate and distinct acts of bullying or teen dating violence. The list shall be limited to the number of such verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence in the school, and it shall not set out

the particulars of each verified act, including but not limited to any personally identifiable student information, which is confidential information by law.

## **VI. Prohibition against Discrimination and Retaliation**

### **A. Safety**

Discrimination and/or retaliation against any person who reports bullying or teen dating violence, provides information during an investigation of an act of bullying or teen dating violence, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying or teen dating violence is prohibited.

The continuation and perpetuation of bullying or teen dating violence of a student through the dissemination of hurtful or demeaning material by any other student is prohibited.

The District will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, teen dating violence, cyberbullying, discrimination or retaliation in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school related activities. All reports and complaints of bullying, teen dating violence, cyberbullying, discrimination and retaliation will be investigated promptly and prompt action will be taken to end that behavior and restore the student's against whom such bullying or teen dating violence was directed (target's) sense of safety. This commitment is to be supported in all aspects of the school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

Before formally investigating the allegations of bullying, teen dating violence, discrimination or retaliation, the Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged student against whom such bullying or teen dating violence was directed (target) and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but are not limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the alleged victim (target) and/or the alleged perpetrator in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the alleged student against whom such bullying or teen dating violence was directed (target); and altering the alleged perpetrator's schedule and access to the alleged target. The Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying, teen dating violence or retaliation a student who has reported bullying, teen dating violence or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying, teen dating violence or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying, teen dating violence or retaliation.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Principal/Safe School climate Specialist or designee will contact the victim to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If determined necessary, the Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

### **B. Law Enforcement Notification**

The School Principal or his/her designee shall notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such Principal or the Principal's designee believes any acts of bullying or teen dating violence constitute criminal conduct.

## **VII. Training Requirements for School Staff**

A. Certified staff of the District shall be provided in-service training on the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and teen dating violence and the prevention of and response to youth

suicide. *(The Board, subject to the approval of the State Department of Education, is not required to offer an in-service program regarding bullying, teen dating violence or youth suicide prevention and intervention if it instead implements an evidence-based model approach to this issue.)*

B. Beginning teachers shall satisfactorily complete instructional modules as required by C.G.S. 10-145a which shall include a module in classroom management and climate, which shall include training regarding the prevention, identification, and response to school bullying, teen dating violence and the prevention of and response to youth suicide.

C. Non-certified staff of the District will participate in annual training to be provided, within available appropriations, by the Connecticut State Department of Education. The training may be presented in person by mentors, offered in state-wide workshops, or through on-line courses. Such training may include, but is not limited to:

1. Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying and teen dating violence among students in school and outside the school setting,
2. Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate and effective interventions to stop bullying and teen dating violence,
3. Information regarding the interaction and relationship between students committing acts of bullying and teen dating violence, students against whom such acts of bullying and teen dating violence are directed and witnesses of such acts of bullying and teen dating violence,
4. Research findings on bullying and teen dating violence, such as information about the types of students who have been shown to be at-risk for bullying and teen dating violence in the school setting,
5. Information about the incidence and nature of cyberbullying as defined in C.G.S. 10-222d, or
6. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

#### **VIII. Notification Requirements**

A. A copy of this District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be provided in written or electronic format to all District employees annually at the beginning of each school year.

B. The District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be made available on the Board's website and on the website of each individual school with the District. Such posting shall occur within thirty (30) days of the approval of such plan by the State Department of Education. *(Note: The Safe School Climate Plan must be approved by the Board of Education not later than January 1, 2012 and submitted to the State Department of Education.)*

C. The District's Safe School Climate Plan shall be included in the District's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

#### **IX. School Climate Assessments**

A. On or after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, the Board requires each school within the District to complete an assessment using the school climate assessment instruments, including uniform surveys, that collect information about students' perspectives and opinions about the school climate at the school and allow students to complete and submit such surveys anonymously, approved and disseminated by the State Department of Education.

B. Completed assessments shall be shared with the Board and then submitted by the Board to the



State Department of Education.

**X. Bullying Through the Use of Technology (Cyberbullying)**

An emerging form of bullying is the use of technology to threaten, intimidate, ridicule, humiliate, insult, or harass. Technology enables aggressive expression toward others and does not rely on physical strength or physical contact. By using a cell phone or the Internet, a student can quickly and aggressively spread rumors, threats, hate mail, or embarrassing photos through text messages, e-mails, or instant messages.

There are a number of social networking sites available to our students that can be misused and/or abused for bullying purposes. Any alleged misuse or abuse must be reported to any staff member or the Safe School Climate Specialist.

The District's discipline policy states that misuse, on or off campus, of electronic devices, for threatening/Bullying or harassment is a violation and can be the basis for discipline on or off campus. When information is received that a student or students are involved in bullying through the use of technology either as the actor or a member of a group, or the victim, the following will be considered:

- If it takes place on campus or at a school sponsored event, disciplinary action will be taken.
- If it takes place off campus a school may take disciplinary action if the incident poses a likelihood of substantial disruption to the educational process or the orderly day to day operations of the school.

**XI. Relationship to Other Laws**

A. Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the district and school rules, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color gender, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the "Plan" prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or district policies.

B. In addition, nothing in the "Plan" is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action under applicable laws, or local school or District policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the "Plan" covers the behavior.

**XII. Immunity for Board of Education, School Employees, Others**

Members of the Board of Education and school employees are protected by statute against damageclaims in the implementation of a safe school climate plan and, in accordance with a school district safe school climate plan, report, investigate, or respond to bullying. PA 11-232 also extends this immunity to reports of bullying incidents by parents, students, and others to a school employee according to a safe school climate plan.

To be immune, these parties must act in good faith and, in the case of a school employee or Board of Education, within the scope of their duties. The immunity does not cover gross, wanton, reckless, or willful misconduct.

**BUS TRANSPORTATION**

**School Bus Rules And Regulations**

Safety and efficient operation of the bus requires the cooperation of all families and the enforcement of the following regulations:

1. At all times the bus driver is in full charge of the bus and of all students riding therein.
2. The bus driver is empowered to enforce all rules.

3. Students must take a seat as soon as they enter the bus and remain seated until the bus has reached its designated stops.
4. Students may not change their seats while the bus is in motion. The behavior of the students on the bus should be substantially the same as that in the classroom. Reasonable conversation is permitted.
5. Yelling or indecent language is forbidden.
6. Fighting, pushing, or shoving is also forbidden.
7. Unnecessary conversation with the bus driver is discouraged.
8. Students must not throw unwanted items on the floor of the bus.
9. Students must assist the drivers in keeping buses clean by adhering to reasonable standards of accountability.
10. Upon entering or leaving the bus, all students are to behave in an orderly manner. Crowding or tripping is not permitted.
11. Students are not permitted to leave the bus without permission from the bus driver.
12. Students must be on time at their stops. Bus drivers will not wait for students.
13. Students must not stand or play on the traveled part of the roadway while waiting for the bus.
14. After being discharged from the bus, students will cross the road in FRONT of the bus while traffic is stopped in both directions. The bus driver will keep his red lights flashing and not start the bus until students are safely across the roadway.
15. Students must not extend head or arms out of an open window.
16. Students are not to mar or deface the interior or exterior of the bus. Students who violate this rule above shall be liable for the damage
17. Students who wish to ride a bus other than the one to which they are assigned, may do so if authorization has been received from the principal.
18. Students not adhering to the bus rules risk having their bus transportation privileges revoked.

### CAFETERIA

While in the cafeteria, students are expected to demonstrate good manners and appropriate behavior. Students who do not abide by the established rules of the cafeteria may be removed from the cafeteria and may be subject to progressive discipline.

A student who has forgotten or lost lunch money will be placed on the school's "Indebted List". It is expected that the School Lunch Program will be reimbursed on the next regular school day. The School Lunch Program Publication lists the prices, menus, and other information pertaining to the program. (Please also reference Board of Education Policy regarding our School Lunch Program.) If lunch and snack are sent from home, please consider making it a healthy one.

### CONDUCT

Students are expected to behave in an appropriate manner at all times in the classroom, cafeteria, playground, and on the school bus. All students have the right to receive an education in an atmosphere that is free from disturbing influences.

We expect students to be courteous toward adults and their classmates, to respect the rights, feelings, and property of others, to abide by the rules, and to act in a way that is appropriate to the activity or class.

If a student is disruptive, the family will be notified by a staff member or principal either by phone or email or a disciplinary referral. Recurrent disruptive behavior will be cause for progressive discipline. The behavior and discipline of students is a shared responsibility between the home and school. With your action and support, we will be able to minimize the reoccurrence of poor behavior and strive to improve the student's self-control and self-esteem.

## CONFIDENTIALITY OF EDUCATION RECORDS

### Definitions

1. Student Records: any item of information directly related to an identifiable student which is maintained by the school district or required to be maintained by an employee in the performance of his/her duties, whether recorded by handwriting, print, disk, tapes, student gathered within or without the school system and maintained within the school district, regardless of the physical form in which it is maintained. Any information which is maintained for the purpose of review by a second party is considered a student record.
  - A. Student records shall not include informal notes related to a student compiled by a school officer or employee which remain in the sole possession of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute.
  - B. Substitute: a person who performs the duties of the individual who made the notes on a temporary basis, and does not refer to a person who permanently succeeds the maker of notes in his or her position. Medical records are not open to public inspection.
2. Parent: means a natural parent, an adopted parent, or legal guardian. If parents are divorced or legally separated, both the parent granted custody and the parent not granted custody have the legal right to access to the academic, medical, hospital or other health records of the child, unless a court order prohibits access.

Whenever a student has attained eighteen years or is attending an institution of post secondary education, the permission or consent required of, and the rights accorded to, the parents or guardian of the student shall thereafter only be required of, and accorded to, the student.
3. Access: a personal inspection and review of a record or an accurate copy of a record, an oral description or communication of a record or an accurate copy of a record and a request to release a copy of any record.
4. Student: a person who is or was enrolled in a school
5. Adult Student: a person who is or was enrolled in school and who is at least eighteen years of age.
6. Eligible Student: a person sixteen years or older or who has completed grade 10.

## DEADLY WEAPONS/DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS

\*Deadly weapon means "any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or a switch blade knife, a gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles" and fire arm means "any sawed-off shotgun, machine gun, rifle, shot gun, pistol, revolver, or other weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged."

"Dangerous instrument" means any "instrument, article, or substance which, under the circumstances in which it is used, or attempted, or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury, and includes a 'vehicle' as defined in subdivision (8) of section 53 a-3 of the Connecticut General Statutes."

If a student has in his possession a weapon or a dangerous instrument, the suspension/expulsion procedure will be implemented.

## DELAYED OPENINGS, CANCELLATIONS, & EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The alert announcement system is designed to make phone calls alerting both families and staff members to schedule disruptions caused by weather and other unforeseen incidents.

Additionally emergency/storm closings will be announced on radio stations in and around Hartford starting at approximately 6:30 a.m. On delayed opening days, the schedule will typically begin 2 hours later than the regular schedule. Please do not call the school. Phone inquiries should be directed to the dedicated "Weather Line" (860-258-7703). Parents are asked not to bring students to school until 15 minutes prior to the announced opening time when there is a delayed opening, as there will be no supervision for students until that time. In the event of an all day closing or early dismissal because of bad weather, all evening activities scheduled for the schools will be postponed automatically unless announced otherwise on the radio (WTIC, WDRC, WRCH) or TV (Channel 3 WFSB or Channel 30 WVIT).

Typical delayed opening schedules run as follows:

**All Students and Grades 11:00 A.M. — 3:40 P.M**

It is very important that you discuss with your student any alternate plans for emergency and early closing days.

**EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS**

On planned scheduled early dismissal days, students in all grades will be dismissed at 1:05 p.m. planned early dismissal schedule runs as follows:

**All Students and Grades 9:00 a.m. — 1:05 p.m.**

**EARLY DISMISSAL REQUESTS FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS**

All requests for early dismissal for individual students must be made in written form by the parent or legal guardian and must be submitted to the school office. In an emergency, telephone requests for early dismissal may be approved. Upon the arrival of the family or a designee, the student will be called from class for dismissal. **The family member or designee must sign the student out from the school office and present a photo I.D.** Planned parent pick-ups take place in the café at 3:40.

**FIELD TRIPS**

Transportation to and from school field trips will be arranged by the school. In the event that an adult family member attends the field trip and wishes to bring his/her child home, a release form must be signed.

**GENERAL SCHOOL RULES**

- No gum chewing.
- No toys in school.
- No running in school.
- Electronic devices, including cell phones, are not to be turned on or allowed to be within the student's reach during instruction time.
- Food at celebrations is prohibited.
- No hats worn in school.
- Birthday invitations are not to be distributed in school.
- Flip flops are discouraged.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The health and safety of the students in school is of utmost concern to all of us, requiring close cooperation between parents, teachers and the school nurse. Understanding and constant communication are vital in helping the schools render the best possible care and protection to your child. Your assistance in following the instructions below will help us greatly in providing proper health services.

**WHEN TO CALL THE SCHOOL: Parents must notify the school:**

1. To report if a student will be absent from school.
2. To designate a responsible adult who is to be notified in case of emergency should a parent be unavailable.
3. To inform the school if the student has:
  - a) been diagnosed with a long-term disorder, e.g., diabetes, seizures, etc.
  - b) been placed on daily medications.

- c) had severe, known reactions to allergens, e.g., bee stings, foodstuffs, etc.
- d) had any surgery.
- e) had a physical examination (forms will be provided for the examining doctor to complete in order to bring school records up to date ).
- f) had hearing or sight tested, and the results of these tests.
- g) had any update of immunizations ( e.g. DT, MMR)
- h) has a communicable disease (e.g. strep throat, chicken pox)

**WHEN TO KEEP THE STUDENT HOME:** Parents are responsible for keeping students home when an illness is evident and are advised to keep a student home when a rash is detected. **Nurses are not allowed to diagnose an illness or rash.** Students should be kept home until they have been free of fever (temp below 100) and/or vomiting for 24 hours. **Parents should call the school office to report if a student will be absent.**

**LENGTHY ABSENCES:** Parents whose child has been absent from school because of illness or injury for a period of ten school days or longer must secure their doctor's approval for the student's readmission to school.

**EXCLUSION FOR CERTAIN HEALTH CONDITIONS:** Students will be excluded from school for the following conditions:

- any undiagnosed rash (MD approval for re admission to school or resolution of rash)
- any untreated eye infections
- temperature of 100 degrees or over
- suspected communicable diseases, e.g., chicken pox, etc.
- vomiting

**STUDENTS ON MEDICATION:** Students who require medication, including over the counter medication, during school hours may do so provided they have WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION FROM A PHYSICIAN/ DENTIST/ ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSE/ PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT. MEDICATION FORM LOCATED ON RHPS WEBSITE - [CLICK HERE](#) OR USE THE URL: <https://goo.gl/pnn3Gd>

THE MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- DATE OF DOCUMENT
- STUDENT'S NAME, ADDRESS, AND BIRTHDATE
- CONDITION FOR WHICH THE MEDICATION IS BEING ADMINISTERED
- NAME OF DRUG, AMOUNT OF DRUG, TIME OF ADMINISTRATION, RELEVANT SIDE EFFECTS, AND DURATION TO BE ADMINISTERED (FROM \_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_)
- DOCTOR'S SIGNATURE

THIS FORM, MUST INCLUDE PARENT'S/GUARDIAN AUTHORIZATION SECTION COMPLETED, AND BE PRESENTED TO THE NURSE PRIOR TO ANY DRUG BEING ADMINISTERED, ACCORDING TO CONNECTICUT STATE LAW.

Students who are able to self administer their asthma inhalers and/or medication for the emergency treatment of severe allergic reactions and/or medication while on an over night field trip, may do so provided:

- 1) THEY PRESENT A PHYSICIAN/ DENTIST/ ADVANCED PRACTICE RN/ PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT'S WRITTEN ORDER FOR "AUTHORIZATION FOR SELF- ADMINISTRATION"
- 2) THERE IS WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION FROM STUDENT'S PARENT INCLUDING AN AGREEMENT TO SUPPLY THE SCHOOL NURSE WITH BACK-UP MEDICATION
- 3) THERE IS A SIGNED STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING FROM THE STUDENT
- 4) THE SCHOOL NURSE HAS EVALUATED THE SITUATION AND DEEMED IT TO BE SAFE AND APPROPRIATE. IF THE NURSE DETERMINES THAT THE MEDICATION CANNOT BE SAFELY ADMINISTERED, THE PHYSICIAN AND PARENT WILL BE NOTIFIED. IF THE SITUATION CANNOT BE RESOLVED, THE SCHOOL MEDICAL ADVISOR WILL DETERMINE IF THE STUDENT CAN SELF-ADMINISTER MEDICATION.

**ANY MEDICATION MUST BE IN A PROPERLY LABELED BOTTLE FROM THE PHARMACY. IT IS TO INCLUDE THE STUDENT'S NAME, DATE, MEDICATION NAME, FREQUENCY OF ADMINISTRATION, AND THE DOCTOR'S NAME. THE MEDICATION, EXCEPT THOSE APPROVED FOR TRANSPORTING BY STUDENTS FOR SELF**

MEDICATION, MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE NURSE BY A PARENT, GUARDIAN, OR OTHER RESPONSIBLE ADULT. NO MORE THAN A 90 DAY SUPPLY OF MEDICATION MAY BE BROUGHT IN.

YEARLY HEALTH SCREENINGS: In an effort to promote a maximum level of wellness and in keeping with Ct Gen. Statute 10-214, at a minimum will provide annually: 1. Each pupil in kindergarten, grades 1, 3, 4, 5 a vision screening; 2. Each pupil in Kindergarten, grades 1, 3, 4, 5 an audiometric screening for hearing; 3. Postural screening for (1) each female pupil in grades 5, 7 and (2) each male pupil in grade 8 or 9.

IN THE EVENT OF ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS: Parents are responsible for contacting the school to keep updated telephone numbers and individuals responsible for transporting ill students. Nurses and teachers make every effort to insure immediate care, comfort, and protection for students during any emergency which may occur at any school activity. The following procedures apply in all schools:

- \* School personnel will administer first aid only (reasonable and prudent) to a student whose illness or injury occurs on school premises during school hours or supervised school sponsored activities.
- \* Parents, or an individual designated by the parents, are responsible for transporting an ill student to his home or to the physician.
- \* If a parent cannot be reached in an emergency, the student will be transported to the nearest hospital (or the hospital of choice listed in Power School if appropriate), where he will remain until the parent arrives. In a life-threatening emergency the student will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital.

We very much appreciate your attention and cooperation in these important matters. Please do not hesitate to call your school nurse if you have any questions.

### HOMEWORK

Although homework is an activity which requires active monitoring and involvement on your part, you should bear in mind that the final responsibility for its completion belongs to your student.

#### HOW MUCH TIME IS SPENT ON HOMEWORK?

Every student is expected to spend the following daily minimum estimated amount of time completing homework assignments:

- GRADE 1: 15 to 20 minutes
- GRADE 2: 20 to 30 minutes
- GRADE 3: 30 to 40 minutes

### LATE ARRIVING STUDENTS

If you bring your child to school after 9:00 a.m., please bring your child to the school office. Late arriving students must be signed in by the family member accompanying the child to school. The school office staff will provide the child with a pass to enter the classroom and remove his/her name from the absence list.

### LOST AND FOUND

Throughout the year we accumulate a number of abandoned items and pieces of clothing. The "Lost and Found" is located in the office area and is accessible for your perusal. Items unclaimed at the end of the year will be donated to a worthy organization.

### PARENT PICK-UP PROCEDURE

Parents picking up their children from school should enter the parent pick up line at the far entrance to the parking lot (closest to Parsonage St.) Parents will be provided with a sign to place on the dashboard of their vehicle with their child's name and teacher. Staff will ask to see a license or identification for students.

In addition, if your child is being picked up from someone other than a parent or legal guardian, the office requires a note written by the parent or legal guardian authorizing this individual to pick up the student. The office staff may ask to create a photo copy of the individual's driver's license if that individual is not known to the office staff.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

In addition to the scheduled conference days that are indicated on the district calendar, families are encouraged to contact the teacher or the school regarding concerns about your student's progress or other matters. These issues can often be clarified through communication such as a phone call or conference with your child's teacher. Other acceptable means of contacting the teachers include e-mail or notes sent in with the student. Teachers shall not leave the classrooms while they are with their class, but may be available at other times. Communication provides a link between school and home which will promote mutual understanding.

When a concern arises, please address the matter with the teacher, as she/he is oftentimes closest to the concern.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The physical education program attempts to provide the families of students' flexibility in providing clothing which must be worn by their children to physical education classes and still maintain satisfactory student safety standards.

The clothing requirements for children in the physical education program in grades K-3 are as follows:

- a) well-fitted sneakers (no backless or platform);
- b) comfortable fitting slacks or shorts;
- c) minimal jewelry, please

**Gym Exclusions:** There may be times when a child is unable to participate in physical education class. If that is the case, a note from the child's doctor should be sent to the school nurse. The note should indicate an estimated time of absence. Any modifications/adaptations in physical education participation by the student upon return to class should be indicated as well.

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued three times a year. Dates will be provided in the newsletter, and they will be sent digitally.

### **SAFETY REGULATIONS**

It is against the law to pass a school bus with flashing lights. Do not drive past the school bus during loading and unloading at any time including the beginning of the day or at dismissal time. The bus loading area is also a fire lane with parking or stopping prohibited during the school day. For the safety of all students, it is necessary to abide by these laws.

In addition, if entering the building between the hours of 8:55 a.m. — 3:25 p.m., you will need to press the security buzzer in order to enter the building. You are required to report directly to the school office. If you plan to stay, you need to sign in and wear a visitor's badge.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

**All Students and Grades 9:00 a.m. — 3:40 p.m.**

At 8:45 a.m. students may enter the building. Supervision of students is not provided until 8:45 a.m. Therefore, students are not to arrive before that time.

## SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are issued textbooks and other materials to use in the education program. Students are responsible for returning texts, library books, etc., in satisfactory condition at the proper time. If such materials are lost, the students, and their families by extension, shall be responsible for the cost of replacement. You will be billed for the items not returned. If they are found and returned at a later date, the money will be refunded.

## SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

### WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is unwanted and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature which interferes with a student's right to learn, study, work, achieve, or participate in school activities in a comfortable and supportive atmosphere. Under federal and state laws and policies, sexual harassment is illegal and is prohibited in school settings.

While the majority of incidents of sexual harassment involve a male harassing a female, harassment also can involve female to male, male to male, or female to female behaviors. Harassment may be student to student, teacher to student, student to teacher, or teacher to teacher.

### WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS RELATED TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Students are legally protected against sexual discrimination and sexual harassment by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, a federal law prohibiting discrimination in schools on the basis of sex. Sex discrimination is also addressed by Connecticut state law. Students have a right to participate in all school and classroom activities in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Each person has a responsibility not to engage in behaviors that are unwelcome or offensive to others.

### HOW DO I KNOW WHEN SEXUAL HARASSMENT MAY BE OCCURRING?

Am I being harassed? Am I harassing someone?

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Can the behavior be interpreted as being of a sexual nature?
- Is it possible that the behavior would be unwelcome by anyone involved?
- Does the behavior make you or appear to make any other person feel uncomfortable?
- Does the behavior appear to interfere with the ability of another to learn or to enjoy school or classroom activities?
- Does the behavior involve one person trying to have some kind of power over another person?
- Is the behavior part of a pattern of recurring behavior?
- Would you want this behavior to be directed toward a member of your family or toward a friend?

### WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FLIRTING AND HARASSMENT?

| <u>Flirting</u>     | <u>Harassment</u>           |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Welcome             | Unwelcome                   |
| Wanted              | Unwanted                    |
| Two-sided           | One-sided                   |
| Feels good          | Feels uncomfortable         |
| Equal Participation | Embarrassing or humiliating |
|                     | Use of power                |

### WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIORS THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

- Staring or leering at parts of someone else's body
- Comments, gestures, or jokes of a sexual nature
- Displaying of sexual pictures or objects
- Spreading sexual rumors or commenting about sexual behavior
- Repeated pressuring for dates or unwanted sexual activity
- Touching, grabbing, pinching







- Asking for sexual favors in exchange for grades, promotions, or participation in school activities
- Physical sexual assault

**WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I BELIEVE I AM BEING SEXUALLY HARASSED?**

- Whenever possible, tell the harasser verbally or in writing the specific behaviors that you find offensive. Request for this behavior to stop.
- Report the offensive behaviors to a teacher, counselor, Title IX coordinator (contact information below) or school administrator.
- Keep a detailed record of the harassing behavior to share with school officials who investigate your report.
- If you are not satisfied with the resolution of your concerns, contact the district administration or the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities at (800) 477-5737, <http://www.ct.gov/chro/site/default.asp>.

**WHERE CAN I GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE?**

School District Title IX Coordinator: (860) 258-7701.

**Gender Equity Consultant**

CT State Department of Education  
P.O. Box 150471  
Hartford, CT 06115-0471  
(860) 713-6737

**The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities,**

21 Grand Street  
Hartford, CT 06106  
(860) 541-3400  
CHRO.Webmaster@ct.gov (e-mail)  
Office for Civil Rights, Region I  
Regional Civil Rights Director  
U.S. Department of Education  
J.W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse  
Post Office Square, Room 222  
Boston, MA 02109  
(617) 223-9662

**Permanent Commission on the Status of Women**

18-20 Trinity Street  
Hartford, CT 06106  
(860) 240-8300  
pcsw@cga.ct.gov (e-mail)

**Connecticut Women's Education & Legal Fund,**

135 Broad Street  
Hartford, CT 06105 -3701  
(860) 247-6090  
cwealf@cwealf.org (e-mail)

**SMOKING**

The Rocky Hill Board of Education prohibits the use of or possession of tobacco-related products by students irrespective of age and the use of all tobacco products on all school system property by anyone else.

**STUDENT ATTIRE**

Families should monitor the appropriateness of students' clothing. Moderation in dress and appearance is always a reasonable guide. Students arriving to school with clothing with suggestive

pictures or writings will be asked to call home for a change of clothing. Students are not allowed to wear boots or shoes with carbon-based black soles. This is a school district regulation for all schools. This type of shoe makes black marks which are difficult to remove.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

### **Removal/Suspension/Expulsion**

#### **I. DEFINITIONS**

- A. "Exclusion" is defined as any denial of public school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.
- B. "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.
- C. "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.
- D. "In-school suspension" is defined as an exclusion from regular classroom activity for not more than five 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 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.
- E. "Expulsion" is defined as an exclusion from school privileges for more than 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 calendar year. Such period of exclusion may extend to the school year following the school year in which such exclusion was imposed.
- 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 education process that a hearing may be delayed until a time as soon after the exclusion of such student as possible.
- G. "Days" is defined as days when school is in session.
- H. "School sponsored activity" is defined as any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board of Education and includes activities conducted on or off student property.
- I. "Deadly Weapon" means any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or a switch-blade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles.
- J. "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.
- K. "Firearm" means any sawed-off shotgun, machine gun, rifle, shotgun, pistol, revolver or other weapon, whether loaded or unloaded from which a shot may be discharged.

#### **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 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 against whom such disciplinary action was taken and the cause of it.

#### **III. STANDARDS GOVERNING SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

Any student whose conduct endangers persons or property or whose conduct on or off school grounds is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or is violat~~e~~ of any Board policy, may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

The following behaviors shall be considered cause for suspension or expulsion:

1. Conduct causing injury or a threat of injury to others.
2. Use of physical force against another person which is not reasonably necessary for self defense.
3. Bullying, hazing or harassing comments or behavior.
4. 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.
5. Willfully causing, or attempting to cause, damage to school property,
6. Unauthorized occupancy of any part of any school or school premises or other building owned by any school district, and failure to promptly leave such location after having been directed to do so by the principal or other person then in charge of such building or facility.
7. Intentional incitement which results in an unauthorized occupation of any part of a school or other facility owned by any school district.
8. Possession, use, transmission or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant or any kind of facsimile thereof.
9. 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.
10. Possession or transmission of any firearm, knife, explosive, deadly weapon, or other dangerous instrument or any kind of facsimile thereof.
11. Using or copying the academic work of another and presenting it as his/her own without proper attribution.
12. Possessing or consuming tobacco products or possessing smoking paraphernalia or any kind of facsimile thereof.
13. Open defiance of the authority of any teacher or person having authority over students.
14. Intentional and successful incitement of truancy by other students.
15. Violation of any federal or state law which would indicate that the violator presents a danger to any person in the school community to school property.
16. Violation of any Board policy or rule dealing with conduct or school conduct, including conduct on school buses.

#### **IV. SUSPENSION PROCEDURE**

- A. The administration of each school is authorized to invoke suspension for a period of up to 10 days, or to invoke in-school suspension for a period of up to 5 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 administration is authorized to immediately suspend any student when there is an emergency as defined in Section I, above.  
If an emergency exists, the hearing outlined in Paragraph C of this section shall be held as soon as possible after the suspension.
- B. In the case of suspension, the administration shall notify the Superintendent of Schools within 24 hours of the suspension regarding the name of the student. The student in question shall be given an opportunity to complete 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 the administration and to deny 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 upon which the proposed suspension is based. The administration' shall then determine whether or not 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 administration shall then determine whether or not suspension or in-school suspension shall be imposed. Past disciplinary problems shall be a consideration.

- D. No student shall be suspended more than 10 times or a total of 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 15 times or a total of 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 (1) graduates from high school, or (2) is not expelled or suspended during the two year period commencing on the date of his/her return to school from the suspension.

#### **V. EXPULSION PROCEDURES**

The Board of Education may expel any student 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. 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 family, if he/she has not attained the age of eighteen, that expulsion is under consideration. Such notice shall contain the information required under Paragraph B of this section. 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 provided that three affirmative votes shall be required for expulsion.

The Board shall conduct an expulsion hearing when a student is alleged to have possessed a deadly weapon or firearm and shall act to expel any student who is found to have engaged in such conduct for a period of one calendar year, provided the Board may modify the period of expulsion for a student on a case-by-case basis.

- B. The procedure for any hearing conducted under this section shall be determined by the Hearing Officer or Board Chair-Person, as appropriate, but shall include the right to the following:
  - 1. Notice of the proposed hearing which shall include the following:
    - 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 brief statement of the matters asserted, if such matters have not already been provided in a statement of reasons requested by the student. Upon request from the student, or his/her family if he/she has not attained the age of eighteen, concerned a more detailed statement of the issues shall be furnished.
    - e) A statement, as appropriate, that the Board is not required to offer an alternative educational opportunity to any student between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who (1) has been expelled previously or (2) is found to have engaged in conduct which endangered persons and involved (a) carrying onto school property or a school-sponsored activity a firearm, deadly weapon, or dangerous instrument, or (b) offering for sale or distribution on school property or at a school-sponsored activity a controlled substance as defined by law. (See Section VIII on Alternative Educational Opportunity).
  - 2. The opportunity to present a case for defense against charges.
  - 3. The opportunity to present witnesses and evidence.
  - 4. The opportunity to cross-examine adverse witnesses.



5. The opportunity to be represented by counsel.
  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 copy of the initial letter, if any, of notice of proposed expulsion, and a copy of all notices for hearings.
  2. Questions and offers of proof, objections, and rulings on such objections.
  3. The decision of the Board of Education rendered after such hearing.
  4. The official transcript, if any, of proceedings relating to the case, or, if not transcribed, any recording or stenographic record of the proceeding.
- 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 (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. 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.
  8. A record of any oral proceedings before the Board of Education at an expulsion hearing shall be made provided, however, that 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. Decisions shall be in writing if adverse to the student and shall include findings of fact and conclusion 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.
- F. Any student who is expelled shall be offered an alternative educational opportunity consistent with the requirements of state law as set forth in Section VIII of this policy.
- G. 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 students' cumulative educational record. Such notice, except for notice of an expulsion based upon possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student (1) graduates from high school or (2) is not expelled again or suspended one or more times during the two year period commencing on the date of the student's return from such expulsion.
- H. 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, (1) notice of the pending expulsion hearing shall be included on the student's cumulative educational record and (2) the Board of Education shall complete the expulsion hearing and render a decision.
- I. 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 of Education. 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.

#### **VI. NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS OR GUARDIAN**

The family of any minor student against whom disciplinary action is taken under this policy shall be given notice of such disciplinary action within 24 hours the time the student was excluded.

#### **VII. SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS**

Students requiring special education and related services shall be subject to discipline consistent with state and federal law.

#### **VIII. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

The Board of Education recognizes its obligation to offer any student under the age of sixteen who is expelled an alternative educational opportunity during the period of expulsion. Any parent or guardian of such a student who does not chose 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 Statues. Any expelled student who is between the ages of sixteen and eighteen 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 years of age, placement in an adult education program. 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 to offer an alternative educational opportunity to a student between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who has been expelled previously or who is expelled because of conduct which endangers persons and it was determined that the expulsion hearing that the conduct for which the student was expelled involved (a) carrying on or introducing onto school property or a school sponsored activity a firearm, deadly weapon or a dangerous instrument or (b) offering for sale or distribution on school property or at a school sponsored activity a controlled substance as defined in Subdivision (9) of C.G.S. 21a-240, whose manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting, or possessing with the intent to sell or dispense, offering, or administration is subject to criminal penalties under C.G.S. 21a-277 or 21a-278. If the Board expels a student for the sale or distribution of such a controlled substance 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 or deadly weapon, 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 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 sub-section (e) of Connecticut General Statues 10-76a.

#### **IX. 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. Section 8921, et seq.

#### **STUDENT INFORMATION**

The purpose of acquiring student information is to provide the school staff with a quick means of contacting students' families in the event of sudden illness/injury. In a serious or life-threatening situation requiring immediate medical attention, every effort will be made to contact family members in a timely manner. The needs of the student will be attended to first. In a non-life-threatening situation which requires student dismissal, the nurse will make a judgment and

call the contacts on the card beginning with the family contacts. Please update these student cards at any time. A note to the school with the family's preferences, changes in telephone numbers, contacts, and addresses will be processed with confidentiality.

## **TECHNOLOGY & INSTRUCTION: ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTER NETWORK**

### 1. RIGHTS

Users have certain rights and privileges. Infringement upon or disrespect of the rights of other members or users may result in the loss of network privileges and other disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion

#### A. PRIVACY/MONITORING NOTIFICATION

All computer communication systems received or contained on the network are the property of the Rocky Hill Public Schools and are to be used only for school-related purposes.

To ensure proper use of the computer network and of the Internet, private correspondences and/or files may be accessed at any time. Prior to a search, the user shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present during the search. In the event there is a reasonable suspicion that a user is using the network in violation of the guidelines stated in this policy, a teacher or administrator may gain access to private correspondence or files without prior notice.

There also may be a need to access private files as part of regular system maintenance. An attempt will be made to notify users of this in advance whenever possible. It is important that users recognize the fundamental difference between public and private forms of communication.

#### B. EQUAL ACCESS

Users will be granted free and equal access to as many network services as their technology permits. Exploration of the Internet is encouraged if consistent with the mission and policies of the Rocky Hill Public Schools. No single user should monopolize a computer or the network it uses. Users may be asked to remove personal files if total system storage space is limited.

#### C. SAFETY

To the greatest extent possible, users will be protected from harassment and unwanted contacts. Any student user who receives threatening or unwelcome communications should bring them to the attention of a teacher or administrator. Students must be aware that there are many services available on the Internet that could potentially be offensive to certain groups of users. The designers of the network cannot eliminate access to all such services, nor could they even begin to identify them. Individual student users must take responsibility for their own actions when navigating the Internet.

#### D. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

The computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools must provide a free and open forum for expression, including differing viewpoints. Students should be aware, however, that others may be openly critical of such opinions. Occasionally, a posted message may be received from outside the local school network with harsh criticism (a practice known as "Flaming" or "Slamming"). It is best not to respond to such attacks. Personal attacks are not an acceptable use of the network at any time. The Rocky Hill Board of Education does not officially endorse any opinions stated on the network. Any statement of personal belief is implicitly understood to be representative of the author's individual point of view and not that of the Rocky Hill Public Schools.

### 2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Students must become familiar with their responsibilities while using the network and the Internet. Failure to adhere to them may result in the loss of privileges on the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools and possible disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

- a) Users have the full responsibility for the use of their account. Users must never share their password or account with anyone. All violations of this policy that can be traced to an individual account name will be treated as the sole responsibility of the owner of that account. Under no conditions should users give their password to other users.
- b) Users must not knowingly degrade the performance of the network. Electronic chain letters and mail bombs are prohibited for this reason.
- c) Users must obey the rules of copyright. They must respect all copyright issues regarding software, information, and attributions of authorship. Commercial software may not be installed on the system without express permission of a teacher or administrator.
- d) Posting personal communications to a public forum without the original author's prior consent is prohibited. To do this is a violation of the author's privacy. However, all messages posted in a public forum, such as news groups or alias e-mail, may be copied in subsequent communication, so long as proper attribution is given.

- e) Use of the network for any illegal activities is prohibited. Illegal activities include tampering with hardware or software, unauthorized entry into computers, or vandalism or destruction of computer files. Such activity is considered a crime under state and federal law.
- f) Users must avoid the knowing or inadvertent spread of computer viruses. Computer viruses are programs that have been developed as pranks and can destroy valuable programs and data. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance of the network or any other computer system on the Internet by spreading computer viruses is considered criminal activity under state and federal law.
- g) Users must employ appropriate language. Profanity or obscenity will not be tolerated on the network. All users should employ language appropriate for school situations as indicated by school codes of conduct.
- h) Users should avoid offensive or inflammatory speech. Users must respect the rights of others both on the local network and on the Internet. Personal attacks are unacceptable use of the network.
- i) Impersonations, anonymity, or pseudonyms are not permitted. As an educational network, users must take responsibility for their actions and words.
- j) Exemplary behavior is expected on "virtual" field trips. When visiting locations on the Internet or using video conferencing or screen sharing communication tools, users must conduct themselves as representatives of both their class and the entire Rocky Hill community.

Conduct that is in conflict with the responsibilities outlined in this document will be subject to loss of privileges to use the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools and possible disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

### 3. NETWORK ETIQUETTE AND PRIVACY

Users of the Rocky Hill Public Schools computer network are expected to follow the accepted rules of network etiquette. These rules include, but are not limited to, the following. Users must:

- a) Be polite.
- b) Use appropriate language. Users are representatives of their school. What is written can be viewed worldwide. Use of offensive or obscene words or any other inappropriate language is prohibited.
- c) Report messages relating to illegal activities to a teacher or administrator since electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private.
- d) Sharing personal information or names, home addresses, and phone numbers of any other person while on the Internet is not permitted.
- e) Not send or encourage others to send abusive messages.
- f) Not disrupt the computer network in any way.

### 4. PROHIBITIONS

The use of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools for illegal, inappropriate, unethical purposes by users is prohibited. More specifically:

- a) Use of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools to facilitate illegal activity is prohibited.
- b) Use of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools for commercial or for profit purposes is prohibited.
- c) Use of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools for non-school purposes is prohibited.
- d) Use of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
- e) Malicious use of the computer network for the Rocky Hill Public Schools to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer system and/or damage the software or a computer or system is prohibited.
- f) Harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other anti-social communications on the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools are prohibited. Students should promptly inform staff of any online communications that the student feels is threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate.
- g) The network and internet will not be used to obtain obscene or pornographic material. There is to be no display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, or cartoons that contain ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything that may be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientations, age, disability, religious and political beliefs. The e-mail system should not be used to solicit others for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-school related solicitations.
- h) Use of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools to transmit material likely to be offensive or objectionable to recipients is prohibited.
- i) Use of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools intentionally to obtain or modify files, passwords, or data belonging to other users is prohibited.
- j) Use of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools to misrepresent others users on the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools is prohibited.
- k) Use of the technology or the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools for fraudulent copying, communications, or modifications of materials in violation of law is prohibited and will be referred to appropriate authorities.

- l) Loading or use of unauthorized games, program, files, and other electronic media is prohibited.
  - m) Users should not allow onsite or remote access to district hardware or network without official authorization.
  - n) The hardware and software of other users shall not be destroyed, modified or abused in any way.
- Abuse of any one of the above activities will result in the loss of privileges to the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools and possible disciplinary action including, but not limited to suspension or expulsion.

5. SECURITY

Security on the computer system is a high priority because there are so many users. If users of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools identify a security problem, the user must notify a teacher or administrator at once without discussing it or showing it to another user. The user must not use another individual's account. Any user identified as a security risk will be denied access to the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools.

6. CONSEQUENCES

Users of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools shall be responsible for damages to the equipment, system, and software resulting from deliberate or willful acts.

Failure to follow the procedures and prohibitions listed above may result in the loss of the right to gain access to the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools. Other appropriate disciplinary procedure may take place as needed.

Illegal use of the computer network of the Rocky Hill Public Schools, intentional deletion or damage of files of data belonging to others, and copyright violations or theft of services will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution.

7. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

The Rocky Hill Board of Education makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The Board will not be responsible for any problems suffered while on the internet. These problems include but are not limited to, loss of data as a result of delays or otherwise, no deliveries, "misdeliveries", or service interruptions caused by the internet or users which include errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained through the internet is at the user's own risk. The Board will not accept any responsibility for the accuracy of information obtained through the internet.

In no event shall the Rocky Hill Board of Education be liable to any user for any damages, whether direct, indirect, special or consequential, arising out of the use of the internet, or accuracy or correctness of databases or information contained therein or related, directly or indirectly, to any failure to delay of the school system in providing access to the internet.

Nothing in this policy should be interpreted to constitute an expressed or implied contract on the part of the Rocky Hill Board of Education to continue to provide Internet or other computer services. The Board reserves the right to discontinue this service at any time with or without notice.

## VISITORS

**All visitors need to sign in at the main office and are required to provide picture identification.**

**Visitors will be permitted to enter the building with a visitors pass that needs to remain visible.**

