

NEW MILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
New Milford Public Schools  
50 East Street  
New Milford, Connecticut 06776

POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE

RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
2022 OCT - 1 A 9 32  
NEW MILFORD, CT  
MHP

<b>DATE:</b>	October 13, 2022
<b>TIME:</b>	6:45 P.M.
<b>PLACE:</b>	Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center

AGENDA

New Milford Public Schools Mission Statement

The mission of the New Milford Public Schools, a collaborative partnership of students, educators, family, and community, is to prepare each and every student to compete and excel in an ever-changing world, embrace challenges with vigor, respect and appreciate the worth of every human being, and contribute to society by providing effective instruction and dynamic curriculum, offering a wide range of valuable experiences, and inspiring students to pursue their dreams and aspirations.

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Public Comment**

An individual may address the Board concerning any item on the agenda for the meeting subject to the following provisions:

- A. A three-minute time limit may be allocated to each speaker with a maximum of twenty minutes being set aside per meeting. The Board may, by a majority vote, cancel or adjust these time limits.
- B. If a member of the public comments about the performance of an employee or a Board member, whether positive, negative, or neutral, and whether named or not, the Board shall not respond to such comments unless the topic is an explicit item on the agenda and the employee or the Board member has been provided with the requisite notice and due process required by law. Similarly, in accordance with federal law pertaining to student confidentiality, the Board shall not respond to or otherwise discuss any comments that might be made pertaining to students.

**3. Discussion and Possible Action**

- A. Policies Recommended for Revision and Approval at Initial Board Presentation in accordance with Board Bylaw 9311:
  1. 5158 Policy to Improve Completion Rates of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  2. 6142.1 Curricular Exemptions
  3. 6144 Policy for the Equitable Identification of Gifted and Talented Students

**4. Item of Information**

- A. Regulation:
  1. 5158 Administrative Regulation Addressing Improving the Completion Rates of FAFSA

**5. Discussion**

- A. Policy for Revision:
  1. 5132 Student Dress
- B. Regulation:
  1. 5132 Student Dress
- C. Audit of Policy Series 5000 Students and 6000 Instruction

**6. Public Comment**

An individual may address the Board concerning any item on the agenda for the meeting subject to the following provisions:

- A. A three-minute time limit may be allocated to each speaker with a maximum of twenty minutes being set aside per meeting. The Board may, by a majority vote, cancel or adjust these time limits.
- B. If a member of the public comments about the performance of an employee or a Board member, whether positive, negative, or neutral, and whether named or not, the Board shall not respond to such comments unless the topic is an explicit item on the agenda and the employee or the Board member has been provided with the requisite notice and due process required by law. Similarly, in accordance with federal law pertaining to student confidentiality, the Board shall not respond to or otherwise discuss any comments that might be made pertaining to students.

**7. Adjourn**

**Sub-Committee Members: Olga I. Rella, Chairperson  
Tammy McInerney  
Leslie Sarich  
Keith A. Swanhall, Jr.**

**Alternates: Brian McCauley  
Eric Hansell**

**RECOMMENDED FOR REVISION AND  
APPROVAL AT INITIAL BOARD PRESENTATION**

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin:**

*Policy to Improve Completion Rates of the FAFSA (NEW – June 2022)*

*Public Act No. 21-199 directs boards of education, not later than July 1, 2022, to adopt a policy to improve completion rates of the FAFSA by students enrolled in grade twelve or an adult education program maintained by the board. We have drafted a policy that meets statutory requirements, as well as administrative regulations that offer suggestions for how to implement the policy. The suggested procedures are not required by law.*

**Series 5000 Students**

**New # 5158**

**POLICY TO IMPROVE COMPLETION RATES OF THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)**

The New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) understands that completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (“FAFSA”) is an important step in the path to postsecondary education and is associated with higher rates of college enrollment. The Board is committed to improving the completion rates of the FAFSA for students enrolled in the New Milford Public Schools (the “District”).

In order to improve the completion rates of the FAFSA by students enrolled in grade twelve in the District, and students enrolled in the District’s adult education program, the District shall develop a systematic program through which such students are educated about the purpose and content of the FAFSA, encouraged to complete the FAFSA, and assisted in the completion of the FAFSA, as may be necessary and appropriate. The Board directs the Superintendent or designee to develop administrative regulations in furtherance of this policy. The Board further directs the Superintendent or designee to conduct periodic assessments of such regulations, at least annually, to determine effectiveness in improving completion rates of the FAFSA.

Any information contained in a FAFSA, held by the Board, shall not be a public record for purposes of the Freedom of Information Act and thus shall not be subject to disclosure under the provisions of section 1-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Each year, the Superintendent or designee will report to the Board the FAFSA completion rate for each high school in the District and for the District’s adult education program.

The Board may accept gifts, grants and donations, including in-kind donations, to implement the provisions of this policy.

Legal Reference:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10a-11i

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-223m

Policy adopted:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
New Milford, Connecticut

**RECOMMENDED FOR REVISION AND  
APPROVAL AT INITIAL BOARD PRESENTATION**

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin:**

*Curricular Exemptions (September 2022)*

*We have revised this policy to include “firearm safety programs” on the list of curricular exemptions. This exemption is an existing requirement under state law, but had not previously been included in our model policy because many boards did not provide instruction in this area. Boards of education are required, by statute, to provide HIV/AIDS instruction and implement the sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program described in this policy. Boards of education may, but are not required to, provide family life education and firearms safety programs. For instruction in any of these areas, as well as dissection, state law provides that parents and guardians may submit a written request for a curricular exemption, which must be granted in accordance with specific statutory requirements. We have revised this policy to address firearms safety programs and exemption from such instruction.*

*This policy will replace the current Policy 6142.1 Exemption from Instruction in its entirety.*

**Series 6000 Instruction**

**6142.1**

**CURRICULAR EXEMPTIONS**

Mandatory Curricular Exemptions:

Upon the written request of a parent or guardian received by the school district prior to planned instruction in the areas set forth below, the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) shall permit curricular exemptions for instruction in the following areas:

1. Dissection;
2. Family life education;
3. HIV/AIDS;
4. Sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program; or
5. ~~Firearms safety programs.~~ (Deleted as this is not part of our curriculum.)

Definitions:

“Dissection Instruction” is defined as instruction in which a student must participate in, or observe, the dissection of any animal.

“Family Life Education Instruction” is defined as instruction pertaining to family planning, human sexuality, parenting, nutrition and the emotional, physical, psychological, hygienic, economic and social aspects of family life.

“HIV/AIDS Instruction” is defined as ongoing and systematic instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) offered by the district pursuant to state law.

**CURRICULAR EXEMPTIONS**

“Sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program” is defined as the state-wide program identified or developed by the Department of Children and Families, in collaboration with the Department of Education and Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc. (or a similar entity) that includes age-appropriate educational materials designed for children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, regarding child sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention that may include, but not be limited to, (A) the skills to recognize (i) child sexual abuse and assault, (ii) boundary violations and unwanted forms of touching and contact, and (iii) ways offenders groom or desensitize victims, and (B) strategies to (i) promote disclosure, (ii) reduce self-blame, and (iii) mobilize bystanders.

**Written Request for Mandatory Exemption:**

Parents who wish to exercise such exemptions must notify the school district in writing in advance of the instruction to be provided.

**Permissive Curricular Exemptions:**

Except for the mandatory curricular exemptions noted above, or otherwise required by law, the Board does not require teachers to exempt students from any other aspect of the curriculum.

**Alternative Assignments:**

1. Any student excused from participating in, or observing, the dissection of any animal as part of classroom instruction shall be required to complete an alternate assignment to be determined by the teacher.
2. Any student excused from participating in the sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program or a firearm safety program shall be provided, during the period of time in which the student would otherwise be participating in such program, an opportunity for other study or academic work as determined by the teacher.
3. Any student excused from any other aspect of the curriculum may be required by the teacher to complete an alternative assignment as determined by the teacher.

**Legal References:**

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-16c.  
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-16e.  
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-18c.  
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-18d.  
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-19(b).  
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-101q.

CURRICULAR EXEMPTIONS

NEW MILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Curricular Exemption Request Form

I request that my child be exempted from instruction in the following areas:

Check all that apply:

- 1. Dissection \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Family life education \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. HIV/AIDS \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. ~~Firearm safety program~~ \_\_\_\_\_

I recognize that teachers may require my child to complete alternative assignments in lieu of the curricular instruction planned in the area of exemption.

This form must be completed annually and returned to the school principal prior to the planned instruction.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Student (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's/Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Or

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature (if 18 years of age)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Policy adopted:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
New Milford, Connecticut

**RECOMMENDED FOR REVISION AND  
APPROVAL AT INITIAL BOARD PRESENTATION**

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin:**

*Equitable Identification of Gifted and Talented Students (NEW – May 2022)*

*Last year, the Connecticut Legislature passed Public Act No. 21-199, which requires boards of education, not later than July 1, 2022, to adopt a policy for the equitable identification of gifted and talented students. Such policy must require the use of multiple methods of identification of gifted and talented students that are in compliance with guidance provided by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). CSDE released guidance on this topic in 2019. We have developed a model policy that reflects the legislative requirements.*

**Series 6000 Instruction**

**New # 6144**

**POLICY FOR THE EQUITABLE IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED AND  
TALENTED STUDENTS**

The New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) will use equitable methods to identify students enrolled in the New Milford Public Schools (the “District”) that have an extraordinary learning ability and/or outstanding talent in the creative arts, the development of which requires programs or services beyond the level of those ordinarily provided in regular school programs. Such students will be identified as gifted and/or talented.

**I. Definitions**

For purposes of this policy:

“Extraordinary learning ability” means a child identified by the planning and placement team as gifted and talented on the basis of either performance on relevant standardized measuring instruments, or demonstrated or potential achievement or intellectual creativity, or both.

“Gifted and talented” means a child identified by the planning and placement team as (A) possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of very superior intellectual, creative or specific academic capability and (B) needing differentiated instruction or services beyond those being provided in the general education program in order to realize the child’s intellectual, creative or specific academic potential. The term includes children with extraordinary learning ability (“gifted”) and children with outstanding talent in the creative arts (“talented”).

“Outstanding talent in the creative arts” means a child identified by the planning and placement team as gifted and talented on the basis of demonstrated or potential achievement in music, the visual arts or the performing arts.

“Planning and placement team (“PPT”),” for purposes of the evaluation, identification or determination of the specific educational needs of a child who may be gifted or talented, means a group of certified or licensed professionals who represent each of the teaching, administrative, and pupil personnel staffs, and who participate equally in the decision making process.

**POLICY FOR THE EQUITABLE IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS****II. Referral**

Any student enrolled in grades kindergarten through twelve, inclusive, in a District school may be referred to the PPT to determine eligibility as gifted and talented. A referral may come from any source, including the student's teacher, an administrator, the student's parent/guardian, or the student.

**III. Evaluation and Identification**

The PPT shall be responsible for conducting evaluations and identifying whether students are eligible as gifted and talented, and shall meet, as needed during the school year to determine the eligibility of groups of children for whom evaluation and identification as gifted and talented are planned. When a child has been individually referred to the PPT for consideration as a gifted and talented child, the PPT shall provide the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) with written notice of the referral.

The Board requires the use of multiple methods of identification of gifted and talented students. The PPT will use the following methods of evaluation in determining whether a student is eligible as gifted and talented:

Group Assessment. The PPT may use an appropriate standardized test administered to all students in a particular grade. In administering standardized tests, the PPT will use a locally normed cut score to identify students for consideration for gifted and talented classification. Parent/guardian consent is not required prior to the administration of a group assessment.

Individual Evaluation. Individual evaluations may be recommended by the PPT in appropriate circumstances, such as when there is a possibility of identifying the student as gifted and talented in areas that are not typically addressed by large-scale standardized tests, such as social studies, a technical discipline, music, creative arts, or performing arts. The PPT may also recommend an individual assessment for a student referred to the PPT for an evaluation when the student is in a grade level in which group assessments are not administered. Before a student is individually evaluated for identification as gifted or talented, the PPT must secure the written consent from a parent/guardian.

After the PPT has determined from an individual or group assessment that a student has potential for or has demonstrated extraordinary learning ability or outstanding talent in the creative arts, the student will be identified as gifted and talented only if the PPT determines that the child requires differentiated instruction or services beyond those provided in the general education program in order to realize the child's intellectual, creative or specific academic potential.



**POLICY FOR THE EQUITABLE IDENTIFICATION OF GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS**

The results of the PPT meeting concerning a determination of the child's identification as gifted or talented shall be provided to the parent or guardian electronically or, if the District does not have the parent or guardian's e-mail address on file, in writing. Such notice shall include, but is not limited to, (1) an explanation of how such student was identified as gifted and talented; and (2) the contact information for (A) the District employee in charge of the provision of services to gifted and talented students, or, if there is no such employee, the District employee in charge of the provision of special education and related services, (B) the employee at the Connecticut State Department of Education who has been designated as responsible for providing information and assistance to boards of education and parents or guardians of students related to gifted and talented students and, (C) any associations in the state that provide support to gifted and talented students.

If a parent/guardian disagrees with the results of the evaluation conducted by the PPT, the parent/guardian has a right to a hearing.

The District may identify up to ten (10) percent of the total student population for the District as gifted and talented.

**IV. Provision of Services**

The provision of services for gifted and talented students by the Board is discretionary.

Legal Reference:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-76a  
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-76xx

Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-76a-1  
Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-76a-2  
Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-76d-1  
Conn. Agencies Regs. § 10-76d-9(c)

Connecticut State Department of Education, *Gifted and Talented Education: Guidance Regarding Identification and Service* (March 2019), available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Gifted-and-Talented/Gifted-and-Talented-Education---Guidance.pdf>

Policy adopted:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
New Milford, Connecticut

## ITEM OF INFORMATION

### **Note from Shipman & Goodwin:**

#### ***Administrative Regulation Addressing Improving the Completion Rates of FAFSA (NEW – June 2022)***

***Boards of education are required to adopt a policy to improve the completion rates of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (“FAFSA”). The specific measures that the Board and the District will take to improve the completion rates are left up to the Board and the District. We recommend that the Board and the District consider what works best for the specific student population and implement measures accordingly. The measures in these administrative regulations are designed to be suggestions and are not required by law.***

**Series 5000 Students**

**New # 5158**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION ADDRESSING IMPROVING THE COMPLETION RATES OF FAFSA**

In order to improve the completion rates of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (“FAFSA”) by students enrolled in the New Milford Public Schools (the “District”), and students enrolled in the District’s adult education program, the District will:

- Develop a school based FAFSA Task Force to identify challenges, successes, and next steps in improving the completion rates of the FAFSA among students in grade twelve and students enrolled in the District’s adult education program.
- Track data from such students regarding FAFSA completion, including date of completion.
- Identify FAFSA coaches who will be assigned a caseload of students to assist students in completing the FAFSA and monitor their completion rates.
- Provide incentives to students who have completed the FAFSA, which may include but are not limited to, spirit days and giveaways, if funding permits.
- Conduct annual presentations to students about the purpose and importance of the FAFSA and the District’s resources available to help students in completing the FAFSA.
- Provide professional development to identified District staff regarding the FAFSA and best practices for supporting students in completing the FAFSA.

Legal Reference:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-223m

Regulation adopted:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
New Milford, Connecticut

**FOR DISCUSSION**  
**FIRST DRAFT**

*This policy will replace the current policy 5132 Dress and Grooming.*

**Series 5000 Students**

**NEW # 5132**

**STUDENT DRESS**

The New Milford Board of Education encourages students to dress in a manner that reflects pride in and respect for themselves, their school, and their community.

In general, attire and grooming of individual students in the New Milford Public Schools are the responsibility of the students and their parents/guardians. However, there are general principles of good taste and modesty which must and shall be observed.

Restrictions on student appearance may be applied when it:

1. Is unsafe for the student or those around the student.
2. Is disruptive to school operations and the education process in general.
3. Is contrary to law.

No restriction on freedom of dress and adornment will be imposed which:

1. Reflect discrimination as to civil rights.
2. Enforce particular codes of morality or religious tenets.

The accompanying administrative regulation will serve as a guide to implement this policy and will be reviewed periodically through cooperative planning with staff, students, and parents/guardians.

Policy adopted:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
New Milford, Connecticut