

NEW MILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
New Milford Public Schools
25 Sunny Valley Road, Suite A
New Milford, Connecticut 06776

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POLICY SUB-COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE

DATE: November 5, 2024
TIME: 6:15 P.M.
PLACE: Sarah Noble Intermediate School – Library Media Center

REVISED 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. Bylaws Recommended for Second Review:

- 1. 9000 Role of Board and Members
- 2. 9001 Officers
- 3. 9002 Official Duties—Chairperson
- 4. 9003 Official Duties—Vice Chairperson
- 5. 9004 Official Duties—Secretary
- 6. 9006 Removal of Board Officers
- 7. 9007 Code of Conduct for Board Members
- 8. 9008 Reimbursement of Board Members' Expenses
- 9. 9009 Oath of Office
- 10. 9010 Formulation, Adoption, Amendment or Deletion of Bylaws
- 11. 9011 Formulation, Adoption, Amendment or Deletion of Policies

12. 9012 Formulation, Adoption, Amendment or Deletion of Administrative Regulations
 13. 9013 Suspension of Policies, Bylaws or Administrative Regulations
 14. 9014 Board Committees
- B. Bylaws Not Required, but the Board May Wish to Retain Them after Review for Compliance
1. 9005 Role of the Board and Its Members (Integrity)
 2. 9115 Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board
 3. 9125 Attorney
 4. 9132 Standing Committees
 5. 9150 Board Consultants
 6. 9160 Student Involvement in Decision Making
 7. 9230 Orientation of New Board Members
 8. 9240 Board Member Development
 9. 9271 Code of Ethics
 10. 9325.2 Order of Business
 11. 9400 Monitoring Products and Processes (Self-Evaluation)
 12. 9410 Public Announcements and Accomplishments
 13. 9420 Recognition of Accomplishments by Citizens, Students, Staff Members or the Board
- C. Bylaws Recommended for Deletion Upon Approval of Bylaws in Item A.
1. 9000 Role of the Board and Member (Powers, Purposes, Duties)
 2. 9010 Limits of Authority
 3. 9012 Legal Responsibilities of Boards of Education
 4. 9020 Public Statements
 5. 9030 Commitment to Democratic Principles in Relation to Community, Staff, Students
 6. 9040 Board-Related Responsibilities
 7. 9110 Number of Members Terms of Office, Oath of Office
 8. 9120 Term of Office for Board Officers
 9. 9121 Role of the Chairperson
 10. 9122 Office of the Vice Chairperson
 11. 9123 Role of the Secretary
 12. 9131 Committee of the Whole
 13. 9140 Board Representatives
 14. 9221 Filling Vacancies on the Board
 15. 9222 Resignation/Removal from Office/Censure
 16. 9250 Remuneration and Reimbursement
 17. 9260 Board Member Protection
 18. 9311 Policies
 19. 9313 Formulation/Adoption/Amendment of Administrative Regulations
 20. 9314 Suspension of Policies, Bylaws, and Regulations
- D. Policy Revisions Recommended for First Read
1. 5118.1 Homeless Children and Youth
 2. 5141.5 Suicide Prevention and Intervention
 3. 5158 Policy to Improve the Completion Rates of the Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA)

E. Policy for Review

1. 5131.91 Connecticut School Climate Policy

F. Items of Information

1. 5118.1 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Homeless Children and Youth
2. 5141.5 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Suicide Prevention Intervention
3. 5158 Administrative Regulations to Improve the Completion Rates of the Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA)

4. Public Comment

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5. Adjourn

**Sub-Committee Members: Leslie Sarich, Chairperson
Dean Barile
Tammy McInerney
Randall Scofield**

**Alternates: Sarah Herring
Brian McCauley**

**Note from the Shipman & Goodwin as per the Audit of Series 9000:
Repeal and replace the current 9000 Bylaw, Role of the Board and Members
(Powers, Purposes, Duties), with this Bylaw, Role of Board and Members.**

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9000

ROLE OF BOARD AND MEMBERS

1. General Duties

- A. The New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) represents the residents of the Town of New Milford (the “Town”), in carrying out the mandates of the Connecticut General Statutes pertaining to education.
- B. The Board shall determine all questions of general policy to be employed in the conduct of the schools.
- C. In determining school policy, the Board shall:
 - (1) hear and consider facts and recommendations;
 - (2) adopt a plan, policy or course of action; and
 - (3) authorize the Superintendent of Schools, its chief executive officer, to carry out its policy.

2. Specific Powers and Duties

The Board shall have authority to take all action necessary or advisable to meet its responsibilities under the Connecticut General Statutes and Town Charter, including but not limited to the following:

- A. To create, abolish, modify and maintain such positions, schools, divisions and classifications as may be necessary for the efficient administration of the educational enterprise.
- B. To elect a Superintendent of Schools in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes.
- C. To consider and adopt an annual budget, prepared by the Superintendent of Schools.
- D. To determine the number, classification, duties and remuneration of employees.
- E. To establish policies for employment, promotion and dismissal of personnel in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes.
- F. To provide for the appraisal of the efficiency of personnel.

- G. To provide for the proper maintenance of facilities; initiate and approve the acquisition and disposition of school sites; and initiate and approve plans for school buildings.
- H. To consider any specific recommendations made by the Superintendent of Schools.
- I. To keep the citizenry informed of the purposes, values, conditions and needs of public education in the Town.
- J. To establish a curriculum committee to recommend, develop, review and approve all curriculum for the district.
- K. To take any other actions required or permitted by law.
- L. To make reasonable provision to implement the educational interests of the State, as defined by law, so that
 - (1) each child shall have for the period prescribed in the Connecticut General Statutes equal opportunity to receive a suitable program of educational experiences;
 - (2) the school district shall finance at a reasonable level an educational program designed to achieve this end;
 - (3) the school district shall provide educational opportunities for its students to interact with students and teachers from other racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds; and
 - (4) the mandates in the Connecticut General Statutes pertaining to education within the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education shall be implemented.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes

- 1-200 Definitions (public agency)
- 10-4a Educational interest of state identified
- 10-4b Complaint alleging failure or inability of board of education to implement educational interests of state. Investigation; inquiry; hearing. Remedial process. Regulations
- 10-220 Duties of boards of education
- 10-221 Board of education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures
- 10-241 Powers of school districts

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

This bylaw is recommended by Shipman & Goodwin as per the Series 9000 Audit. The approval of this bylaw will require action to delete the current bylaw, 9120 Term of Office for Board Members.

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9001

OFFICERS

1. The New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) shall, not later than one month after the date on which newly elected members take office, elect from its own members a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson,* and a Secretary.
2. The votes of each member cast in such election shall be reduced to writing and made available for public inspection within forty-eight hours, excluding Saturday, Sunday, or legal holidays, and shall also be recorded in the minutes of such meeting at which taken, which minutes shall be available for inspection at all reasonable times.
3. If such officers are not chosen after one month from the date on which newly elected members take office because of a tie vote of the members, the town council, or, if there is no town council, the Mayor of the town shall choose such officers from the membership of the Board.
4. Officers shall hold their respective offices for one year, and until their successors are duly elected.
5. Should a vacancy arise in an office of the Board during the term of a Board officer’s service, the members of the Board (including, if applicable, the member vacating a Board office) shall elect a successor to fill the office until the next regular election for Board officers. Such votes shall be reduced to writing, recorded, and made available for public inspection as described in Section 2, above.

****Note: By statute, local boards of education are required to elect only a Chairperson and a Secretary. Should a board wish to elect a Vice Chairperson, we suggest including the optional language above in bold and adopting a policy describing the duties of a Vice Chairperson. For your convenience, please refer to the policy entitled “Official Duties – Vice Chairperson.”***

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes
10-218 Officers. Meetings.

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from the Shipman & Goodwin as per the Audit of Series 9000:
Delete Bylaw 9121, Role of the Chairperson, and approve this Bylaw.**

This Bylaw has a new title and number.

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9002

OFFICIAL DUTIES - CHAIRPERSON

1. The Chairperson shall preside at all of the meetings of the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”).
2. The Chairperson shall serve as the Board's spokesperson.
3. The Chairperson shall appoint the chair and members of all special committees.
4. The Chairperson shall serve as an ex officio member on all committees.
5. The Chairperson shall act as the Board’s representative for the purposes of consultation with Board legal counsel when appropriate, and may authorize other Board members to consult with Board counsel when appropriate.
6. The Chairperson shall perform such other duties as may be delegated to the Chairperson by the Board.

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

Note from Shipman & Goodwin:

This is an optional Bylaw since the position of Vice Chairperson is not required by statute. Should a board wish to have a Vice Chairperson, however, we recommend the following policy be adopted.

Series 9000

9003

Bylaws

OFFICIAL DUTIES – VICE CHAIRPERSON

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall assume and carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson.

Bylaw approved:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Bylaw revised:

New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin as per the Audit of Series 9000:
Recommend deletion of Bylaw 9123, Role of the Secretary, and approve this Bylaw.**

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9004

OFFICIAL DUTIES - SECRETARY

1. The Secretary of the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) shall keep minutes or cause minutes to be kept of all meetings of the Board, and shall cause copies of such minutes to be forwarded to each member of the Board.
2. In accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board Secretary shall cause a copy of the minutes of all Board meetings to be placed on file in the Board Office and posted on the Board’s Internet web site, if available, no later than seven (7) days after the date on which the Board shall have met. Such minutes will be available for public inspection, except that such minutes will not be termed "official minutes" until approved by the Board at a duly convened meeting of the Board.
3. The Board Secretary shall also make provision that members of the Board are notified of all regular and special meetings.
4. The Board Secretary shall attend to the official correspondence of the Board.
5. The Board Secretary shall submit to the Town at its annual meetings a report of the doings of the Board.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1-225 | Meetings of government agencies to be public. Recording of votes. Schedule and agenda of certain meetings to be filed and posted on web sites. Notice of special meetings. Executive sessions |
| 7-3 | Warning of town and other meetings |
| 7-4 | Record of warning |
| 10-224 | Duties of the secretary |
| 10-225 | Salaries of secretary and attendance officers |

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin as per the audit of Series 9000:
This Bylaw is recommended for approval along with the new Bylaw regarding Officers.
These two recommended Bylaws will replace 9120, Term of Office for Board Officers.**

This is a new Bylaw and number.

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9006

REMOVAL OF BOARD OFFICERS

It is the policy of the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) that officers of the Board will:

1. adhere to all Board policies, rules and regulations;
2. conduct themselves in a fair and impartial manner; and
3. carry out the duties of their respective offices in accordance with law.

An officer of the Board may be removed for cause by a majority vote of the entire Board. A vote to remove a Board officer shall only take place at a regular meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose. “Cause,” which means a reasonable ground for removal, includes, but is not limited to, any conduct that:

1. specifically relates to and affects the administration of the office in a manner deemed to be deleterious to Board operations;
2. negatively and directly affects the rights and interests of the public;
3. violates Board policies, rules and regulations; or
4. interferes with the orderly and efficient operation of the Board.

Procedures for Removal

The following procedures shall be used in lieu of any procedures set forth in Robert’s Rules of Order with respect to any proposed action to remove or take other disciplinary action regarding an officer of the Board for cause:

- 1) The Board shall review the performance and/or conduct of an officer of the Board in open or executive session (as determined by the Board and the Board officer in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act) at a regular or special meeting of the Board, prior to initiating any action to remove or take other disciplinary action regarding a Board officer for cause.
- 2) If the Board determines as a result of such discussion that formal action is necessary, the Board shall provide the Board officer with:
 - a) reasonable written notice of the Board’s intent to consider removal or other disciplinary action, including the factual basis for the claimed “cause” for removal of the officer from office, with such notice to be

provided after being authorized by majority vote of those Board members present and voting; and

- b) an informal opportunity to be heard by the Board regarding such possible removal or other disciplinary action, at which the Board officer shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the Board member's own expense and to present relevant evidence to the Board. The informal opportunity to be heard shall take place in open or executive session (as determined by the Board and the Board officer in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act) at a regular or special meeting of the Board.
- 3) Any action to remove or take other disciplinary action regarding a Board officer for cause following such informal hearing shall require an affirmative vote by a majority of all members of the Board.

Service as a Board officer is a privilege, the purpose of which is to assist the Board in conducting its business in an appropriate, orderly and efficient manner. Therefore, any Board member serving as an officer shall have no legally protected right to continue in that position.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes

- 10-218 Officers. Meetings.
- 10-220 Duties of boards of education.

LaPointe v. Board of Education of the Town of Winchester, 274 Conn. 806 (2005).

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin Audit of Series 9000:
Recommend deletion of Bylaw 9222, Resignation/Removal from Office/Censure, and
approval of this Bylaw and the new proposed Bylaw 9006, Removal of Board Officers.**

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9007

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BOARD MEMBERS

It is the policy of the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) that all members of the Board will:

1. adhere to all Board policies, rules and regulations;
2. conduct themselves in a fair and impartial manner;
3. refrain from interfering with the implementation of a Board policy decision by the administration;
4. refrain from interfering with the duties of any school district official; and
5. refrain from divulging to anyone any aspect of matters considered and discussed in executive session.

Each member of the Board shall act in complete accordance with the provisions and tenor of this policy. Should any member of the Board fail to so act, such failure shall constitute cause for censure or other such disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Board.

Procedures for Censure or Other Disciplinary Action

The following procedures shall be used in lieu of any procedures set forth in Robert’s Rules of Order with respect to any proposed action to censure or take other disciplinary action regarding a Board member for cause:

- 1) The Board shall review the performance and/or conduct of the Board member in open or executive session (as determined by the Board and the Board member in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act) at a regular or special meeting of the Board, prior to initiating any action to censure or take other disciplinary action regarding a Board member for cause.
- 2) If the Board determines as a result of such discussion that censure or other disciplinary action concerning a Board member may be appropriate, the Board shall provide the Board member with:
 - a) reasonable written notice of the Board’s intent to consider censure or other disciplinary action, including the factual basis for the claimed “cause” for the censure or disciplinary action against the member, with such notice to be provided after being authorized by majority vote of those Board members present and voting; and

- b) an informal opportunity to be heard by the Board regarding such possible censure or other disciplinary action, at which the Board member shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the Board member's own expense and to present relevant evidence to the Board. The informal opportunity to be heard shall take place in open or executive session (as determined by the Board and the Board member in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act) at a regular or special meeting of the Board.
- 3) Any action to censure or take other disciplinary action regarding a Board member for cause following such informal hearing shall require an affirmative vote by a majority of all members of the Board.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-220 Duties of boards of education.

Bylaw approved:

Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin as per the Audit of Series 9000:
The recommendation is to delete Bylaw 9250, Remuneration and Reimbursement,
and to approve this new Bylaw 9008, Reimbursement of Board Members, as it
contains more detail concerning the nature of permissible reimbursements.**

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9008

REIMBURSEMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS' EXPENSES

1. Remuneration
 - A. A member of the New Milford Board of Education (the "Board") shall receive no compensation for carrying out Board services.
2. Reimbursement
 - A. Board members authorized to attend educational conferences, meetings or travel on Board business shall be reimbursed, upon submitting vouchers and supporting documentation for reasonable and necessary expenditures, transportation costs, and registration fees. Board members must have approval in advance from the Board to be eligible for a reimbursement.
 - B. All Board members that receive prior authorization for reimbursement of a Board expense are expected to account for all expenditures incurred in connection with the performance of their Board duties.
 - C. Receipts in general are required for:
 - (1) Lodging -- Lodging accommodations should provide normal comforts and services well located in relation to the area in which Board business will be conducted.
 - (2) Meals --Reasonable expenditures are allowed for meals [*specific meal amounts may be noted here*]. Board members may submit appropriate explanatory information as needed, on a separate sheet of paper attached to the receipt. The Board will not reimburse Board members for the purchase of alcohol.
 - (3) Taxi, Uber/Lyft or Bus Fare
 - (4) Parking Fees or Toll Charges (when applicable)
 - (5) Mileage – The Board may reimburse for mileage costs incurred for travel for Board business other than for regular and special Board meetings and subcommittee meetings, when approved in advance, and in accordance with IRS standard reimbursement rates.

- (6) Registration Fees -- The Board will not pay any late registration fees without an explicit prior authorization.

Legal Reference

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-225	Salaries of secretary and attendance officers
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-232	Restrictions on employment of members of board of education

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin as per the Audit of Series 9000:
Bylaw 9110, Number of Members Terms of Office, Oath of Office, is recommended
for deletion, and approval of Bylaw 9009, Oath of Office.**

The Town Charter identifies the number of Board members and the terms of office.

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9009

OATH OF OFFICE

Members of the Board of Education shall, before entering upon their official duties, take the oath of office provided in Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-25.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-218a	Oath of office
1-25	Forms of oaths

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

This is a Bylaw in the Shipman & Goodwin Series 9000. Currently, the Board does not have a Bylaw on this topic.

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9010

FORMULATION, ADOPTION, AMENDMENT OR DELETION OF BYLAWS

Bylaw proposals and suggested amendments to, revisions of, or deletions of existing bylaws shall normally be submitted to all members of the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) by the Superintendent in writing prior to a regular Board meeting in which such proposed bylaws, amendments, revisions or deletions thereof shall be read and discussed.

Except for emergency situations, bylaws will be adopted, amended, or deleted after consideration at two regular meetings of the Board. The agenda shall be marked to indicate such matters.

When a bylaw is placed on the agenda for the second consecutive meeting, a motion either to adopt or not to adopt the bylaw or the proposed bylaw changes is necessary for discussion. If the discussion results in a suggestion for change, such changes will be included in the second reading of the bylaw prior to adoption.

Any bylaw of the Board may be adopted, amended or deleted at any regular meeting by a majority vote of all members of the Board, provided that such proposal shall have been given to the Board at the previous regular meeting.

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin as per the Audit of Series 9000:
This Bylaw is recommended to replace Bylaw 9311, Policies.**

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9011

FORMULATION, ADOPTION, AMENDMENT OR DELETION OF POLICIES

1. In the absence of any written policy, administrative regulations will be used to guide and administer the effective operation of the New Milford Public Schools.
2. Suggestions for either new policies or policy changes normally come to the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) from any of the following:
 - A. Board members
 - B. Superintendent
 - C. Statute
 - D. Matters of law
 - E. Citizens, and/or
 - F. Students.
3. The Superintendent will prepare a draft policy statement for consideration and development by the Board.
4. Policy proposals and suggested amendments to, revisions of, or deletions of existing policies shall normally be submitted to all members of the Board by the Superintendent in writing prior to a regular Board meeting in which such proposed policies, amendments, revisions or deletions thereof shall be read and discussed.
5. Policies that deal with matters of an emergency nature may be introduced at any regular or special Board meeting.
6. Policies that affect students shall become effective at the beginning of the next school year following adoption unless the policy provides otherwise.
7. Except for emergency situations, policies will be adopted, amended, or deleted after consideration at two regular meetings of the Board. The agenda shall be marked to indicate such policy matters.
8. When a policy is placed on the agenda for the second consecutive meeting, a motion either to adopt or not to adopt the policy or the proposed policy changes is necessary for discussion. If the discussion results in a suggestion for change, such changes will be included in the second reading of the policy prior to adoption.

9. The formal adoption or deletion of policies and the adoption of policy changes shall be by majority vote of all members of the Board, and the action shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board.
10. Only those written statements so adopted as policy and so recorded shall be regarded as official policy of the Board.

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin as per the Audit of Series 9000:
This Bylaw is recommended for approval and Bylaw 9313, Formulation, Adoption,
Amendment of Administrative Regulations is recommended for deletion.**

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9012

**FORMULATION, ADOPTION, AMENDMENT OR DELETION
OF ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

1. The Superintendent is responsible for the formulation, adoption, amendment and deletion of administrative regulations to implement the policies of the New Milford Board of Education (the "Board") and/or as necessary to promote the orderly operation of the New Milford Public Schools in compliance with applicable law.
2. The Superintendent shall bring to the attention of the Board all new, revised or deleted administrative regulations.
3. The Board reserves the right to review and direct revisions or deletions of administrative regulations should they, in the Board's judgment, be inconsistent with the policies of the Board. If the Board directs the Superintendent to adopt, amend, or delete administrative regulations, it shall do so upon majority vote of all members in attendance at a meeting, provided that prior notification of such proposed revision has been described in writing in the call of the meeting, or upon majority vote of all members of the Board when no such written notice has been given.

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from Shipman & Goodwin as per the Audit of Series 9000:
This Bylaw is recommended to replace Bylaw 9314, Suspension of Policies, Bylaws
or Administrative Regulations.**

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9013

**SUSPENSION OF POLICIES, BYLAWS OR
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS**

1. Policies and bylaws of the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) shall be subject to suspension for a specified purpose and limited time by:
 - A. A majority vote of all members of the Board in attendance at a meeting, and
 - B. Provided that prior notification of such a proposed suspension has been described in writing in the call of the meeting.
2. Policies of the Board shall be subject to suspension for a specified purpose and limited time upon a majority vote of all members of the Board when no such written notice has been given.
3. Bylaws of the Board shall be subject to suspension for a specified purpose and limited time upon a two-thirds votes of all members of the Board when no such written notice has been given.
4. Administrative regulations of the Board may be suspended for a specified purpose and limited time:
 - A By the Superintendent, who shall give notice to the Board of the reason for the suspension and the time period of the suspension.
 - B. The Board may direct the Superintendent to suspend administrative regulations for a specified purpose and limited time upon majority vote of all members in attendance at a meeting, provided that prior notification of such proposed suspension has been described in writing in the call of the meeting, or upon majority vote of all members of the Board when no such written notice has been given.

Bylaw approved:
Bylaw revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**Note from the Shipman & Goodwin Audit of Series 9000:
This bylaw is more robust than the S & G model policy. It has been reviewed for compliance
and it is recommended the Board retain this bylaw with a new number.**

**Series 9000
Bylaws**

9014

BOARD COMMITTEES

In order to better serve the school system, the Board shall establish certain committees to serve in an advisory capacity to the Superintendent and the Board, and to fulfill its responsibilities as required by law.

It is the policy of the Board to maintain certain Standing Committees, namely: Operations, Learning, Facilities and Policy; and to establish certain Ad-Hoc Committees, as needed. The committees shall operate within the standards set forth by this policy.

Standing Committees

Not later than the January regular meeting of the Board, the Standing Committees shall be appointed by the Board Chairperson to serve until the next annual meeting. Each committee shall consist of four Board members and two alternates. The alternates will only participate in committee meetings when one or more of the assigned board members are not present at the committee meeting. The Board Chairperson appoints the Chairperson for each committee from the members of the committee. The Board Chairperson is an ex-officio member of all standing committees.

Any member of the Board who is interested in serving on a standing committee shall notify the Chairperson promptly concerning his or her interest.

- A. Each Board member must serve on at least one standing committee.
- B. No Board member may serve on more than three standing committees.
- C. No Board member may chair more than one standing committee.

Any member of the Board may attend standing committee meetings (excluding Executive Session, unless otherwise permitted under the Freedom of Information Act); however, they are not able to participate in any discussion or vote. At all times, the total number of Board members participating in a committee meeting shall be one less than the number that represents a quorum of the Board.

Standing Committee Chairpersons and members on standing committees shall serve for the same term as the Board Chairperson.

Ad-Hoc (Special/Temporary) Committees

Ad-Hoc (Special/Temporary) committees shall be established by the Board or Board Chairperson, whenever advisable, to address specific problems and projects. These committees shall include a minimum of two and a maximum of three Board members and may include members of the staff and/or community who would be able to provide expertise. Ad-Hoc committees shall be appointed as soon as possible after their establishment and shall be dissolved when their report has been

accepted by the Board or at the next annual organizational meeting or upon a motion for dissolution passed by a majority vote, or upon completion of the assigned task whichever comes first. Ad-Hoc Committees supersede any standing committee.

Ad Hoc committee members shall be appointed by the Chairperson. Any Board member interested in serving on an Ad Hoc committee shall notify the Chairperson promptly concerning his/her interest. Any Board member who is interested in attending Ad Hoc committee meetings may do so. Board members who are not members of the Ad Hoc Committee may not 1) attend any executive session of the Ad Hoc Committee, unless otherwise permitted under the Freedom of Information Act, or 2) participate in any discussion or vote.

In the event of vacancies on Ad Hoc committees, the Chairperson shall appoint new committee members. All appointments expire when the committee as a whole expires.

The duties of each Ad Hoc committee shall be outlined at the time the committee is appointed.

Conduct of Committee Business

So that Board Committees shall operate in a consistent and effective manner, the following standards shall apply:

1. Board committee appointments shall be determined by the Board Chairperson as guided by the best interests of the Board. To make this determination, the Board Chairperson shall consider:
 - The requests by Board members to serve on specific committees. Requests to serve on specific Standing Committees shall be submitted by Board members, in the form of a prioritized list, to the Board Chairman at the annual meeting of the Board.
 - The individual background, talents and experiences of Board members.
 - The synergetic quality of the committee as a whole.
2. Standing Committees shall plan to meet once a month. Additional meetings may be called by the Committee Chairperson whenever he/she deems necessary, or upon a request of two committee members.
3. All committees of the Board of Education shall follow the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act as required by statute.
4. All Standing Committee meetings shall have a written agenda, prepared by the Committee Chairperson and the Superintendent or his/her designee; and posted at least twenty-four hours before the meeting. The agenda shall include all assignments as may be directed by the Board.
5. The proceedings of all Standing Committee meetings shall be recorded and distributed to Board members in a timely manner.
6. Recommendations to be considered for Board action, as determined by a vote of the committee members present, shall be placed on the agenda of a regular Board meeting as a formal motion.

7. All committee meetings shall be open to the public; however, an executive session may be called in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.
8. All committees shall post agendas and keep minutes of business conducted at meetings in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. The minutes shall be kept on file in the Superintendent's office and be made available at all times to the Board of Education members.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
1-200 through 1-241 of the Freedom of Information Act.
1-200 Definitions.
1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public.

Bylaw approved:	January 9, 2001	NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bylaw revised:	November 7, 2005	New Milford, Connecticut
Bylaw revised:	November 14, 2006	
Bylaw revised:	June 9, 2009	
Bylaw revised:	December 14, 2010	
Bylaw revised:	April 10, 2012	
Bylaw revised:		

Note:

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act requires each state educational agency to ensure that homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth. This policy previously defined “homeless children and youth” to mean “children and youth twenty-one years of age and younger who lack a fixed, regular, and nighttime residence....” As of July 1, 2023, Connecticut law requires boards of education to provide special education services to a child until such child graduates from high school or upon the end of the school year in which such child turns twenty-two, whichever occurs first. In light of this change, this policy has been revised to eliminate the age limit and now define “homeless children and youth” to mean “children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and nighttime residence....” Under the revision, boards of education will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to all homeless children and youth consistent with the education provided to other students in accordance with state law.

**Series 5000
Students**

5118.1

**POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING
HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

In accordance with federal law, it is the policy of the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) to prohibit discrimination against, segregation of, or stigmatization of, homeless children and youth. The Board authorizes the Administration to establish regulations setting forth procedures necessary to implement the requirements of law with respect to homeless children and youth. In the event of conflict between federal and/or state law and these administrative regulations, the provisions of law shall control.

Legal References:

State Law:

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education re school attendance. Hearings. Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board. Readmission. Transfers.

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-253 School privileges for children in certain placements, non-resident children and children in temporary shelters, homeless children and children in juvenile residential centers. Liaison to facilitate transitions between school districts and juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Federal Law:

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11431 et seq., as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. 114-95.

Policy Approved: June 10, 2003
Policy Revised: June 12, 2007
Policy Revised: February 21, 2023

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING
HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

In accordance with federal law, the New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) and the New Milford Public Schools (the “District”) does not permit discrimination against, segregation of, or stigmatization of, homeless children and youth. The following sets forth the procedures to implement the requirements of law with respect to homeless children and youth. In the event of conflict between federal and/or state law and these regulations with respect to homeless children and youth, the provisions of law shall control.

I. Definitions:

- A. **Enroll and Enrollment:** includes attending classes and participating fully in school activities.
- B. **Homeless Children and Youth:** means children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who:
 - 1. Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
 - 2. Are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
 - 3. Are living in emergency or transitional shelters.
 - 4. Are abandoned in hospitals.
 - 5. Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
 - 6. Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
 - 7. Are migratory children living in the above described circumstances.
- C. **School of Origin:** means the school that a homeless child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the homeless child was last enrolled. School of origin may include preschool administered by the District and, when a homeless child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, school of origin also includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

D. **Unaccompanied Youth:** means a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

II. Homeless Liaison:

A. The District's Homeless Liaison is the Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services.

B. The duties of the District's Homeless Liaison include:

1. Ensuring that homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through outreach and coordination with other entities and agencies.
2. Ensuring that homeless children and youth enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in the District's schools, including ensuring that such homeless children and youth have opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic standards as other children and youths.
3. Ensuring that homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which such families, children and youth are eligible, including services through Head Start and Even Start, early intervention services under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and preschool programs administered by the District.
4. Ensuring that parents and guardians of homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.
5. Ensuring that parents and guardians of homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth are informed of educational and related opportunities available to homeless children and youth, including extracurricular activities, and that parents and guardians of homeless children and youth are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
6. Ensuring that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children under the McKinney-Vento Act is disseminated in locations frequented by parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth in a manner and form that is understandable to them.
7. Ensuring that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act, including carrying out the initial dispute

resolution process and ensuring that homeless students are immediately enrolled pending resolution of any enrollment dispute.

8. Ensuring that parent(s)/guardian(s) of homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing those services.
9. Assisting homeless children and youth in enrolling in school and accessing school services and removing barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees, fines or absences.
10. Ensuring that students who are English learners/multilingual learners are not deterred or discouraged from applying and/or accessing special academic programs and offerings, including advanced courses and programs, because they are English learners/multilingual learners or because they have interrupted formal schooling due to work-related mobility.
11. Informing parent(s)/guardian(s) of homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth, school personnel, and others of the rights of such students.
12. Assisting homeless children and youth who do not have immunizations or immunization/medical records to obtain necessary immunizations or immunization/medical records.
13. Assisting unaccompanied youth in placement/enrollment decisions, including considering the unaccompanied youth's wishes in those decisions, and providing notice to the unaccompanied youth of the right to appeal such decisions.
14. Ensuring that high school age homeless children and youth receive assistance from counselors to advise such youths on preparation and readiness for college, including informing such children and youths of their status as independent students under the Higher Education Act of 1965 and that they may obtain assistance from the district to receive verification of this status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
15. Ensuring collaboration with community and school personnel responsible for providing education and related support services to homeless children and youth.
16. Collaborating with and participating in professional development and technical assistance activities offered by the State Office of the Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth.

17. Ensuring that school personnel providing services to homeless children and youth receive professional development and other technical assistance activities regarding the McKinney-Vento Act.
18. Ensuring that unaccompanied youth are enrolled in school and that procedures are implemented to identify and remove barriers that prevent them from receiving credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed at a prior school, in accordance with state, local, and school policies.
19. Ensuring that information about enrollment, classes, and other educational programs and activities is made accessible to parents and guardians who have limited English proficiency.
20. With appropriate training, affirming that a child or youth who is eligible for and participating in a program provided by the District, or the immediate family of such a child or youth, is eligible for homeless assistance programs administered under Title IV of the McKinney-Vento Act.

III. Enrollment of Homeless Children and Youth:

- A. Enrollment of homeless children and youth may not be denied or delayed due to the lack of any document normally required for enrollment. However, administrators shall require the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth to provide contact information prior to enrollment.
- B. To facilitate enrollment, administrators:
 1. May permit parents/guardians of homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth to sign affidavits of residency to replace typical proof of residency.
 2. May permit unaccompanied youth to enroll with affidavits to replace typical proof of guardianship.
 3. Shall refer parent/guardian/unaccompanied youth to the District's Homeless Liaison who will assist in obtaining immunizations.
 4. Shall contact previous schools for records and assistance with placement decisions.
 5. Shall maintain records so that the records are available in a timely fashion when the student enters a new school or school district.

IV. School Selection:

- A. Standards for School Selection:

1. The District is required to make a determination as to the best interests of a homeless child or youth in making a determination as to the appropriate school of placement.
2. In making such a determination, the District is required to keep a homeless child or youth in the child's or youth's school of origin for the duration of homelessness when a homeless child or youth becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or for the remainder of the academic year if the homeless child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year, to the extent feasible, unless it is against the wishes of the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth. Otherwise, the homeless child or youth shall be enrolled in a public school that non-homeless students who live in the area where the homeless child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.
3. The District must presume that keeping the homeless child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's or youth's best interest unless doing so is contrary to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the unaccompanied youth. In considering the child's or youth's best interest, the District must consider student-centered factors related to the child's or youth's best interest, giving priority to the request of the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth.

B. Procedures for Review of School Selection Recommendation:

1. The Principal or designee of the school in which enrollment is sought shall review an enrollment request in accordance with the standards discussed above, and shall make an initial recommendation regarding same. If the Principal's or designee's recommendation is to select a placement other than the school desired by the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the homeless child or youth or the unaccompanied youth, then the Principal or designee shall refer the matter to the Superintendent or designee for review of the recommendation and the reasons therefor, and shall notify the District's Homeless Liaison of same.
2. The Superintendent or designee shall review the matter and consult with the District's Homeless Liaison concerning same. If the Superintendent or designee agrees with the recommendation of the Principal or designee, and a dispute remains between the District and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth about a school selection and/or enrollment decision; the Superintendent or designee shall provide the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied

youth with a written explanation of the District's decision regarding this matter, and the right to appeal such decision to the Board.

C. Dispute Resolution Process:

1. The District's Homeless Liaison shall be responsible for promoting objective and expeditious dispute resolutions, and adherence to these administrative regulations.
2. If the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth disputes the school placement decision or enrollment, the District must immediately enroll the homeless child or youth in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The homeless child or youth shall also have the right to all appropriate educational services, including transportation to and from the school in which enrollment is sought, while the dispute is pending.
3. If necessary, the District's Homeless Liaison shall assist parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth with completion of the necessary appeal paperwork required to file for an appeal to the Board, and provide the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth with a copy of Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-186(b).
4. Not later than ten (10) days after receipt of an appeal to the Board by a parent(s) or guardian(s) of a homeless child or youth or an unaccompanied youth, the District shall hold a hearing before the Board concerning such appeal, and such hearing shall be conducted in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-186(b).
5. If the Board finds in favor of the Superintendent or designee, a parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth or unaccompanied youth may appeal the Board's decision to the State Board of Education within twenty (20) days of receipt of the Board's written decision, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-186(b). If necessary, the District's Homeless Liaison shall assist a parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth or unaccompanied youth with filing the necessary appeal paperwork to the State Board of Education. The homeless child or youth or unaccompanied youth shall remain in the child's or youth's school of origin pending resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.

V. Services:

- A. Homeless children and youth shall be provided with services comparable to those offered other students in the selected school including:

1. Title I services or similar state or local programs, educational programs for students with disabilities, and preschool programs.
 2. Language assistance services for students who have limited English proficiency to enable students who are English learners/multilingual learners to meaningfully participate in the educational programs.
 3. Transportation services.
 4. Vocational and technical education.
 5. Programs for gifted and talented students.
 6. School nutrition programs.
 7. Before and after school programs.
- B. The District shall coordinate with local social service agencies, other service providers, housing assistance providers and other school districts to ensure that homeless children and youth have access and reasonable proximity to available education and support services.

VI. Transportation:

- A. The District shall provide transportation comparable to that available to other students.
- B. Transportation shall be provided, at a parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth's request, to and from the school of origin for a homeless child or youth. Transportation shall be provided for the entire time the child or youth is homeless and until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing. Transportation to the school of origin shall also be provided during pending disputes. The District's Homeless Liaison shall request transportation to and from the school of origin for an unaccompanied youth. Parents and unaccompanied youth shall be informed of this right to transportation before they select a school for attendance.
- C. To comply with these requirements:
1. Parents/guardians, schools, and the District's Homeless Liaison shall use the district transportation form to process transportation requests.
 2. If the homeless child or youth is living and attending school in this District, the District shall arrange transportation.

3. If the homeless child or youth is living in this District but attending school in another, or attending school in this District and living in another, the District will follow the inter-district transportation agreement to determine the responsibility and costs for such transportation. If there is no inter-district transportation agreement, the District shall confer with the other school district's Homeless Liaison to determine an apportionment of the responsibility and costs.
4. If no mutually agreeable arrangement can be reached, then the District shall:
 - (a) arrange transportation immediately;
 - (b) bring the matter to the attention of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth; and
 - (c) ensure that such disputes do not interfere with the homeless child or youth attending school.

VII. Records:

An unaccompanied youth, as defined in section I.D, above, is entitled to knowledge of and access to all educational, medical, or similar records in the cumulative record of such unaccompanied youth maintained by this District.

VIII. Contact Information:

- A. Local Contact: for further information, contact:

[Name of Liaison]
[Title]
[Telephone No.]

- B. State Contact: for further information or technical assistance, contact:

Louis Tallarita, State Coordinator
Connecticut Department of Education
450 Columbus Boulevard
Hartford, CT 06103
(860) 807-2058
Louis.Tallarita@ct.gov

Legal References:

State Law:

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education re school attendance. Hearings. Appeals to state board. Establishment of hearing board. Readmission. Transfers.

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-253 School privileges for children in certain placements, non-resident children and children in temporary shelters, homeless children and children in juvenile residential centers. Liaison to facilitate transitions between school districts and juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-76d Duties and powers of boards of education to provide special education programs and services. Medicaid enrollment, participation and billing requirements. Development of individualized education program. Planning and placement team meetings. Public agency placements; apportionment of costs. Relationship of insurance to special education costs. Prohibition on punishing members of planning and placement teams and birth-to-three service coordinators and qualified personnel for certain conduct.

Federal Law:

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11431 et seq., as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. 114-95.

United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, *Protecting Access to Education for Unaccompanied Children* (June 2023).

United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, *Protecting Access to Education for Migratory Children* (June 2023).

Regulation Adopted: June 10, 2003
Regulation Revised: May 21, 2013
Regulation Revised: February 21, 2023

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS
UNDER CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES SECTION 10-186**

(1) If any board of education denies such accommodations, the parent or guardian of any child who is denied schooling, or an emancipated minor, a pupil eighteen years of age or older or an unaccompanied youth who is denied schooling, or an agent or officer charged with the enforcement of the laws concerning attendance at school, may, in writing request a hearing by the board of education. The board of education may

- (A) conduct the hearing,
- (B) designate a subcommittee of the board composed of three board members to conduct the hearing, or
- (C) establish a local impartial hearing board of one or more persons not members of the board of education to conduct the hearing.

The board, subcommittee or local impartial hearing board shall give such person a hearing not later than ten days after receipt of the written request, make a stenographic record or tape recording of the hearing and make a finding not later than ten days after the hearing. Hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of sections 4-176e to 4-180a, inclusive, and section 4-181a. Any child, emancipated minor, pupil eighteen years of age or older or unaccompanied youth who is denied accommodations on the basis of residency may continue in attendance in the school district at the request of the parent or guardian of such child or emancipated minor, pupil eighteen years of age or older or unaccompanied youth, pending a hearing pursuant to this subdivision. The party claiming ineligibility for school accommodations shall have the burden of proving such ineligibility by a preponderance of the evidence, except in cases of denial of schooling based on residency, the party denied schooling shall have the burden of proving residency by a preponderance of the evidence, unless the party denied schooling is claiming that he or she is a homeless child or youth, as defined in 42 USC 11434a, as amended from time to time, in which case, the party claiming ineligibility based on residency shall have the burden of proving that the party denied schooling is not a homeless child or youth by a preponderance of the evidence in accordance with the provisions of 42 USC 11431, et seq., as amended from time to time.

(2) Any homeless child or youth who is denied accommodations by a board of education as the result of a determination by such board, or a subcommittee of the board or local impartial hearing board, that the child is not entitled to school accommodations in the district, shall continue in attendance or be immediately enrolled in the school selected by the child in the school district pursuant to 42 USC 11432(g)(3), as amended from time to time. The board of education for such school district shall (A) provide, in accordance with the provisions of 42 USC 11432(g)(3)(E)(ii), as amended from time to time, the homeless child or youth or the parent or guardian of such homeless child or youth with (i) a written explanation of the reasons for the denial of accommodations that is in a manner and form understandable to such homeless child or youth or parent or guardian, and (ii) information regarding the right to appeal the decision of the denial of accommodations pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection, and (B) refer, in accordance with the provisions of 42

USC 11432(g)(3)(E)(iii), as amended from time to time, the homeless child or youth or the parent or guardian of such homeless child or youth to the liaison, designated pursuant to 42 USC 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii), as amended from time to time, who is responsible for carrying out the duties described in 42 USC 11432(g)(6)(A), as amended from time to time.

(3) Any such parent, guardian, emancipated minor, pupil eighteen years of age or older, unaccompanied youth, or agent or officer, aggrieved by the finding shall, upon request, be provided with a transcript of the hearing within thirty days after such request and may take an appeal from the finding to the State Board of Education. A copy of each notice of appeal shall be filed simultaneously with the local or regional board of education and the State Board of Education. Any child, emancipated minor or pupil eighteen years of age or older or unaccompanied youth who is denied accommodations by a board of education as the result of a determination by such board, or a subcommittee of the board or local impartial hearing board, that the child is not a resident of the school district and therefore is not entitled to school accommodations in the district may continue in attendance in the school district at the request of the parent or guardian of such child or such minor or pupil, pending a determination of such appeal, except any homeless child or youth shall be entitled to continue in attendance in the school district during all available appeals pursuant to 42 USC 11432(g)(2)(E). If an appeal is not taken to the State Board of Education within twenty days of the mailing of the finding to the aggrieved party, the decision of the board, subcommittee or local impartial hearing board shall be final. The local or regional board of education shall, within ten days after receipt of notice of an appeal, forward the record of the hearing to the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall, on receipt of a written request for a hearing made in accordance with the provisions of this subsection, establish an impartial hearing board of one or more persons to hold a public hearing in the local or regional school district in which the cause of the complaint arises. Members of the hearing board may be employees of the state Department of Education or may be qualified persons from outside the department. No member of the board of education under review nor any employee of such board of education shall be a member of the hearing board. Members of the hearing board, other than those employed by the state of Connecticut, shall be paid reasonable fees and expenses as established by the State Board of Education within the limits of available appropriations. Such hearing board may examine witnesses and shall maintain a verbatim record of all formal sessions of the hearing. Either party to the hearing may request that the hearing board join all interested parties to the hearing, or the hearing board may join any interested party on its own motion. The hearing board shall have no authority to make a determination of the rights and responsibilities of a board of education if such board is not a party to the hearing. The hearing board may render a determination of actual residence of any child, emancipated minor, pupil eighteen years of age or older or unaccompanied youth where residency is at issue.

(4) The hearing board shall render its decision within forty-five days after receipt of the notice of appeal except that an extension may be granted by the Commissioner of Education upon an application by a party or the hearing board describing circumstances related to the hearing which require an extension.

(5) If, after the hearing, the hearing board finds that any child is illegally or unreasonably denied schooling, the hearing board shall order the board of education under whose jurisdiction it has been found such child should be attending school to make arrangements to enable the child to attend public school. Except in the case of a residency determination, the finding of the local or regional board of education, subcommittee of such board or a local impartial hearing board shall be upheld unless it is determined by the hearing board that the finding was arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable. If such school officers fail to take action upon such order in any case in which such child is currently denied schooling and no suitable provision is made for such child within fifteen days after receipt of the order and in all other cases, within thirty days after receipt of the order, there shall be a forfeiture of the money appropriated by the state for the support of schools amounting to fifty dollars for each child for each day such child is denied schooling. If the hearing board makes a determination that the child was not a resident of the school district and therefore not entitled to school accommodations from such district, the board of education may assess tuition against the parent or guardian of the child or the emancipated minor or pupil eighteen years of age or older based on the following: One one-hundred-eightieth of the town's net current local educational expenditure, as defined in section 10-261, per pupil multiplied by the number of days of school attendance of the child in the district while not entitled to school accommodations provided by that district. The local board of education may seek to recover the amount of the assessment through available civil remedies.

SAMPLE WRITTEN NOTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT DECISION

[Month] __, 20__

VIA HAND DELIVERY AND U.S. MAIL

[Insert Name of Parent or Unaccompanied Youth]

[Insert Home Address]

Re: Notification of Enrollment Decision

Dear [Parent/Guardian or Unaccompanied Youth]:

After reviewing your request to enroll the student(s) listed above [name(s)], the enrollment request is denied. This determination is based upon the following factors:

[List factors]

Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, you have the right to appeal this decision by completing the form attached to this notice or by contacting the school district's homeless education liaison:

[Name of Liaison]

[Title]

[Telephone No.]

In addition, the student listed above has the right to immediately enroll in the school of choice pending resolution of the dispute. You may provide written or verbal evidence to support your position. You may seek the assistance of advocates or attorneys at your own expense; however, you may qualify for free legal services. To inquire about free legal assistance, please call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320. You may also contact the state coordinator for homeless education:

Louis Tallarita, State Coordinator

State Department of Education

450 Columbus Boulevard

Hartford, CT 06103

(860) 807-2058

Louis.Tallarita@ct.gov

A copy of the dispute resolution process under Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-186 is attached to this notice.

Please contact the District's Homeless Liaison listed above if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[Name]
Superintendent of Schools

cc: **[Superintendent of Schools in which enrollment is sought, if appropriate]**

**SAMPLE NOTIFICATION OF DECISION
TO APPEAL EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT**

This form is to be completed by the parent, guardian, caretaker, or unaccompanied youth when a dispute arises. If you need assistance in preparing this form, you may meet with the District’s Homeless Liaison, _____, who can be reached at _____.

Person completing form: _____

Relation to Student: _____

Contact Information: _____

I am requesting a Board of Education Hearing under Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes to appeal the enrollment decision made by [Name of District], [Name of School]. I have been provided with a written explanation of the District’s decision, contact information for the District’s homeless education liaison, and a copy of the Dispute Resolution Process under Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-186.

Name

Date

Optional. You may also include a written explanation to support your appeal in the space below or provide your explanation verbally to the District’s Homeless Liaison.

**SAMPLE NOTIFICATION OF HEARING
REGARDING ENROLLMENT DISPUTE**

[Month] __, 20__

VIA HAND DELIVERY AND U.S. MAIL

[Insert Name of Parent or Unaccompanied Youth]

[Insert Home Address]

Re: Educational Placement

Dear [Name of Parent or Unaccompanied Youth]:

You have requested a hearing before the [local or regional] Board of Education (the “Board”) regarding the educational placement of [insert name(s) of student(s)] at [name of school]. The Board will conduct a hearing regarding your claim on [date] at [time]. The hearing will be held at the offices of the Board, which are located at [insert address].

The hearing will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Section 10-186 of the Connecticut General Statutes, a copy of which is enclosed. The hearing will be conducted in executive session, and the Board will make either a tape recording or a stenographic record of the hearing. You may be represented by counsel or by an advocate, at your expense, if you so desire; however, you may qualify for free legal services. To inquire about free legal assistance, please call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320.

Please contact the District’s Homeless Liaison, [insert name], if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[Name]

Superintendent of Schools

cc: **[Superintendent of Schools in which enrollment is sought, if appropriate]**

STUDENT RESIDENCY AFFIDAVIT
[PARENT/GUARDIAN FORM]

[Name of District]

Name of student: _____ Birthdate: _____

Name and Location of School Last Attended: _____

I, _____ declare and affirm as follows:

I am of legal age and believe in the obligations of an oath.

I am the parent/legal guardian/caregiver of _____ (name of student) who is of school age and is seeking admission to [School District].

Since _____ (date), _____ (name of student) has not had a permanent home. The student is currently staying at _____ (may list multiple addresses, if applicable). The student has been staying there since _____ (date).

This location is:

- _____ a shelter
- _____ a motel/hotel
- _____ a campsite
- _____ shared housing with other persons
- _____ other _____

If the location is shared housing with other persons, please specify the reason why the student is living in such housing:

_____.

Prior to staying at this location, the student was staying at _____
From _____ (date) to _____ (date).

I regularly receive my mail at: _____.
I am currently staying at the following address(es): _____,
_____. I plan to stay at this/these location(s) until: _____ (date). I can be reached at the following telephone number: _____.
I can be reached for emergencies at: _____.

I authorize school district officials to contact _____ (case worker/shelter staff/other) at _____ to obtain further information in order to verify the information contained in this affidavit and in order to coordinate necessary services for the student.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of Connecticut that the information provided is true and correct and of my own personal knowledge.

AFFIANT,

Signature of Affiant

Print Name of Affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this ___ day of ___, 20__.

NOTARY PUBLIC

STUDENT RESIDENCY AFFIDAVIT
[UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH FORM]

[Name of District]

Name of student: _____ Birthdate: _____

Name and Location of School Last Attended: _____

I, _____ declare and affirm as follows:

I, _____ am of school age and is seeking admission to [School District].

Since _____ (date), I, _____ have not had a permanent home. I am currently staying at _____ (may list multiple addresses, if applicable). I have been staying there since _____ (date).

This location is:

- _____ a shelter
- _____ a motel/hotel
- _____ a campsite
- _____ shared housing with other persons
- _____ other _____

If the location is shared housing with other persons, please specify the reason why the student is living in such housing:

_____.

Prior to staying at this location, I was staying at _____
From _____ (date) to _____ (date).

I regularly receive my mail at: _____.
I am currently staying at the following address(es): _____,
_____, _____. I plan to stay at this/these
location(s) until: _____ (date). I can be reached at the following telephone number:
_____. I can be reached for emergencies at: _____.

I authorize school district officials to contact _____ (case worker/shelter staff/other) at _____ to obtain further information in order to verify the information contained in this affidavit and in order to coordinate necessary services for me.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of Connecticut that the information provided is true and correct and of my own personal knowledge.

AFFIANT,

Signature of Affiant

Print Name of Affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this ___ day of ___, 20__.

NOTARY PUBLIC

AFFIDAVIT FOR MISSING ENROLLMENT DOCUMENTATION
[PARENT FORM]

[District]

I, _____, being duly sworn upon oath and based on my personal knowledge hereby state and affirm the following information regarding [name of student's] missing enrollment documentation for the following:

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|-----|----------------------|
| ___ | Proof of residency | ___ | Immunization Record |
| ___ | Proof of guardianship | ___ | School Health Record |
| ___ | Proof of identity | ___ | School Records |
| ___ | Birth Certificate | | |

I am of legal age and believe in the obligations of an oath.

I am unable to present a copy of the document(s) requested above for the following reasons:

The name and location of the last school the student attended is

_____.

I understand that I must obtain the necessary immunization and health records and provide a copy to the District. I understand that the Homeless Liaison is available to assist me in obtaining any such immunization or health records. The Homeless Liaison is _____ and can be reached at _____.

AFFIANT,

Signature of Affiant

Print Name of Affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this ___ day of ___, 20__.

NOTARY PUBLIC

**AFFIDAVIT FOR MISSING ENROLLMENT DOCUMENTATION
[UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH FORM]**

[District]

I, _____, being duly sworn upon oath and based on my personal knowledge hereby state and affirm the following information regarding my missing enrollment documentation for the following:

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|-----|----------------------|
| ___ | Proof of residency | ___ | Immunization Record |
| ___ | Proof of guardianship | ___ | School Health Record |
| ___ | Proof of identity | ___ | School Records |
| ___ | Birth Certificate | | |

I am unable to present a copy of the document(s) requested above for the following reasons:

The name and location of the last school I attended is

_____.

I understand that I must obtain the necessary immunization and health records and provide a copy to the District. I understand that the Homeless Liaison is available to assist me in obtaining any such immunization or health records. The Homeless Liaison is _____ and can be reached at _____.

AFFIANT,

Signature of Affiant

Print Name of Affiant

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this ___ day of ___, 20__.

NOTARY PUBLIC

Note:

Pursuant to Public Act 23-167, the legislature directed the CSDE to provide boards of education with a list of recommended assessments for determining suicide risk of students who exhibit mental health distress, have been identified as at risk of suicide, or are considered to be at an increased risk of suicide. On January 25, 2024, the CSDE engaged the Connecticut Suicide Advisory Board (CASB) and, together with the Commissioners of Children and Families and Mental Health and Addiction Services, issued a memorandum noting that the CSAB, DCF, and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services “recommend that the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) be used as the assessment tool for determining the suicide risk of students.” S & G revised the policy and the appendix to reflect the CSDE’s assessment recommendation.

**Series 5000
Students**

5141.5

**POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING
SUICIDE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

The New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that schools are not mental health treatment centers. The New Milford Public Schools (the “District”) cannot be expected to thoroughly evaluate and eliminate suicidal risk. Nevertheless, school personnel may become aware of specific factual circumstances in which a student has communicated a suicidal intent or other specific circumstances in which a student is perceived by school staff to be at risk for suicide. In such cases, the Board is committed to respond in a supportive manner, both aggressively and immediately, to a student who has attempted, has threatened, or who communicates that they are considering attempting suicide.

Any Board employee who has knowledge that a student has made a suicidal threat or attempt or exhibited suicidal ideation must immediately report this information to the building principal or designee, who will, in turn, notify appropriate Pupil Personnel Services staff. Pupil Personnel Services staff, with administrative assistance, if necessary, will contact the student's family and appropriate resources within and outside the school system, as permitted by law. The Board further directs the school staff to refer students who come to their attention as being at risk of attempting suicide for professional assessment and treatment services outside of the school. Information concerning a student's suicide attempt, threat or risk will be shared with others only as permitted by state and federal law.

In recognition of the need for youth suicide prevention procedures, the Board directs the Superintendent or designee to adopt and maintain administrative regulations addressing youth suicide prevention.

Training will be provided for teachers, other school staff, and students regarding the prevention of and response to youth suicide.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-220a

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221(f)

Public Act 23-167, “An Act Concerning Transparency in Education.”

Policy Approved: June 30, 2023

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy Revised:

New Milford, Connecticut

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING SUICIDE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The New Milford Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that schools are not mental health treatment centers. The New Milford Public Schools (the “District”) cannot be expected to thoroughly evaluate and eliminate suicidal risk. Nevertheless, school personnel may become aware of specific factual circumstances in which a student has communicated a suicidal intent or other specific circumstances in which a student is perceived by school staff to be at risk for suicide, and in such cases, the Board and the District are committed to respond in a supportive manner, both aggressively and immediately, to a student who has attempted, has threatened, or who communicates that they are considering attempting suicide. The following procedures shall be implemented toward this end.

Management of Suicidal Risk

- I. Any staff member who becomes aware of a student who may be at risk of suicide must immediately notify the building principal or designee. This must be done even if the student has confided in the staff person and asked that the communication be kept confidential. The principal or designee will then notify an appropriate Pupil Personnel Services staff member.
- II. The Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall interview the student, consider available background information, and determine whether, in the Pupil Personnel Services staff member’s judgment, the student is “at-risk” or “in imminent danger.” The Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS) will be used to make the determination if the student is “at-risk” or “in imminent danger.”
- III. If the student is assessed to be “at-risk”:
 - A. The Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall notify the student's parent/guardian and request a meeting with them as soon as possible, preferably that same day.
 - B. When the parent/guardian arrives at school, the Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall meet with the parent/guardian to discuss:
 1. the seriousness of the situation;
 2. the need for an immediate suicide risk evaluation at a medical or mental health facility, or other appropriate evaluation(s);
 3. the need for continued monitoring of the student at home if the student is released following the evaluation;
 4. referral to appropriate professional services outside the school system; and

5. a request for the parent/guardian to sign a release of information form permitting communication between the school and the facility to which the student will be taken, the student's therapist (if any) and other appropriate individuals.
- C. The Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall document in writing the course of events, including what transpired at the meeting and the outcome.
 - D. The Pupil Personnel Services staff member may notify other staff, if permitted by state and federal law, as necessary to promote the safety of the student and others.
 - E. The Pupil Personnel Services staff member may refer the student to the school's Child Study Team, Mental Health Team, Crisis Intervention Team, Student Assistance Team, Planning and Placement Team or other staff as appropriate for further consultation and planning.
 - F. The Pupil Personnel Services staff member or the team shall monitor the student's progress and shall consult as necessary with family, school staff, and outside professionals, if permitted by state and federal law.
- IV. If the student is assessed to be "in imminent danger":
- A. The Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall ensure that the student is not left alone.
 - B. The Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall notify the parent/guardian and request that the student be picked up at school and taken to a medical or mental health professional for thorough suicidal risk evaluation.
 - C. When the parent/guardian arrives at school, the Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall meet with the parent/guardian to discuss:
 1. the seriousness of the situation;
 2. the need for an immediate suicide risk evaluation at a medical or mental health facility, or other appropriate evaluation(s);
 3. the need for continued monitoring of the student at home if the student is released following the evaluation;
 4. referral to appropriate professional services outside the school system; and
 5. a request for the parent/guardian to sign a release of information form permitting communication between the school and the facility to which the student will be taken, the student's therapist (if any) and other appropriate individuals.

In addition, the Pupil Personnel Services staff member:

- a. shall document in writing the course of events, including what transpired at the meeting and the outcome;
 - b. shall inform the principal of the course of events and the outcome;
 - c. may notify other staff, as necessary to promote the safety of the student and others, if permitted by state and federal law; and
 - d. shall refer the student to the school's Child Study Team, Mental Health Team, Crisis Intervention Team, Student Assistance Team, Planning and Placement Team or other staff as appropriate for further consultation and planning.
- D. In instances where the parent/guardian is unable to come to school after being notified that their child has been identified as "in imminent danger" and the student must be picked up from school and taken for a thorough suicidal risk evaluation, the Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall notify the parent/guardian of the District's intent to and arrange transport of the student to an appropriate evaluation/treatment site by means of emergency vehicle (*e.g.*, ambulance or police cruiser). The Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall arrange for an emergency vehicle to transport the student to the hospital or an appropriate mental health facility; shall inform hospital/facility staff of known information pertaining to the situation; and shall plan follow-up in relation to hospital staff or mental health facility staff decisions as to how to proceed.

In addition, the Pupil Personnel Services staff member:

1. shall provide, over the telephone, information to the parent/guardian as to available resources outside and within the school system and shall plan follow-up contacts;
2. may notify police if the student poses a threat to the safety of self or others, or as dictated by other circumstances;
3. shall document in writing the course of events and the outcome;
4. shall inform the principal of the course of events and the outcome;
5. may notify other staff, as necessary to promote the safety of the student and others; and
6. shall refer the student to the school's Child Study Team, Mental Health Team, Crisis Intervention Team, Student Assistance Team, Planning and Placement Team or other staff as appropriate for further consultation and planning.

- E. If the parent/guardian does not agree with the school’s determination that the student is in imminent danger or for any other reason refuses to take action, the Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall meet with the building principal to develop an immediate plan focused on the safety of the student. The Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall document in writing the course of events and the outcome.
- F. When a student assessed to have been “in imminent danger” returns to the school, the Pupil Personnel Services staff member or the appropriate school-based team (if such referral has been made) shall coordinate consultation with outside professionals, supportive services in school, and changes in the instructional program, when necessary and as permitted by state and federal law.
- V. When addressing students who may be “at risk” or “in imminent danger” of suicide, the Pupil Personnel Services staff member shall consider, in light of the particular circumstances, whether a report to the Department of Children and Families is necessary and/or appropriate in accordance with statutory mandated reporting obligations, Board policy, and/or applicable law.

Suicide Education/Prevention - Students and Staff

- I. As part of the District’s Health Education Curriculum and Developmental Guidance Curriculum, students will be educated regarding suicide risk factors and danger signals, and how they might appropriately respond if confronted with suicidal behavior, verbalizations, or thoughts.
- II. Annually, in-service training for school staff will be held in each school building to discuss suicide risk factors, danger signals, and the procedures outlined in these regulations.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-220a
Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221(f)

Regulation Approved: June 30, 2023
Regulation Revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

Note:

Pursuant to legislation passed in 2023, beginning with the graduating class of 2025, students were required to meet certain requirements related to the FAFSA in order to graduate. Public Act 24-45 delays these requirements until the graduating class of 2027, and the current policy has been revised to reflect this change.

**Series 5000
Students**

5158

POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS 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”).

Program to Improve FAFSA Completion Rates

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 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 the effectiveness of such regulations in improving completion rates of the FAFSA.

FAFSA Graduation Requirements

Students graduating in 2027 and beyond are required to have satisfied one of the following prior to graduation:

- (1) completed a FAFSA;
- (2) for students without legal immigration status, completed and submitted to a public institution of higher education an application for institutional financial aid; or
- (3) completed a waiver of completion of the FAFSA and/or financial aid application, as applicable, on a form prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, signed by the student’s parent or guardian or signed by the student if the student is eighteen or older.

On and after March 15 of each school year, a principal, school counselor, teacher, or other certified educator may complete the waiver on behalf of any student who has not satisfied the above requirements if such principal, school counselor, teacher, or other certified educator affirms that they have made a good faith effort to contact the parent/guardian or student about completion of such applications.

Confidentiality of 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.

Reporting of FAFSA Completion Rates

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.

Gifts, Grants and Donations to Implement Policy

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

Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10a-11i

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-223m

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221a

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221z

Public Act No. 24-45, "An Act Concerning Education Mandate Relief, School Discipline, and Disconnected Youth"

Policy Adopted: October 18, 2022

Policy Revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

**ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS 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 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 References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221a

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-221z

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-223m

Public Act No. 24-45, “An Act Concerning Education Mandate Relief, School Discipline, and Disconnected Youth”

Regulation Adopted: October 18, 2022
Regulation Revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

Note: Boards of Education are required to approve the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education Connecticut School Climate Policy by July 1, 2025. They may adopt the policy prior to that date. The one page document “Background Regarding Connecticut School Climate Policy” provides information about the development of the policy.

**Series 5000
Students**

5131.91

CONNECTICUT SCHOOL CLIMATE POLICY

Policy Statement

All schools must support and promote teaching and learning environments where all students thrive academically and socially, have a strong and meaningful voice, and are prepared for lifelong success.

Implementation of the following set of guiding principles and systemic strategies will promote a positive school climate, which is essential to achieving these goals.

This policy sets forth the framework for an effective and informed school climate improvement process, which includes a continuous cycle of (i) planning and preparation, (ii) evaluation, (iii) action planning, and (iv) implementation, and serves to actualize the Connecticut School Climate Standards, as detailed herein.

The Board recognizes that improving school climate is contextual. Each school needs to consider its history, strengths, needs, and goals. Furthermore, this policy will support and promote the development of restorative action plans that will create and sustain safe and equitable learning environments.

The New Milford District Board of Education adopts this policy.

Definitions

1. **“School climate”** means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and that reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.
2. **“Positive Sustained School Climate”** is the foundation for learning and positive youth development and includes:
 - a. Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, culturally, racially, intellectually, and physically safe.
 - b. People who treat one another with dignity and are engaged, respected and solve problems restoratively.
 - c. A school community that works collaboratively together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision.
 - d. Adults who model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning; and
 - e. A school community that contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.

3. **“Social and emotional learning”** means the process through which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.
4. **“Emotional intelligence”** means the ability to (A) perceive, recognize, and understand emotions in oneself or others, (B) use emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to, reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (C) understand and identify emotions, and (D) manage emotions in oneself and others.
5. **“Bullying”** means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
6. **“School environment”** means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs that occur outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program if bullying at or during such other activities, functions or programs negatively impacts the school environment.
7. **“Cyberbullying”** means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any other electronic communication.
8. **“Teen dating violence”** means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening, that occurs between two students who are currently in or who have recently been in a dating relationship.
9. **“Mobile electronic device”** means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted.
10. **“Electronic communication”** means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.
11. **“School climate improvement plan”** means a building-specific plan developed by the school climate committee, in collaboration with the school climate specialist, using school climate survey data and any other relevant information, through a process that engages all members of the school community and involves such members in a series of overlapping systemic improvements, school-wide instructional practices and relational practices that prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment.

12. **“Restorative practices”** means evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior, and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.
13. **“School climate survey”** means a research-based, validated and developmentally appropriate survey administered to students, school employees and families of students, in the predominant languages of the members of the school community, that measures and identifies school climate needs and tracks progress through a school climate improvement plan.
14. **“Connecticut school climate policy”** means the school climate policy developed, updated and approved by an association in the state that represents boards of education and adopted by the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q of the general statutes, as amended by this act, that provides a framework for an effective and democratically informed school climate improvement process that serves to implement Connecticut school climate standards, and includes a continuous cycle of (A) planning and preparation, (B) evaluation, (C) action planning, and (D) implementation.
15. **“School employee”** means (A) a teacher, substitute teacher, administrator, school superintendent, school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, school nurse, physician, paraeducator or coach employed by a local or regional board of education, or (B) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public school, pursuant to a contract with a local or regional board of education.
16. **“School community”** means any individuals, groups, businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations that are invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.
17. **“Challenging behavior”** means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.
18. **“Evidence Based Practices”** in education refers to instructional and school-wide improvement practices that systematic empirical research has provided evidence of statistically significant effectiveness.

19 **“Effective School Climate Improvement”** is a restorative process that engages all stakeholders in the following six essential practices:

- A. Promoting decision-making that is collaborative and actively involves all stakeholders (e.g., school personnel, students, families, community members) with varied and meaningful roles and perspectives where all voices are heard;
- B. Utilizing psychometrically sound quantitative (e.g., school climate survey, discipline data) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups) data to drive action planning, preventive and intervention practices and implementation strategies that continuously improve all dimensions of school climate, including regularly collecting data to evaluate progress and inform the improvement process;
- C. Tailoring improvement goals to the unique needs of the students, educators, and broader school community. These goals shall be integrated into overall school improvement efforts thereby leveraging school strengths to address evidence-based areas of need, while sustaining the improvement process over time;
- D. Fostering adult learning in teams and/or professional learning communities to build capacity building among school personnel and develop common staff skills to educate the whole child;
- E. Basing curriculum, instruction, student supports, and interventions on scientific research and grounding in cognitive, social-emotional, and psychological theories of youth development. Interventions include strength-based programs and practices that together represent a comprehensive continuum of approaches to promote healthy student development and positive learning environments as well as address individual student barriers to learning and adult barriers to teaching; and
- F. Strengthening policies and procedures related to:
 - a. climate and restorative informed teaching and learning environments;
 - b. infrastructure to facilitate data collection, analysis, and effective planning;
 - c. implementation of school climate improvement plans with the goal of becoming restorative;
 - d. evaluation of the school climate improvement process; and
 - e. sustainability of school climate and restorative improvement efforts.

School Climate Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

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

The school climate coordinator shall be responsible for:

- 1. providing district-level leadership and support for the implementation of the school climate improvement plan for each school;
- 2. collaborating with the school climate specialist, for each school to (A) develop a continuum of strategies to prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment,

and (B) communicate such strategies to the school community, including, but not limited to, through publication in the district student handbook;

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

School Climate Specialist

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

The school climate specialist shall be responsible for:

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

School Climate Committee

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

The school climate committee shall consist of:

1. the school climate specialist;

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

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

The school climate committee shall be responsible for:

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

School Climate Survey

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

School Climate Improvement Plan

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

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

Training

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

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

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

Funding

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

Accountability

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

Connecticut School Climate Standards

1. The school district community² has a shared vision and plan for promoting and sustaining a positive school climate³ that focuses on prevention, identification, and response to all challenging behavior⁴.
2. The school district community adopts policies that promote:
 - a. a sound school environment that develops and sustains academic, social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills; and

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

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

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

- b. a restorative school environment focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning by building and supporting meaningful school-wide relationships, and intentionally re-engaging any disengaged students, educators, and families of students in the school community.
3. The school community's practices are identified, prioritized, and supported to:
- a. promote learning and the positive academic, social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students;
 - b. enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities;
 - c. address barriers to teaching and learning; and
 - d. develop and sustain a restorative infrastructure that builds capacity, accountability, and sustainability.
4. The school community creates a school environment⁵ where *everyone* is safe, welcomed, supported, and included in all school-based activities.
5. The school community creates a restorative system that cultivates a sense of belonging through norms and activities that promote social and civic responsibility, and a dedication to cultural responsiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Approved:
Revised:

NEW MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Milford, Connecticut

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

Challenging Behavior Reporting Form

This form is not required by law or policy but serves as a model challenging behavior reporting form that local and regional boards of education may adapt and adopt.

Instructions

This form is for **students, parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school, and school employees** to report any alleged challenging behavioral incidents. Challenging behavior is behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk with interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee. This form should also be used to report alleged bullying incidents, meaning: unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.

Complete this form electronically, or in writing, or go to your school climate specialist (principal, vice principal, or other certified administrator) who will assist you with completing this form. All completed reports require a response from the school climate specialist, and every student, parent or guardian, and school employee **who completed this form** will receive a copy of the "Response Process(es) Notification Form" describing the action steps taken, within three (3) school business days after an assessment has been completed.

The school climate specialist will assess the facts of a challenging behavior incident and complete the "Response Process(es) Notification Form" (located on page 5 of this document). A confirmation of receipt of the "challenging behavior reporting form" will be provided to the individual who completed this form within **three (3) school business days**, and the behavioral assessment will be finalized within a reasonable amount of time.

If this is an emergency, and you feel that you or someone else is in imminent danger, please call 911, or your municipal police department.

Name: First _____ Last _____ or check here for any **student** who would like to submit anonymously.

I am a: Student, Parent and/or Guardian or School Employee

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Contact me by: Phone Email

Was this previously reported to any school employee prior to this report? If yes, identify to whom, when, and what was reported? _____

Where did the incident occur? _____

Check any boxes that apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On school property | <input type="checkbox"/> On a school bus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> At a school-sponsored activity or off school property | <input type="checkbox"/> On the way to/from school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic communication, internet, and social media | <input type="checkbox"/> Outside of school |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Approximate date of incident (if known): _____

This form does not modify or eliminate any rights or obligations under state and federal laws, including, any constitutional and civil rights protections, or any applicable policies and procedures or collective bargaining agreements. All students' private and personal information will remain confidential throughout this process, subject to any wavier rights or disclosure responsibilities as permitted or required by law.

Please note: when a student exhibits challenging behavior, our priority is to ensure the safety of the students and the school, and to work with the student(s) to prevent the recurrence of such behavior, including making amends for any challenging behaviors that occurred. Federal law protects the privacy of each student. Therefore, you cannot be provided with any specific information concerning the student alleged to have engaged in the challenging behavior.

Please describe what happened?

Of the following statement(s) check any that may describe or include what happened:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teasing, name-calling, intimidating, or threatening, in person or through electronic communication | <input type="checkbox"/> Making intimidating, and/or threatening gestures or remarks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spreading rumors or gossip | <input type="checkbox"/> Getting another person to do any of the behaviors listed above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair pulling, or throwing something or other acts of physical aggression | <input type="checkbox"/> Unwanted contact of a sexual nature (verbal, non-verbal, physical) |

Do you believe that the reported instance(s) of challenging behavior was in reference to a student's perceived or actual age, ancestry, color, learning disability, marital status, intellectual disability, national origin, physical disability, mental disability, race, religious creed, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, and status as a veteran? If so, why?

If known, provide the name(s) of any witness(es) of the alleged incident: _____

Date form submitted: _____

***For school climate specialist use only:**

Date received by school climate specialist: _____

Signature of receipt by school climate specialist: _____

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Please note: when a student exhibits challenging behavior, our priority is to ensure the safety of the students and the school, and to work with the student(s) to prevent the recurrence of such behavior, including making amends for any challenging behaviors that occurred. Federal law protects the privacy of each student. Therefore, you cannot be provided with any specific information concerning the student alleged to have engaged in the challenging behavior.

Investigation Form

The purpose of this form is to provide a streamlined process to assess reported instances of challenging behavior.

This form is to be completed by the school climate specialist within a reasonable amount of time. Pursuant to the Federal Education Confidentiality Law (FERPA), students, parents or guardians, and school employees that completed the challenging behavior reporting form **cannot** receive a copy of this "Investigation Form" but will be provided with a copy of the "Response Process(es) Notification Form" after an assessment is completed.

Date "Challenging Behavior Reporting Form" received: _____

Today's Date: _____

Name of school climate specialist who received the report: _____

Were these events already reported to any school employee? If yes, please identify to whom, when, and what was reported _____

Name of school community member who is reporting the incident: (student, parent or guardian, school or district employee, bystander, anonymous): _____

Name of student or students who were allegedly subjected to the challenging behavior: _____

Name of person or persons who allegedly engaged in the challenging behavior: _____

Where did the alleged incident occur? _____

Date and time alleged incident occurred: (if known): _____

Description of the alleged incident: _____

What investigative processes occurred? Answer all of the following questions below. A single incident may require an assessment into multiple areas. Please check all that apply.

Was this investigated as bullying? YES NO

Was this a verified act of bullying? YES NO

Was this investigated as cyberbullying? YES NO

Was this a verified act of cyberbullying? YES NO

Was this investigated as teen dating violence? YES NO

Was this verified teen dating violence? YES or NO

Was this investigated as an assault? YES NO

Was this a verified assault? YES or NO

Was this investigated as an act of physical violence?
YES NO

Was this a verified act of physical violence?
YES or NO

Was this investigated as a protected class violation/
harassment? YES NO

Was this a verified protected class violation/harassment?
YES NO

Was this investigated as a Title IX violation? YES NO

Was this a verified Title IX violation? YES or NO

Was this a verified act of challenging behavior not listed
above? YES NO

This form does not modify or eliminate any rights or obligations under state and federal laws, including, any constitutional and civil rights protections, or any applicable policies and procedures or collective bargaining agreements. All students' private and personal information will remain confidential throughout this process, subject to any wavier rights or disclosure responsibilities as permitted or required by law.

Please note: when a student exhibits challenging behavior, our priority is to ensure the safety of the students and the school, and to work with the student(s) to prevent the recurrence of such behavior, including making amends for any challenging behaviors that occurred. Federal law protects the privacy of each student. Therefore, you cannot be provided with any specific information concerning the student alleged to have engaged in the challenging behavior.

What was the response by the school climate specialist? (E.g., utilization of restorative practices, school-based threat assessment, safety plan, student support services) Additionally, provide the date of each response.

If applicable, please provide any additional notes, observations, or actions taken as a result of this incident:

Signature or E-signature of responding school climate specialist: _____

Printed name: _____

Date of response: _____

This form does not modify or eliminate any rights or obligations under state and federal laws, including, any constitutional and civil rights protections, or any applicable policies and procedures or collective bargaining agreements. All students' private and personal information will remain confidential throughout this process, subject to any wavier rights or disclosure responsibilities as permitted or required by law.

Please note: when a student exhibits challenging behavior, our priority is to ensure the safety of the students and the school, and to work with the student(s) to prevent the recurrence of such behavior, including making amends for any challenging behaviors that occurred. Federal law protects the privacy of each student. Therefore, you cannot be provided with any specific information concerning the student alleged to have engaged in the challenging behavior.

Response Process(es) Notification Form

The purpose of this form is to provide a template for transparency and accountability to a person(s) that submit(s) a report of challenging behavior.

The school climate specialist will complete and submit this form within three (3) school business days **after an assessment has been finalized** and submit it to the student(s), parent(s), or guardian(s), and/or school employee(s) who completed the “Challenging Behavior Reporting Form”.

Describe the steps taken to address and prevent future instance(s) of challenging behavior(s). Responses may include:

- utilization of restorative practices;
- the completion of a school-based threat assessment;
- safety plan for student(s) involved in the instance of alleged challenging behavior;
- student support services;

Signature or E-signature of school climate specialist: _____

Printed name: _____

Date completed: _____

Definitions and Clarifying Terms

Restorative Practices: Evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior, and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.

School Based Threat Assessment: An evidence-based systematic evaluation process used to prevent violence, help troubled students, and avoid over-reactions to challenging behavior.

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Please note: when a student exhibits challenging behavior, our priority is to ensure the safety of the students and the school, and to work with the student(s) to prevent the recurrence of such behavior, including making amends for any challenging behaviors that occurred. Federal law protects the privacy of each student. Therefore, you cannot be provided with any specific information concerning the student alleged to have engaged in the challenging behavior.