

WESTPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING
AGENDA

(Agenda Subject to Modification in Accordance with Law)

SPECIAL NOTICE ABOUT PROCEDURES FOR THIS ELECTRONIC MEETING:

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order No. 7B, there will not be a physical location for this meeting. This meeting will be held electronically and live streamed on westportps.org and shown on Optimum Government Access Channel 78 and Frontier Channel 6021. Emails to BOE members can be sent to BOE@westportps.org. Comments to be read during the public comment period must be submitted to the meeting's Googledoc during the submission period. Please see the following link for instructions and guidelines: https://www.westportps.org/uploaded/Procedures_and_Guidelines_for_Public_Participation_in_Remote_Board_Meetings.pdf. We will use our best efforts to read public comments if they are received during the public comment period and if they state your full name and address. Meeting materials will be available at westportps.org along with the meeting notice posted on the Meeting Agenda page.

WORK SESSION:

12:00 p.m. Held Remotely Via Zoom Pursuant to Executive Order 7B

DISCUSSION/ACTION:

1. Minutes: February 25, 2020, *pages 1-2*

DISCUSSION:

1. Third Reading of Policy 6162.51 Surveys of Students, *pages 3-7*
2. First Reading of the Following Policies:
 - 6172.6, Distance Learning, *pages 8-12*
 - 5156 Research Involving Students, *pages 13-16*
 - 4118.5/4218.5 Acceptable Computer Use, *pages 17-24*
 - 4118.55 Social Networking, *pages 25-65*
 - 5131.81 Use of Electronic Devices (new policy) , *pages 66-68*
 - 6141.321 Computers: Acceptable Use, *pages 69-79*
 - 3514 Equipment, *pages 80-86*
 - 3514.1 Computer Loan, *pages 87-89*
 - 6114.8, Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness: Pandemic/Epidemic (new policy), *pages 90-120*
3. Second Reading of the Following:
 - Policy and Regulation 4138/4238 Non-School Employment, *pages 121-123*
 - Policy 4151.5/4215.5 Legal and Civic Duties, *pages 124-125*
 - Policy 4118.24 Staff/Student Relations/Non-Fraternization, *pages 126-128*
4. Any Other Policy Matters

ADJOURNMENT

**WESTPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY COMMITTEE WORK SESSION MINUTES**

Board Members Present:

Karen Kleine Committee Chair
Youn Su Chao

Administrators Present

John Bayers Director of Human Resources (arrived 9:14 a.m.)

PUBLIC SESSION: 8:41 a.m., Westport Town Hall, Room 307

DISCUSSION

Second Reading of the Following Policies:

- Policy 4117.6, Evaluation – Coaches
- 5112.4 Disenrollment/Enrollment
- 5141.6 Crisis Management

First Reading of the Following Policies:

- 4138/4238 Non-School Employment
- 4151.5/4215.5 Legal and Civic Duties
- 4118.24 Staff/Student Relations/Non-Fraternization

DISCUSSION/ACTION

MINUTES: January 28, 2020

Karen Kleine moved to approve the minutes of January 28, 2020; seconded by Youn Su Chao and approved unanimously (2-0-0).

Karen Kleine moved to bring the following before the full Board for a first reading; seconded by Youn Su Chao and passed unanimously (2-0-0):

- 6146 Graduation Requirements

- 6162.51, Surveys of Students/Student Privacy
- 5145.14, On-Campus Recruitment
- 4112.6, Personnel Records
- 4116, Probationary/Tenure Status
- 4118.7, Study/Use of Religious Symbols, Music and Decorations, etc. (Policy and Reg)
- 4117.6, Evaluation – Coaches
- 5112.4 Disenrollment/Enrollment
- 5141.6 Crisis Management

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Caputo

Instruction

Survey of Students

Surveys can be a valuable resource for schools and communities in determining student needs for educational services. When a survey is used, every effort should be made to ask questions in a neutral manner to ensure the accuracy of the survey.

Administrators, teachers, other staff members and the Board of Education may use surveys for many purposes. Such purposes may include, but are not limited to, the need for student services, the determination of prevailing views pertaining to proposed policies and/or practices, or the determination of student knowledge and/or attitudes related, to a specific subject or units. These are examples of surveys and not intended to be an all-inclusive listing. Administrative approval is required for surveys. Responses will not be used in any identifying manner.

Surveys used in any experimental program or research project will be subject to the requirements of Policy 6141.11. Parents shall have the right to inspect all instructional material that will be used for a survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of a federal program.

Prior to administering a survey, the Board of Education must approve all that are received by the Superintendent that include reference to any of the factors listed below. In addition, no student may, without parental consent, take part in a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sex behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;
7. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program); or
8. religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.

Surveys conducted for other agencies, organizations or individuals must have the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and the approval of the Board of Education as to content and purpose. The results of such approved surveys must be shared with the Board of Education.

Parents/guardians shall have the right to inspect, upon their request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to a student. Such requests shall

made in writing with a response to be at least two weeks in advance of any survey to be given.

For surveys not funded in any part by the federal government, parents/guardians need not give written consent, but must instead be given prior notice of the survey with the opportunity to opt their child out of participation if the survey elicits information concerning any of the eight protected areas listed above.

Overall survey results following decisions must be shared with all parties who request such information.

Parents/guardians shall be notified at least annually, at the beginning of the school year, of this policy and when enrolling students for the first time in district schools. This notification must explain that parent/guardians, or students 18 or older, have the right to "opt the student out of participation," in writing, in the following activities:

1. The collection, disclosure and use of personal information gathered from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information. This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to students, such as:
 - a. College or other post-secondary education recruitment, or military recruitment;
 - b. Book clubs, magazines and programs providing access to low-cost literary products;
 - c. Curriculum and instructional materials used in schools;
 - d. Tests and assessments;
 - e. Student recognition programs; and
 - f. The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related activities;
2. The administration of any survey that delves into the restricted sensitive subject areas identified and listed above, or
3. The administration of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school not necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of the student or other students and not otherwise permitted or required by state law.

Note: The term "invasive physical examination" means any medical examination that involves the exposure of private body parts, or any act during such examination that includes incision, insertion, or injection into the body, but does not include a hearing, vision or scoliosis screening.

The term "personal information" means individually identifiable information including a student's or parent's name, address, telephone number, or social security number.

Parents/guardians of a student shall also have the right to inspect, upon request, any instructional

material used as part of the educational curriculum. The District shall grant reasonable access to instructional material within a reasonable period of time after a parental request is received.

Note: The term "instructional material" means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of format. It does not include tests or academic assessments.

(cf. 6161 – Instructional Materials Selection)

Legal Reference:

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C. §1232h Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. 114-95

Regulation 34 CFR Part 98 (PPRA Regulations)

Instruction**Survey of Students**

Surveys can be a valuable resource for schools and communities in determining student needs for educational services. When a survey is used, every effort should be made to ask questions in a neutral manner to ensure the accuracy of the survey.

Administrators, teachers, other staff members and the Board of Education may use surveys for many purposes. Such purposes may include, but are not limited to, the need for student services, the determination of prevailing views pertaining to proposed policies and/or practices, or the determination of student knowledge and/or attitudes related, to a specific subject or units. These are examples of surveys and not intended to be an all-inclusive listing. Administrative approval is required for surveys. Responses will not be used in any identifying manner.

Surveys used in any experimental program or research project will be subject to the requirements of Policy 6141.11. Parents shall have the right to inspect all instructional material that will be used for a survey, analysis, or evaluation as part of a federal program.

Prior to administering a survey, the Board of Education must approve all that are received by the Superintendent that include reference to any of the factors listed below. In addition, no student may, without parental consent, take part in a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sex behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;
7. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program); or
8. religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.

Surveys conducted for other agencies, organizations or individuals must have the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and the approval of the Board of Education as to content and purpose. The results of such approved surveys must be shared with the Board of Education.

Parents/guardians shall have the right to inspect, upon their request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to a student. Such requests shall be made in writing with a response to be at least two weeks in advance of any survey to be given.

For surveys not funded in any part by the federal government, parents/guardians need not give written consent, but must instead be given prior notice of the survey with the opportunity to opt their child out of participation if the survey elicits information concerning any of the eight protected areas listed above

Overall survey results following decisions must be shared with all parties who request such information.

Parents/guardians shall be notified at least annually, at the beginning of the school year, of this policy and when enrolling students for the first time in district schools. This notification must explain that parent/guardians, or students 18 or older, have the right to "opt the student out of participation," in writing, in the following activities;

1. The collection, disclosure and use of personal information gathered from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information. This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to students, such as:
 - a. College or other post-secondary education recruitment, or military recruitment;
 - b. Book clubs, magazines and programs providing access to low-cost literary products;
 - c. Curriculum and instructional materials used in schools;
 - d. Tests and assessments;
 - e. Student recognition programs; and
 - f. The sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related activities;

2. The administration of any survey that delves into the restricted sensitive subject areas identified and listed above, or
3. The administration of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school not necessary to protect the immediate health or safety of the student or other students and not otherwise permitted or required by state law.

Note: The term "invasive physical examination" means any medical examination that involves the exposure of private body parts, or any act during such examination that includes incision, insertion, or injection into the body, but does not include a hearing, vision or scoliosis screening.

The term "personal information" means individually identifiable information including a student's or parent's name, address, telephone number, or social security number.

Parents/guardians of a student shall also have the right to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum. The District shall grant reasonable access to instructional material within a reasonable period of time after a parental request is received.

Note: The term "instructional material" means instructional content that is provided to a student, regardless of format. It does not include tests or academic assessments.

(cf. 6141.11 - Curriculum Research/Experimental Projects)

(cf. [6161](#) - Equipment, Books and Materials: Provision/Selection)

(cf. [6161.1](#) - Evaluation/Selection of Instructional Materials)

(cf. 6161.12 - Reconsideration of Materials)

Legal Reference: Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C. §1232h Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. 114-95

Regulation 34 CFR Part 98 (PPRA Regulations)

Policy adopted:

Instruction**Distance Education****Virtual/Online Courses**

The Board of Education believes that education through virtual/online courses or through university or college courses is an alternative (effective) means of instruction for students. A virtual school is hereby defined as an educational organization that offers courses at various grade levels through Internet or Web-based methods. These schools can offer courses to enhance, supplement or enrich the existing curriculum and can also provide an alternative means of instruction. Interactive distance learning does not require the student to be physically present in the same location as the instructor or other students.

Virtual/on-line courses will be part of this District's educational program delivery system to increase accessibility and flexibility in the delivery of instruction. In addition to regular classroom-based instruction, students in the District may earn credit through distance education provided by virtual/online courses.

In order to earn credits in meeting the requirements for high school graduation through the successful completion of on-line coursework, the Board, in compliance with C.G.S. 10-221a (17) shall ensure, at a minimum, that (a) the workload required by the on-line course is equivalent to that of a similar course taught in a traditional District classroom setting, (b) the content is rigorous and aligned with curriculum guidelines approved by the State Board of Education, where appropriate, (c) the course engages students and has interactive components, which may include, but are not limited to, required interactions between students and their teachers, participation in on-line demonstrations, discussion boards or virtual labs, (d) the program of instruction for such on-line coursework is planned, ongoing and systematic, and (e) the courses are (1) taught by teachers who are certified in the state or another state and have received training on teaching in an on-line environment, or (2) offered by institutions of higher education that are accredited by the Department of Higher Education or regionally accredited; or (3) toward meeting the high school graduation requirement upon the successful completion of the board examination series permitting students in grades 9 through 12 to substitute achievement of a passing score on a series of examinations approved by the State Board of Education for meeting credit requirements for graduation.

If the drop-out rate of the District is determined to be 8% or higher in the previous school year, the Board of Education shall establish an on-line credit recovery program for those students who are identified as being in danger of failing to graduate. These students, once identified by certified personnel, must be allowed to complete on-line District-approved coursework toward meeting high school graduation requirements. Each high school within the District shall designate, from among existing staff, an online learning coordinator to administer and coordinate the online credit recovery program.

Insert additional district information as to how virtual/online courses links to district mission/goals/strategies focusing on student achievement and accountability.

The Board of Education recognizes students may benefit from on-line courses or post-secondary courses to assist students in obtaining credits necessary to earn a diploma, to maintain academic standings or to provide enrichment for those who might require special courses.

The District will not use on-line courses as the sole medium for instruction in any required subject area for students in grades K-8.

The District will integrate on-line courses as part of the regular instruction provided by a certified teacher for grades K-12.

High school students may also earn a maximum of ____ units of academic credit [*number of credits to be decided at the local district level*] to be applied toward graduation requirements by completing online courses through agencies approved by the Board unless the Principal waives that provision in writing stating the reasons why, citing whatever circumstances that has caused this waiver. [*Option: insert approved agencies here such as the Virtual High School, the Michigan Virtual High School, or the Kentucky Virtual High School.*]

Credit from an online or virtual course or a university/college course may be earned only in the following circumstances:

1. The course is not offered at the District's high school.
2. The high school does offer the course, but the student is unable to take it due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict.
3. The course will serve as an alternative or a supplement to extended homebound instruction.
4. The District has expelled the student from the regular school setting, and the student has been offered an alternative educational opportunity.
5. The Principal, with agreement from the student's teachers and parents/guardians, determines the student requires a differentiated or accelerated learning environment.
6. Students taking such courses must be enrolled in the District and take the courses during the regular school day at the school site.
7. A student has failed a course and wishes to recover credits in that course area.
8. The student's PPT or Section 504 Team has determined it to be an appropriate means of instruction.
9. Add additional circumstances here.

As determined by Board/school policy, students applying for permission to take a virtual/on-line course will do the following:

- Complete prerequisites and provide teacher/counselor recommendations to confirm the student possesses the maturity level needed to function effectively in an online/college learning environment.
- Obtain the written approval of the Principal or his/her designee before a student enrolls in a virtual course or the university/college course.
- Adhere to the District code of conduct to include rules of behavior and consequences for violations.
- Adhere to attendance requirements of the District.

The school must receive an official record of the final grade before awarding credit toward graduation. Only approved courses shall be posted on student transcripts.

The tuition fee for a virtual course shall be borne by the District for students enrolled full-time. (***Alternative:*** *Any and all fees imposed on the learner are the sole responsibility of the learner and not the Board of Education or its designee.*) The Board shall pay the fee for expelled students who are permitted to take virtual courses in alternative settings.

Through its policies and/or supervision plan, the school shall be responsible for providing appropriate supervision and monitoring of students taking virtual courses.

Students will have access to sufficient library media resources such as a “virtual library” available through the World Wide Web, laboratory facilities, technical assistance, and hands-on training and information.

District Review Committee

The Superintendent shall establish a committee to review all distance education courses prior to use by the District. This committee will be comprised of (*insert District choices here; for example, the director of instruction, district curriculum coordinator, library media specialist, district technology coordinator, department heads, classroom teachers, student representatives, etc.*).

Evaluation

The District will evaluate the educational effectiveness of the distance education courses and the teaching/learning process to include assessments based on state curriculum standards as well as student satisfaction. The District will use this evaluation to decide whether to grant credit for the course or to continue or discontinue the use of the distance education course.

Additional language to consider:

- Approval of any course shall be based upon its compliance with Connecticut's academic standards and requirements, including but not limited to the course content and rigor, its length and scope, its method of assessing knowledge acquired by the student, the qualifications of the instructor and other appropriate factors.
- Enrollment in an online course will be allowed only if an appropriately certified teacher is available and willing to supervise the student's participation in the course.
- No more than one credit may be earned toward the required credits in each of the core content areas.
- On line course delivery must be from institutions accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges or Western Association of Schools and Colleges or, if the institution is foreign, recognized by the Connecticut State Department of Education as having appropriate academic standards.

(cf. [6141.321](#) - Computers: Acceptable Use of the Internet)

(cf. 6141.1 - Independent Study)

(cf. [6146](#) - Graduation Requirements)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-221](#) Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures.

[10-221a](#) High school graduation requirements. (as amended by P.A. 00-124, An Act Concerning High School Diplomas and Veterans of World War II, P.A. 00-156, An Act Requiring A Civics Course for High School Graduation and P.A. 08-138, An Act Concerning High School Credit for Private World Language Courses ,Other Subject Areas) and P.A. 10-111, An Act Concerning Education Reform in Connecticut.

Policy adopted:

CREDIT FOR ONLINE COURSES

The _____ Board of Education (“Board”) recognizes the importance of technology in education and the growing popularity and use of online coursework. In that regard, and in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221a, the Board sanctions the receipt of online course credit to be used toward high school graduation requirements, in accordance with this policy.

Pre-approval of Courses Identified by Students and Parents

To receive credit for online courses to be used toward high school graduation requirements, students must, prior to registering for the course, receive approval from the high school principal or his/her designee. The decision of the principal or his/her designee with regard to online course credit approval is final. Pre-approval for online course credit may be granted if the requirements set forth below are met.

District-Provided Distance Learning

Students may also earn credit for high school graduation by participating successfully in distance learning offered by the Board during the COVID-19 health emergency, or other long-term school closure related to a community-wide emergency. Determination of successful participation will be made by the teacher teaching the course through district-provided distance learning, taking into account work performed by the student prior to the school closure.

Requirements for Online Coursework

1. The workload required by the online course is substantially equivalent to that of a similar course taught in a traditional classroom setting;
2. The content of the online course is rigorous and aligned with curriculum guidelines approved by the State Board of Education, where appropriate;
3. The course engages students and has interactive components, which may include, but are not limited to, required interactions between students and their teachers, participation in online demonstrations, discussion boards or virtual labs;

4. The program of instruction for such online coursework is planned, ongoing and systematic;
5. The courses are:
 - a. taught by teachers who are certified in Connecticut or another state and have received training on teaching in an online environment, or
 - b. offered by institutions of higher education that are accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or regionally accredited; and
6. The principal has determined, in his or her professional judgment, that, given the student's academic and disciplinary history, the student is appropriately suited to engage in online coursework.

Additional Requirements

Only students in grades 9-12 are eligible to receive credit toward high school graduation by taking online courses. Students who have been pre-approved shall receive such credit upon completing the online course and obtaining a passing grade.

Any expense incurred for taking an online course identified by the student and/or parent shall be the responsibility of the student/parent and shall not be the responsibility of the Board. Distance learning provided to students during the COVID-19 or other community-wide emergency shall be provided at Board expense.

Legal References

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221a.

APPROVED: _____
REVISED: _____

4/13/2020

Students**Research Involving Students**

Research may be permitted in the schools, when, in the judgment of the Superintendent it would provide a potential valuable resource for the schools or result in a meaningful contribution to education.

All research activities must be sound for students, must not be unduly disruptive of educational activities or contrary to the welfare of the school or the school system.

All research activities must be carried out in accordance with procedures established by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent may limit the number of research projects and may disapprove those which otherwise meet established criteria if they duplicate or are similar in nature to activities previously conducted.

Policy adopted: April 7, 1980

WPS Existing Regulation**Students****Research Involving Students****Procedures for Seeking Approval of Research**

- A. Timely notice shall be given of all requests for cooperation by the schools with research projects so that appropriate staff members may be consulted. Last minute requests will not be considered.
- B. All requests to conduct research in the schools shall be directed to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee, who shall confer with the appropriate Assistant Superintendent and other appropriate staff members.
- C. When proposals for research are being reviewed, the following factors should be considered:
 1. Would the research provide a potentially valuable research resource for the Westport Schools and/or make a meaningful contribution to education in general?
 2. Is it consistent with Westport Board of Education policy?
 3. Is it in the interest of the school system to honor the request?
 4. What is the length of time individual student(s) or class time would be required to be away from regular class work?

An attempt should be made to limit use of individual or class time to no more than 30 minutes. Projects which require more than 30 minutes of individual or class time should be subject to especially rigorous administrative scrutiny before permission is granted. Wherever possible an attempt should be made not to take time for research projects from the basic subjects.

5. What is the source of the request?

All other factors being equal, the following guidelines for consideration should be employed:

- a) Requests from staff, former students, individuals or organizations associated with the Westport schools and/or Westport residents should be given more favorable consideration than requests from non-residents.
- b) University affiliation projects, including dissertations should be given greater consideration than college class projects or individual college-students' projects.
- c) Requests from the Connecticut State Department of Education should be given more favorable consideration than norming research from elsewhere or requests from publishing houses wishing to pilot published materials etc.

D. If the project is approved, depending on the nature of the project, approval may take one of two forms:

1. The Superintendent may require Principals and staff members to cooperate with and/or assist in the approved research project; or
2. A request may be approved contingent on the voluntary participation by Principals and/or staff.

In this case, research requests may be discussed with individual teachers or at building faculty meetings, at the discretion of the Principal, and staff members may consider requests as they would any other offer of resources, keeping in mind that the first obligation is to the students.

E. The Superintendent's decision will be final.

General Requirements For All Research Projects

- A. All proposals shall contain a statement of objectives, specific procedures to be used, and details of number of students to be involved, approximate time commitment, an evaluation plan for measuring the attainment of objectives, and an explanation of the use to which the information will be put.
- B. Researchers must supply a letter to parents (and students over 18) informing them of the research project.
 1. The letter must contain all of the above information and offer parents the right to refuse to have their children participate.
 2. Participation of secondary level students will be completely voluntary.
 3. Specific written consent must be obtained from parents (or students over 18) for:
 - a) the use of names or data derived from school records,
 - b) the participation of their children in interviews or questionnaires which have the potential for invasion of privacy for students or their families even though the data are collected and reported under conditions of anonymity.
- C. Projects involving college student researchers must have prior written approval of a faculty member of the institution in which the student is enrolled. Projects involving Westport student researchers must have prior written approval by a faculty member and by the Principal of the school which the student attends. In either case, the faculty member must have direct responsibility for the student's research.

Procedures Relating to Specific Types of Research

- A. Research involving review of records and/or case studies.
 1. In addition to information required, the researcher must indicate the relevancy of the records sought.
 2. A consent form must be signed by the parent/guardian/adult student in order for the contents of a student record to be released (see attached sample form).
 3. Staff involvement in assisting in data collection should be minimal.
- B. Research involving questionnaires, testing, interviews or use of class time.
 1. Superintendent's designee will review questionnaire or test Materials to determine if the material is of controversial nature or if there is possible invasion of privacy, and/or if written parental consent is necessary prior to the administration of the questionnaire or test.
 2. Testing or interviews may be carried out during class period, but must be done so that educational activities are not disrupted and children being interviewed or tested do not miss more than 30 minutes of class time.
- C. Research involving use of new teaching materials and/or techniques in the classroom.
 1. Parents/guardians should be informed of approach or technique to be used and the possible advantages of that approach or technique.

2. Parents/guardians should be informed if class is to be instructed by someone other than the regular teacher for the research project.

Regulation approved: April 7, 1980

Students**Research Involving Students**

All requests for the services of student volunteers in research projects, special studies, and surveys not part of the regular educational program must have parent, superintendent of schools, and Board of Education approval.

Staff members shall submit their request through regular administrative channels.

Policy adopted:

WPS Existing Policy

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Acceptable Computer Network Use

Employees are advised that in accordance with state law there should be no expectation of privacy while using the school system's computers or E-mail service. The Board of Education's policy specifically states that computer use can be monitored to assure compliance.

These rules are in effect for use of:

Computers/electronic resources provided by the Westport schools.

Privately owned resources while on school property.

These rules apply to the following while on school property and/or using school equipment:

All employees of the school system.

Employees of the food services department and the bus company.

Anyone working in or on behalf of the school system, e.g., consultants, subs, temporary and part-time workers.

Volunteer, including parents.

The following practices are prohibited:

1. Downloading onto a school computer material that is copyrighted and/or programs you are not licensed to use.
2. Conducting personal private or commercial business not related to school system responsibilities, other than incidental personal use that does not interfere with job duties.
3. Hacking into any computers that you are not authorized to use.
4. Making any unauthorized changes to programs in use by the school system or to material that belongs to another.
5. Using the computer to threaten, intimidate, harass or otherwise violate the rights of anyone.
6. Downloading, viewing or transmitting sexually explicit material or material that is pornographic or obscene.
7. Downloading, viewing or transmitting material that attacks ethnic, religious and racial groups except for bone fide educational purposes directly related to one's assignment.
8. Sending any message for an illegal purpose or in any illegal manner.
9. Making any additions to, deletions from, or alterations of the school district's website or the website of any school, without authorization.
10. Using school system resources for politicking or religious proselytizing.
11. Installing programs on a school system computer without the approval and/or assistance of a member of the technical staff.

You should know that certain violations of these rules, e.g. copyright violation, may also constitute a violation of state or federal law.

In conformity to Board policy, failure to comply with these rules will result in loss of computer privileges and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Due process rights will be protected.

E-Mail

The e-mail system is made available as a resource to staff members for official and necessary professional communications. While occasional incidental personal use is not prohibited, staff members are advised to avoid using it as their personal e-mail program because it is not a private or secure communication and could be subject to Freedom of Information requirements, subpoenaed, etc.

E-mail to Colleagues

1. If possible, avoid using names of students or parents in e-mail messages, and do not send sensitive or confidential information about yourself, other staff members, students, or parents through e-mail, even without their names.
2. Always use the heading "Draft" when working on documents that you are developing or revising. Ultimately they may become permanent records subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, but use of the heading "Draft" may clarify that documents are not subject to disclosure because they are "preliminary drafts or notes" under the FOIA. Please note, however, that the exemption may be lost when you share a draft with colleagues as part of the decision-making process and that such documents may be subject to public disclosure.
3. Use e-mail for messages of a transitory nature only and delete unneeded messages very soon, and regularly.
4. E-mail to colleagues should be used for professional matters. It should not be used to air personal or individual concerns to groups of other staff members or to convey derogatory sentiments about other staff members or groups.
5. Permission is required for staff members to use e-mail for communications to large groups, i.e., an entire department, school, bargaining unit or school district.

E-mail to Students and Parents

1. For your own protection, think of e-mail as if it were a permanent communication because a recipient can print it and make it permanent, or forward it to someone else. Therefore, don't say anything you wouldn't put into a written letter or that you would be unwilling to share with many people, including strangers, etc.
2. For your further protection, the content of messages to students should deal strictly with school-related matters. Don't feel obligated to respond to personal content, and don't use e-mail as a personal conversation. Keep your messages brief and to the point. Don't have prolonged e-mail "chats" with students or parents.
3. To avoid being imposed upon, let students know what topics may be dealt with in e-mail. Students are not entitled to a private tutorial via e-mail. It is not a substitute for the student who didn't take notes in class or didn't write down the assignment.
4. If you set up a conference with all parents' e-mail addresses, communications should deal strictly with matters pertaining to the class. The conference should not be used to air personal concerns to groups of parents, or to communicate about private political, entrepreneurial, avocational, religious, charitable, or other activities in which you engage.
5. If the volume of e-mail becomes burdensome for you, set up a time frame for both receiving and answering e-mail and communicate that time frame to students and parents so that they do not expect instantaneous answers to their questions.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

The Freedom of Information Act.

PA 98-142 an Act Requiring Notice to Employees of Electronic Monitoring by employees

Policy adopted: September 1, 2003

Policy revised: 2006

WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Westport, Connecticut

**Series 4000
Personnel**

**POLICY REGARDING EMPLOYEE USE OF
THE DISTRICT'S COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND ELECTRONIC
COMMUNICATIONS**

Computers, computer networks, electronic devices, Internet access, and e-mail are effective and important technological resources. The Board of Education provides computers, a computer network, including Internet access and an e-mail system, and other electronic devices that access the network such as wireless and/or portable electronic hand-held equipment that can be used for word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture and recording, sound recording, information transmitting and/or receiving, storing, etc. (including, but not limited to, personal laptops, Smartphones, network access devices, Kindles, Nooks, cellular telephones, radios, personal cassette players, CD players, iPads or other tablet computers, walkie-talkies, Blackberries, personal data assistants, iPhones, Androids and other electronic signaling devices) (referred to collectively as "the computer systems"), in order to enhance both the educational opportunities for our students and the business operations of the district.

These computer systems are business and educational tools. As such, they are made available to Board employees for business and education related uses. The Administration shall develop regulations setting forth procedures to be used by the Administration in an effort to ensure that such computer systems are used for appropriate business and education related purposes.

In accordance with applicable laws and the Administrative Regulations associated with this Policy, the system administrator and others managing the computer systems may access email or monitor activity on the computer system or electronic devices accessing the computer systems at any time and for any reason or no reason. Typical examples include when there is reason to suspect inappropriate conduct or there is a problem with the computer systems needing correction. Further, the system administrator and others managing the computer systems can access or monitor activity on the systems despite the use of passwords by individual users, and can bypass such passwords. In addition, review of emails, messages or information stored on the computer systems, which can be forensically retrieved, includes those messages and/or electronic data sent, posted and/or retrieved using social networking sites, including, but not limited to, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace.

Incidental personal use of the computer systems may be permitted solely for the purpose of e-mail transmissions and access to the Internet on a limited, occasional basis.

Such incidental personal use of the computer systems, however, is subject to all rules, including monitoring of all such use, as the Superintendent may establish through regulation. Moreover, any such incidental personal use shall not interfere in any manner with work responsibilities.

Users should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of the computer system or other electronic devices that access the computer system. Use of the computer system represents an employee's acknowledgement that the employee has read and understands this policy and any applicable regulations in their entirety, including the provisions regarding monitoring and review of computer activity.

Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-40x
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-48d
Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53a-182; 53a-183; 53a-250

Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

ADOPTED: _____

REVISED: _____

8/1/16

[Note: Although we have included this sample notice in our model policy documents for the convenience of our Board of Education clients, the notice does not need to be approved as a Board policy].

NOTICE REGARDING ELECTRONIC MONITORING

**[To be posted in a conspicuous place
readily available for viewing by employees]**

In accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 31-48d, the Board of Education hereby gives notice to all its employees of the potential use of electronic monitoring in its workplace. While the Board may not actually engage in the use of electronic monitoring, it reserves the right to do so as the Board and/or the Administration deem appropriate in their discretion, consistent with the provisions set forth in this Notice.

“Electronic monitoring,” as defined by Connecticut General Statutes Section 31-48d, means the collection of information on the Board’s premises concerning employees’ activities or communications, by any means other than direct observation of the employees. Electronic monitoring includes the use of a computer, telephone, wire, radio, camera, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical systems. The law does not cover the collection of information (A) for security purposes in any common areas of the Board’s premises which are open to the public, or (B) which is prohibited under other state or federal law.

The following specific types of electronic monitoring may be used by the Board in its workplaces: **[modify as appropriate for the school district in question]**

- Monitoring of e-mail and other components of the Board’s computer systems, including monitoring of electronic devices such as PDAs, Smartphones, and mobile or handheld devices that access the computer systems, for compliance with the Board’s policies and regulations concerning use of such systems.
- Video and/or audio surveillance within school buildings (other than in restrooms, locker rooms, lounges and other areas designed for the health or personal comfort of employees or for the safeguarding of their possessions), on school grounds and on school buses and other vehicles providing transportation to students and/or employees of the school system.
- Monitoring of employee usage of the school district’s telephone systems.

The law also provides that, where electronic monitoring may produce evidence of misconduct, the Board may use electronic monitoring without any prior notice when the Board has reasonable grounds to believe employees are engaged in conduct that (i)

violates the law, (ii) violates the legal rights of the Board or other employees, or (iii) creates a hostile work environment.

Questions about electronic monitoring in the workplace should be directed to the Superintendent.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes:

Section 31-48b

Section 31-48d

8/1/16

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified**Rights, Responsibilities and Duties****Acceptable Computer Network Use**

The Board of Education provides computers, networks and Internet access to support the educational mission of the schools and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff.

NOTE: Local Boards should decide whether employee use of computers will be limited to job-related duties or whether some level of personal use will be allowed. The following paragraphs illustrate two different approaches that local school units may want to consider:

Employees may utilize the district's computers, networks and Internet services only for purposes related to the schools and the performance of their jobs, and no personal use of any kind is permitted.

OR

Employees are to utilize the district's computers, networks, email system and Internet services for school-related purposes and performance of job duties. Limited incidental personal use of district computers, networks, email systems and Internet services is permitted as long as such use does not interfere with the employee's job duties and performance, with system operations or other system users. "Limited incidental personal use" is defined as use by an individual employee for an appropriate, lawful, brief and occasional personal purposes. Employees are reminded that such personal use must comply with this policy and all other applicable policies, procedures and rules.

Employees shall be notified that computer files and electronic communications, including email and voice mail, are not private. Technological resources shall not be used to transmit confidential information about students, employees, or District operations without authority. The systems' security aspects, message delete function and personal passwords can be bypassed for monitoring purposes. Therefore, employees must be aware that they should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of these computer systems. This provision applies to any and all uses of the district's computer systems, including any incidental personal use permitted in accordance with this policy and applicable regulations.

Online/Internet Services

The Board will educate minor students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response. Additionally, the Board will implement a technology protection measure to block or filter Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene material, contain child pornography, or are harmful to minors and ensure that such filtering technology is operative during computer use by minor students.

Any employee who violates this policy and/or any rules governing use of the district's computers will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Illegal uses of the school district's computers will also result in referral to law enforcement authorities.

All District computers remain under the control, custody and supervision of the school district. The school unit reserves the right to monitor all computer and Internet activity by employees. Employees have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers.

NOTE: CABE recommends that local Boards require employees to sign an acknowledgment that they have read Board policy 4118.5/4218.5 and the regulations concerning computer use and include the following paragraph in the Board policy.

Each employee authorized to access the school district's computers, networks and Internet services is required to sign an acknowledgment form stating that they have read this policy and the accompanying regulations. The acknowledgment form will be retained in the employee's personnel file.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and the accompanying rules and for advising the Board of the need for any future amendments or revisions to the policy/regulations. The Superintendent or his/her designee may develop additional administrative procedures/rules governing the day-to-day

management and operations of the school district's computer system as long as they are consistent with the Board's policy/rules. The Superintendent may delegate specific responsibilities to building principals and others as he/she deems appropriate.

(cf. [6141.321](#) - Student Use of the Internet)

(cf. [6141.322](#) - Web Sites/Pages)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes

The Freedom of Information Act

[31](#)-48d Employers engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.

[53a](#)-182 Disorderly conduct; Class C misdemeanor

[53a](#)-182b Harassment in the first degree.

[53a](#)-183 Harassment in the second degree

[53a](#)-250 Computer-related Offenses: Definitions

Electronics Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §2510 through 2520

Policy adopted:

WPS Existing Policy**Personnel - Certified****Social Networking By Staff**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of social media for its employees, and acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. In accordance with the provisions of the First Amendment, the Board will regulate the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, when such use:

- 1) Interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
- 2) is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications ;
- 3) creates a hostile work environment;
- 4) breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees, or
- 5) violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board of Education, through its Superintendent, will adopt and maintain administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Legal References:

U.S. Constitution, Amend. I

Conn. Constitution, Article I, Sections 3, 4, 14

Conn. Gen. Stat. § [31-48d](#)

Conn. Gen. Stat. § [31-51q](#)

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ [53a-182](#); [53a-183](#); [53a-250](#)

Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

ADOPTED: September 10, 2012

Personnel - Certified**Administrative Regulations Regarding Use of Social Media Definitions:**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of social media for its employees, and acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. In accordance with the provisions of the First Amendment, the Board will regulate the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, when such use:

- 1) Interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
- 2) is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications ;
- 3) creates a hostile work environment;
- 4) breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees, or

- 5) violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

Social Media includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites, such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace.

Board of Education includes all names, logos, buildings, images and entities under the authority of the Board of Education.

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity

1. An employee may not mention, discuss or reference the Board of Education, the school district or its individual schools, programs or teams on personal social networking sites in a manner that could reasonably be construed as an official school district communication, unless the employee also states within the communication that such communication is the personal view of the employee of the school district and that the views expressed are the employee's alone and do not represent the views of the school district or the Board of Education.
2. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, parents, and colleagues. For example, on Facebook, absent an unrelated online relationship, (e.g., relative, family friend, or personal friendship unrelated to school), it is not appropriate for a teacher or administrator to "friend" a student or his/her parent or guardian or otherwise establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media, and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students or parents access to personal postings unrelated to school.
3. Unless given written consent, employees may not use the Board of Education's logo or trademarks on their personal posts. Please note that this prohibition extends to the use of logos or trademarks associated with individual schools, programs or teams of the school district.
4. Employees must refrain from engaging in harassing, defamatory, obscene abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications through personal social media. Such communications reflect poorly on the school district's reputation, can affect the educational process and may substantially and materially interfere with an employee's ability to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities.
5. Employees are individually responsible for their personal communications through social media. Employees may be sued by other employees, parents or others, and any individual that views an employee's communication through social media as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. As such activities are outside the scope of employment, employees may be personally liable for such claims.
6. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or electronic devices when accessing social media sites. Any access to personal social media activities while on school property or using school district equipment must comply with those policies, and may not interfere with an employee's duties at work.
7. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication or post made through social media while using district computers, cellular telephones or other electronic data devices.
8. All communications through personal social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is considering sharing information and is unsure about the confidential nature of the information, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to communicating such information.
9. An employee may not link a personal social media page to the Board of Education's website or the websites of individual schools, programs or teams; or post Board of Education material on a social media site or webpage without written permission of his/her building administrator.
10. All Board of Education policies that regulate off-duty conduct apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to public trust, illegal harassment, code of conduct, and protecting confidential information.

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity

1. In order for an employee to use social media sites as an educational tool or in relation to extracurricular activities or programs of the school district, the employee must seek and obtain the permission of his/her supervisor.

2. If an employee wishes to use Facebook or other similar social media sites to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity or an official school-based organization, or an official sports team, the employee must also comply with the following rules:
- The employee must set up the club, etc. as a group list which will be "closed" (e.g. membership in the group is limited to students, parents and appropriate school personnel), and "monitored" (e.g. the employee has the ability to access and supervise communications on the social media site).
 - When Facebook is used as the social media site, members will not be established as "friends," but as members of the group list. When other social media sites are used, the employee will establish a similar parameter on the basis of the functionality of the social media site utilized.
 - Anyone who has access to the communications conveyed through the site may only gain access by the permission of the employee (e.g. teacher, administrator, supervisor or coach). Persons desiring to access the page may join only after the employee invites them and allows them to join.
 - Parents shall be permitted to access any page that their child has been invited to join.
 - Access to the page may only be permitted for educational purposes related to the club, activity, organization or team.
 - The employee responsible for the site will monitor it regularly.
 - The employee's supervisor shall be permitted access to any page established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
 - Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such district-sponsored social media activity.
3. Employees are required to refrain from making harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate statements in their social media communications on district-sponsored sites.
4. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures and all applicable laws with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or devices when accessing district-sponsored social media sites.
5. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any communication made through social media while using district computers, cellular telephones or other data devices.
6. All communications through district-sponsored social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is considering sharing information and is unsure about the confidential nature of the information, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to communicating such information.
7. An employee may not link a district-sponsored social media site or webpage to any personal social media sites or sites not sponsored by the school district.
8. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purposes.
9. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board of Education, individual school or school district, or in a manner that could be construed as such.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of the Board's policy concerning the use of social media or these administrative regulations may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

Legal References:

U.S. Constitution, Amend. I

Conn. Constitution, Article I, Sections 3, 4, 14

Conn. Gen. Stat. § [31](#)-48d

Conn. Gen. Stat. § [31](#)-51q

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ [53a](#)-182; [53a](#)-183; [53a](#)-250

Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

ADOPTED: September 10, 2012

**Series 4000
Personnel**

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media or personal online accounts under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges, for example, that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily, the use of social media by employees, including employees' use of personal online accounts, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from social media use that:

- 1) interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
- 2) is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications;
- 3) creates a hostile work environment;
- 4) breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees; or
- 5) violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board of Education, through its Superintendent, will adopt and maintain administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Legal References:

U.S. Constitution, Amend. I

Conn. Constitution, Article I, Sections 3, 4, 14

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-40x

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-48d

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-51q

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53a-182; 53a-183; 53a-250

Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

ADOPTED: _____

REVISED: _____

7/5/16

STAFF USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

(Background information for Policy Committee)

Social networking presents significant challenges to schools. These challenges are not limited solely to students. The use of social networks by school faculty and staff can provide exciting new ways to collaborate and communicate. Districts use such tools. However, care must be exercised to be sure that such tools are used, especially with students, in ways that are age-appropriate and consistent with the mission of the district and school.

School faculty and staff are expected to behave honorably in both real and online spaces. Activities which are improper, unethical, and illegal or which may cause undue discomfort for students, employees, parents/guardians or other members of the school community should be avoided in both physical space and cyberspace.

Determining what communications between teachers and students and teachers and other teachers and individuals, are appropriate, especially through the increased use of electronic devices and social-networking websites. This is an issue that districts nationwide are navigating, with policies ranging from fairly permissive to restrictive. The challenge that is faced in determining policy in this area is the speed with which new technologies are emerging. In addition, recent judicial actions, and guidance promulgated by the NLRA, the Teacher Negotiation Act, and MERA impact actions districts can take against employees' inappropriate use of social media.

Many teachers participate in social networking websites. The district's authority over staff behaviors usually does not extend to off duty hours. However, recent legal disputes indicate that this is changing. Staff members may argue that the district has no control over their off-duty behaviors. However, employee dismissal hearings and some legal decisions have allowed administrators to introduce evidence that off-duty behaviors have negatively influenced a teacher's ability to teach effectively and/or to control their classes after inappropriate materials were posted on the Internet. The scope of privacy expectation is evolving as individuals increasingly rely on technology in their daily lives.

It is important that teachers remember that they are role models and quasi-public figures. In the eyes of the communities and students, they are individuals who should be beyond reproach. An educator means living in the public eye and being held to a higher standard.

The websites and social media sites, per se, are not the problem. Many districts and organizations maintain a social networking presence. Some schools encourage teachers to use such sites to help students. However, education groups do not agree on the best approach to these sites and their use by staff.

A case in Ansonia, Connecticut in 2008 involved a teacher who created a MySpace page to communicate with students. The site had pictures on it of naked men and inappropriate captions. The teacher's contract was not renewed after being placed on leave. His challenge that his free speech rights were violated was not upheld in the U.S. District Court.

In the fast-changing world of social networking, districts will have to continue to adapt to new technologies and the uses to be made of them, and changing judicial decisions regarding the district's ability to regulate or discipline employees for what is posted on such site. The technology is and will be constantly evolving, causing the need for policy direction that will certainly need to be reexamined on a regular basis.

A sample policy to consider.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites – Version #1

The Board of Education recognizes that technological resources can enhance employee performance by offering effective tools to assist in providing a quality instructional program, facilitating communications with parents/guardians, students and the community, supporting District and school operations and improving access to and exchange of information. The Board expects all employees to learn to use the available technological resources that will assist them in the performance of their job responsibilities. As needed, employees shall receive professional development in the appropriate use of these resources. Further, employees shall be responsible for the appropriate use of technology and shall use the District's resources primarily for purposes related to their employment. Technological resources shall not be used to transmit confidential information about students, employees or District operations without authority.

Staff members will utilize social network sites, such as but not limited to, Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, judiciously by not posting confidential information about students, staff or District business. Staff members will treat fellow employees, students and the public with respect while posting. Communication with students using personal communication devices will be appropriate, professional and related to school assignments or activities. If communicating with students electronically, staff is expected to use District e-mail using mailing lists to a group of students rather than individual students. Texting students is [discouraged] [prohibited].

The Superintendent and the School Principals shall annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

- A. Improper fraternization [inappropriate communications] with students using social networking websites on the Internet.
 - 1. Teachers may not list current students as “friends” on networking sites.
 - 2. All e-contacts with students should be through the District's computer and telephone systems.
 - 3. All contacts by coaches with team members shall be sent to all team members.
 - 4. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the Superintendent or designee.
 - 5. Inappropriate contact via e-mail or telephone is prohibited.
- B. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites – Version #1 (continued)

- C. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs or alcohol.
- D. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid.
- E. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of District computers and technology.
- F. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. Further, the Board acknowledges that District employees have First Amendment rights, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern.

The Superintendent or designees will periodically conduct Internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will download the offensive material and determine the appropriate disciplinary action.

(cf. 4118.24/4218.24 – Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)
(cf. 4118.4/4218.4 – E-Mail – Electronic Monitoring)
(cf. 4118.5/4218.5 – Acceptable Computer Network Use)
(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
(cf. 5125 – Student Records)
(cf. 6141.32 – Computer Literacy)
(cf. 6141.321 – Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)
(cf. 6141.322 – Websites/Pages)
(cf. 6141.323 – Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes
 The Freedom of Information Act
 53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
 31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
 United States Code, Title 20
 675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part D, especially: 6777 Internet safety
 United States Code, Title 47
 254 Universal service discounts (E-rate)
 Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
 54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate discounts
 U.S. Constitution, 1st Amendment
 Connecticut Constitution, Article 1, Sections 3, 4, 14

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology) (continued)

Social Networking Websites – Version #2

The Board of Education (Board) strongly discourages District staff from socializing with students outside of school on social networking websites, including but not limited to MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, or dating websites.

All District employees, faculty and staff who participate in social networking websites shall not post any District data, documents, photographs, or other District owned or created information on any website. Further, the posting of any private or confidential District data is strictly prohibited.

School district employees are prohibited from engaging in any conduct on social networking websites that violates the law, Board policies, or other standards of conduct. No conduct may negatively impact or disrupt the educational environment in the school. Employees who violate this policy may face discipline and/or termination, in line with other Board policies, acceptable use agreement, and/or collective bargaining unit agreements, as applicable. [*optional*: A teacher may be recommended for dismissal if he/she has behaved in any unethical or lascivious conduct at any time; if there is a reasonable and adverse relationship between the conduct and the continuing ability of the employee to perform any of his/her professional functions in an effective manner.]

Nothing in this policy prohibits employees, faculty, staff or students from the use of approved educational websites if such sites are used solely for educational purposes.

Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited/discouraged/limited.

Social Networking Websites – Version #3

Professional standards dictate that an adult should never be alone with a student in an isolated space (e.g., one student, one teacher together in a classroom with the door closed after school operating hours). This is true in online environments as well. Social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace are structured to be closed environments, and as such the _____ School District discourages students and teachers/staff from using them to communicate with one another. The District provides websites, blogs, and email for students and teachers to communicate and collaborate. If a student or teacher desires to use a social networking site to communicate and collaborate, the District recommends using the online service Ning or Elgg (education social networks) to create a class social networking site. In such an environment, students and teachers are both protected by the monitoring of oversight of the District.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites – Version #3 (continued)

Teachers that feel that “mainstream sites” such as Facebook and MySpace will add educational value that cannot be attained without such sites, should communicate their intentions with their Principal and the parents of their students. Teachers must remember that they should not assume that all students have access to the Internet or to social networking sites, and should not use these as the sole source of communication.

Social Networking Websites – Version #4

All employees, faculty, and staff of the _____ School District who participate in social networking websites such as but not limited to MySpace or Facebook, shall not post any data, documents, photos, or inappropriate information on any website that might result in a disruption of classroom activity. This determination will be made by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Employees, faculty and staff should not give social networking website passwords to students. Fraternization [inappropriate communications] via the Internet between employees, faculty or staff and students is prohibited and a violation of any of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Nothing in this policy prohibits employees, faculty, staff or students from the use of educational websites that are used solely for educational purposes. Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited/discouraged/limited.

Policy adopted:

cps 4/10

rev 4/16

A detailed version of this sample policy to consider.

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

The Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily employee use of social media, including employees' personal use of social media, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from social media that:

1. interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
2. is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abuse, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications to harass coworkers or other members of the school community;
3. creates a hostile work environment;
4. breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees;
5. harms the goodwill and reputation of the school district in the community; or
6. violates the law, Board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board of Education therefore adopts the following guidelines for the use of social media by Board of Education employees.

Definitions:

- **Social media** includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace.
- **Board of Education** includes all names, logos, buildings, images and entities under the authority of the Board of Education.

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity

1. An employee may not mention, discuss or reference the Board of Education, the school district or its individual schools, programs or teams on personal social networking sites, unless the employee also states that the post is the personal communication of the employee of the school district and that the views posted are the employee's alone and do not represent the views of the school district or the Board of Education.
2. Employees must refrain from mentioning other Board of Education employees or other members of the school community (e.g., parents or others) on personal social networking sites, without such individuals' express consent unless the employee is addressing an issue of public concern and the employee's speech falls under applicable constitutional protections pertaining to same.
3. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, parents, and colleagues. For example, it is not appropriate for a teacher or administrator to "friend" a student or his/her parent or guardian or otherwise establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media, and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students or parents access to personal postings unrelated to school.
4. Unless given written consent, employees may not use the Board of Education's logo or trademarks on their personal posts. Please note that this prohibition extends to the use of logos or trademarks associated with individual schools, programs or teams of the school district.
5. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their personal social media posts; and to refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications. Such posts reflect poorly on the school district's reputation, can affect the educational process and may substantially and materially interfere with an employee's ability to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities.
6. Employees are individually responsible for their personal posts on social media. Employees may be sued by other employees, parents or others, and any individual that views an employee's social media posts as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. As such activities are outside the scope of employment, employees may be personally liable for such claims.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity (continued)

7. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or electronic devices when accessing social media sites. Any access to personal social media activities while on school property or using school district equipment must comply with those policies, and may not interfere with an employee's duties at work.
8. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication or post made through social media while using computers, cellular telephones or other electronic data devices that are the property of the school district.
9. All posts on personal social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.
10. An employee may not link a personal social media site or webpage to the Board of Education's website or the websites of individual schools, programs or teams; or post Board of Education material on a social media site or webpage without written permission of his/her supervisor.
11. All Board of Education policies that regulate off-duty conduct apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to public trust, illegal harassment, code of conduct, and protecting confidential information.

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity

1. If an employee seeks to use social media sites as an educational tool or in relation to extracurricular activities or programs of the school district, the employee must seek and obtain the permission of his/her supervisor prior to setting up the site.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

2. If an employee wishes to use Facebook or other similar social media site to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity or an official school-based organization, the employee must also comply with the following rules:
 - a. The employee must set up the club, etc. as a group list which will be “closed and moderated.”
 - b. Members will not be established as “friends” but as members of the group list.
 - c. Anyone who has access to the communications conveyed through the site may only gain access by the permission of the employee (e.g. teacher, administrator or supervisor). Persons desiring to access the page may join only after the employee invites them and allows them to join.
 - d. Parents shall be permitted to access any site that their child has been invited to join.
 - e. Access to the site may only be permitted for educational purposes related to the club, activity, organization or team.
 - f. The employee responsible for the site will monitor it regularly.
 - g. The employee’s supervisor shall be permitted access to any site established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
 - h. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such district-sponsored social media activity.
3. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their social media posts on district-sponsored sites; and to refrain from harassing defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications.
4. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures and all applicable laws with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or devices when accessing district-sponsored social media sites.
5. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any communication or post made through social media while using computers, cellular telephones or other data devices that are the property of the school district.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

6. All posts on district-sponsored social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.
7. An employee may not link a district-sponsored social media site or webpage to any personal social media sites or sites not sponsored by the school district.
8. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purpose.
9. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board of Education, individual school or school district, or in a manner that could be construed as such.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of this policy may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

(cf. 4118.24/4218.24 – Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)
(cf. 4118.4/4218.4 – E-Mail – Electronic Monitoring)
(cf. 4118.5/4218.5 – Acceptable Computer Network Use)
(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
(cf. 5125 – Student Records)
(cf. 6141.32 – Computer Literacy)
(cf. 6141.321 – Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)
(cf. 6141.322 – Websites/Pages)
(cf. 6141.323 – Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking – Version #5

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 The Freedom of Information Act
 53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
 31-48d – Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give
 prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
 United States Code, Title 20
 675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part
 D, especially: 6777 Internet Safety
 United States Code, Title 47
 254 Universal Service Discounts (E-rate)
 Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
 54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate
 discounts
 U.S. Constitution, 1st Amendment
 Connecticut Constitution, Article 1, Sections 3, 4, 14

Policy adopted:

cps 3/11
rev 4/16

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

A new policy pertaining to this topic.

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Social Networking

The Board of Education (Board) has a strong commitment to quality education and the well-being of all students, as well as the preservation of the school district's reputation. The Board believes staff members must establish and maintain public trust and confidence and be committed to protecting all students attending the school district. In support of the Board's strong commitment to the public's trust and confidence, the Board holds all staff members to the highest level of professional responsibility.

Inappropriate conduct outside a staff member's professional responsibilities may determine them as unfit to discharge the duties and functions of their position. Staff members should be advised communications, publications, photographs, and other information appearing on social networking sites deemed inappropriate by the Board could be cause for discipline up to and including termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

Staff members are advised to be concerned and aware such conduct deemed inappropriate may include, but is not limited to, communications and/or publications using e-mails, text-messaging, social networking sites, or any other form of electronic communication that is directed and/or available to students or for public display or publication.

While the Board respects the right of staff members to use social networking sites, staff members should recognize they are held to a higher standard than the general public with regard to standards of conduct and ethics. It is important that a staff member's use of these sites does not damage the reputation of the school district, employees, students, or their families. Staff members who utilize, post or publish images, photographs, or comments on social networking sites, blogs, or other forms of electronic communication outside their professional responsibilities shall ensure their use, postings, or publications are done with an appropriate level of professionalism and are appropriate conduct for a school staff member. Staff members should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding that what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public even without their knowledge or consent.

The school district strongly encourages all staff members to carefully review the privacy settings on social networking sites they use and exercise care and good judgement when posting content and information on such sites. Staff members should adhere to the following guidelines, which are consistent with the District's workplace standards on harassment, student relationships, conduct, professional communication, and confidentiality.

When using personal social networking sites, school staff members:

1. Should not make statements that would violate any of the district's policies, including its policies concerning discrimination or harassment;

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Social Networking (continued)

2. Must uphold the district's value of respect for the individual and avoid making defamatory statements about the school district, employees, students, or their families;
3. May not disclose any confidential information about the school district or confidential information obtained during the course of his/her employment, about any individual(s) or organization, including students and/or their families;
4. Shall not use social networking sites to post any materials of a sexually graphic nature;
5. Shall not use social networking sites to post any materials which promote violence;
6. Shall not use social networking sites which would be detrimental to the mission and function of the District;
7. Are prohibited from using their school district title as well as adding references to the District in any correspondence including, but not limited to, e-mails, postings, blogs, and social networking sites unless the communication is of an official nature and is serving the mission of the district. This prohibition also includes signature lines and personal e-mail accounts;
8. Shall not post updates to their status on any social networking sites during normal working hours including posting of statements or comments on the social networking sites of others during school time unless it involves a school project. Employees must seek approval from the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee for such use; and
9. Shall not post or publish any information the Superintendent would deem to be inappropriate conduct by a school staff member.

The Policy of this district is to maintain a level of professionalism both during and after the school day. Any publication through any means of electronic communication which is potentially adverse to the operation, morale, or efficiency of the District, will be deemed a violation of this Policy. If the Board or Superintendent believes that a staff member's activity on any social networking site violates the District's policies, the Board or Superintendent may request that the employee cease such activity. Depending on the severity of the incident, the staff member may be subject to disciplinary action.

This Policy has been developed and adopted by this Board to provide guidance and direction to staff members on how to avoid actual and/or the appearance of inappropriate conduct toward students and/or the community while using social networking sites.

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Social Networking (continued)

(cf. 4118.24/4218.24 – Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)
(cf. 4118.4/4218.4 – E-Mail – Electronic Monitoring)
(cf. 4118.5/4218.5 – Acceptable Computer Network Use)
(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
(cf. 5125 – Student Records)
(cf. 6141.32 – Computer Literacy)
(cf. 6141.321 – Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)
(cf. 6141.322 – Websites/Pages)
(cf. 6141.323 – Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes
 The Freedom of Information Act
 53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
 31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior
 notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
 United States Code, Title 20
 675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part
 D, especially: 6777 Internet safety
 United States Code, Title 47
 254 Universal service discounts (E-rate)
 Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
 54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate
 discounts
 U.S. Constitution, 1st Amendment
 Connecticut Constitution, Article 1, Sections 3, 4, 14

Policy adopted:

cps 4/16

A version from Stafford to consider.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

The Stafford Board of Education recognizes and respects the First Amendment Rights of its employees and recognizes and acknowledges that its employees have the right to speak out on matters of public concern through any and all media including, but not limited to, social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.). However, Stafford Public School employees who engage in personal use of social media should be aware that inappropriate content authored by employees which interferes with the educational mission of the school district is not acceptable and is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 The Freedom of Information Act
 53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
 31-48d – Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give
 prior notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
 United States Code, Title 20
 675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part
 D, especially: 6777 Internet Safety
 United States Code, Title 47
 254 Universal Service Discounts (E-rate)
 Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
 54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate
 discounts
 U.S. Constitution, 1st Amendment
 Connecticut Constitution, Article 1, Sections 3, 4, 14

Policy adopted: January 23, 2012
cps 11/12
rev 4/16

STAFFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Stafford Springs, Connecticut

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

Berlin's version of this policy to consider.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

The Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges, for example, that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily, the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from social media use that:

- 1) interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
- 2) is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications;
- 3) creates a hostile work environment;
- 4) breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees; or
- 5) violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board of Education, through its Superintendent, will adopt and maintain administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 The Freedom of Information Act
 53A-182b Harassment in the first degree.
 31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior
 notice to employees. Exceptions. Civil penalty.
 U.S. Constitution, Article I, Sections 3, 4, 14

Policy adopted: January 27, 2014

cps 3/14
rev 4/16

BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Berlin, Connecticut

Another version of this policy.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites

The Board of Education recognizes and respects the First Amendment Rights of its employees and acknowledges that its employees have the right, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern through any and all media, including social media. The Board of Education also recognizes that inappropriate content authored by employees can interfere with the educational process. Therefore, _____ Public School employees who engage in personal use of social media should be aware that any use which interferes with the educational mission of the district, breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees, or harms the goodwill and reputation of the school district in the community is not acceptable and may be subject to District disciplinary action against the employee.

(cf. 4118.24/4218.24 – Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)
(cf. 4118.4/4218.4 – E-Mail – Electronic Monitoring)
(cf. 4118.5/4218.5 – Acceptable Computer Network Use)
(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
(cf. 5125 – Student Records)
(cf. 6141.32 – Computer Literacy)
(cf. 6141.321 – Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)
(cf. 6141.322 – Websites/Pages)
(cf. 6141.323 – Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes
 The Freedom of Information Act
 53A-182B Harassment in the first degree.
 31-48d – Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give
 prior notice to employees. Exemptions. Civil penalty.
 United States Code, Title 20
 675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part
 D, especially: 6777 Internet safety
 United States Code, Title 47
 254 Universal service discounts (E-rate)
 Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
 54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate
 discounts

Policy adopted:

cps 11/10
rev 4/16

Another version of this policy originally developed by the law firm of Shipman and Goodwin.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of social media for its employees, and acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. However, the Board will regulate the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, when such use:

1. interferes with the work of the school district;
2. is used to harass coworkers or other members of the school community;
3. creates a hostile work environment;
4. breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees;
5. disrupts the work of the school district;
6. harms the goodwill and reputation of the school district in the community; or
7. violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

The Board of Education therefore adopts the following guidelines for the use of social media by Board of Education employees.

Definitions:

Social media includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace.

Board of Education includes all names, logos, buildings, images and entities under the authority of the Board of Education.

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity

1. An employee may not mention, discuss or reference the Board of Education, the school district or its individual schools, programs or teams on personal social networking sites, unless the employee also states that the post is the personal communication of the employee of the school district and that the views posted are the employee's alone and do not represent the views of the school district or the Board of Education.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

Definitions (continued)

2. Employees must refrain from mentioning other Board of Education employees or other members of the school community (e.g., parents or others) on personal social networking sites, without such individuals' express consent unless the employee is addressing an issue of public concern and the employee's speech falls under applicable constitutional protections pertaining to same.
3. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, parents, and colleagues. For example, it is not appropriate for a teacher or administrator to "friend" a student or his/her parent or guardian or otherwise establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media, and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students or parents access to personal postings unrelated to school.
4. Unless given written consent, employees may not use the Board of Education's logo or trademarks on their personal posts. Please note that this prohibition extends to the use of logos or trademarks associated with individual schools, programs or teams of the school district.
5. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their personal social media posts; and to refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications. Such posts reflect poorly on the school district's reputation, can affect the educational process and may substantially and materially interfere with an employee's ability to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities.
6. Employees are individually responsible for their personal posts on social media. Employees may be sued by other employees, parents or others, and any individual that views an employee's social media posts as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. As such activities are outside the scope of employment, employees may be personally liable for such claims.
7. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or electronic devices when accessing social media sites. Any access to personal social media activities while on school property or using school district equipment must comply with those policies, and may not interfere with an employee's duties at work.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

Definitions (continued)

8. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication or post made through social media while using computers, cellular telephones or other electronic data devices that are the property of the school district.
9. All posts on personal social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.
10. An employee may not link a personal social media site or webpage to the Board of Education's website or the websites of individual schools, programs or teams; or post Board of Education material on a social media site or webpage without written permission of his/her supervisor.
11. All Board of Education policies that regulate off-duty conduct apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to public trust, illegal harassment, code of conduct, and protecting confidential information.

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity

1. If an employee seeks to use social media sites as an educational tool or in relation to extracurricular activities or programs of the school district, the employee must seek and obtain the permission of his/her supervisor prior to setting up the site.
2. If an employee wishes to use Facebook or other similar social media site to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity or an official school-based organization, the employee must also comply with the following rules:
 - The employee must set up the club, etc. as a group list which will be "closed and moderated."
 - Members will not be established as "friends," but as members of the group list.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

- Anyone who has access to the communications conveyed through the site may only gain access by the permission of the employee (e.g. teacher, administrator or supervisor). Persons desiring to access the page may join only after the employee invites them and allows them to join.
 - Parents shall be permitted to access any site that their child has been invited to join.
 - Access to the site may only be permitted for educational purposes related to the club, activity, organization or team.
 - The employee responsible for the site will monitor it regularly.
 - The employee's supervisor shall be permitted access to any site established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
 - Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such district-sponsored social media activity.
3. Employees are required to use appropriately respectful speech in their social media posts on district-sponsored sites; and to refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening or other inappropriate communications.
 4. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures and all applicable laws with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or devices when accessing district-sponsored social media sites.
 5. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any communication or post made through social media while using computers, cellular telephones or other data devices that are the property of the school district.
 6. All posts on district-sponsored social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information the employee is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

7. An employee may not link a district-sponsored social media site or webpage to any personal social media sites or sites not sponsored by the school district.
8. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purpose.
9. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board of Education, individual school or school district, or in a manner that could be construed as such.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of this policy may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes
 31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees
 31-51q Liability of employers for discipline or discharge of employee or account of employee's exercise of certain constitutional rights
 53a-182 Obstructing free passage: Class C misdemeanor
 53a-183 Harassment in the second degree: Class C misdemeanor
 53a-182b Harassment in the first degree.
 53a-250 Definitions
 U.S. Constitution, Amend. I
 Connecticut Constitution, Article I, Sections 3,4,14
 Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§2510 through 2520

Policy adopted:

cps 11/10

A version of this policy from Region 5 to consider.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites

The Board of Education recognizes and respects the First Amendment Rights of its employees and acknowledges that its employees have the right to speak out on matters of public concern through any and all media, including social media.

The Board of Education recognizes that technological resources can enhance employee performance by offering effective tools to assist in providing a quality instructional program, facilitating communications with parents/guardians, students and the community, supporting District and school operations and improving access to and exchange of information. The Board expects all employees to learn to use the available technological resources that will assist them in the performance of their job responsibilities. As needed, employees shall receive professional development in the appropriate use of these resources. Further, employees shall be responsible for the appropriate use of technology and shall use the District's resources primarily for purposes related to their employment. Technological resources shall not be used to transmit confidential information about students, employees or District operations without authority.

In using electronic applications, including but not limited to social network sites, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, staff members must do so judiciously by not posting confidential information about students, staff or District business. Staff members will treat fellow employees, students and the public with respect while posting. As with any communication with students, e-communication will be appropriate, professional and related to school assignments or activities. Teachers/staff will keep their immediate supervisor informed about electronic applications used for instructional purposes.

The Administration shall annually remind current staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

- A. Improper fraternization and/or inappropriate communications/postings with students (or that students or families can access) using social networking websites on the Internet.
 - 1. Staff may not list current Amity students as "friends" on networking sites.
 - 2. Routine e-contacts with students should be through the District's computer system.
 - 3. Inappropriate contact via e-mail or telephone is prohibited.
- B. Prohibition of posting items with sexual content.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites (continued)

- C. Prohibition of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs or inappropriate use of alcohol.
- D. Penalties for improper communication or use of District computers and technology.
 - 1. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the administration will download the offensive material and the Superintendent will determine the appropriate disciplinary action.

(cf. 4118.24/4218.24 - Staff/Student Non-Fraternization)

(cf. 4118.4/4218.4 - E-Mail - Electronic Monitoring)

(cf. 4118.5/4218.5 - Acceptable Computer Network Use)

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 6141.32 - Computer Literacy)

(cf. 6141.321 - Student Acceptable Use of the Internet)

(cf. 6141.322 - Websites/Pages)

(cf. 6141.323 - Internet Safety Policy/Filtering)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
The Freedom of Information Act
53A-182b Harassment in the first degree.
P.A. 98-142 An Act Requiring Notice to Employees of Electronic Monitoring by Employers.
United States Code, Title 20
675 1-6777 Enhancing Education Through Technology Act, Title II, Part D, especially: 6777 Internet safety
United States Code, Title 47
254 Universal service discounts (E-rate)
Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47
54.520 Internet safety policy and technology protection measures, E-rate discounts

Policy adopted:

cps 10/11

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

A sample administrative regulation to consider.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Social Media

The _____ Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in the Board's policy or these administrative regulations is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges that its employees have the right under the First Amendment in certain circumstances to speak on matters of public concern. However, the Board will regulate the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, regardless of whether or not the technology used belongs to the District, when such use:

1. Interferes, disrupts or undermines the educational process;
2. Engages in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abuse, discriminatory or threatening or similarity inappropriate;
3. Breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees;
4. Creates a hostile work environment;
5. Violates the law, Board policies and/or other school rules and regulations;
6. Disparages the reputation of the school district or district employee; or
7. Is inconsistent with professional codes of conduct.

The _____ Board of Education, therefore, adopts the following guidelines for the use of social media by Board employees.

Definitions

Administration includes the Superintendent or designee;

Social Media includes a variety of online tools and services that allow users to publish content and interact with their audiences. For the purpose of this policy, the terms "social software" and "social media" may be used interchangeably. The rapid growth of technology continuously evolves and it makes it difficult to identify all types of social media.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

Definitions (continued)

Examples are social networking sites such as Facebook, Linked In, Google +; blogs and micro-blogs such as Twitter and Tumblr; content sharing sites such as Scribd, SlideShare; and image sharing and videos having sites such as Flickr, YouTube, Instagram, Vine, and Pinterest.

Board of Education includes all names, logos, buildings, images and entities under the authority of the Board of Education.

Guidelines Concerning Social Media Activity Sponsored by District Schools

If an employee wishes to use social media sites for instruction to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements, etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity, or an official school-based organization, or for an official sports team, regardless of whether or not the technology used belongs to the District, the employee must also comply with the following rules:

- The employee must seek and obtain the permission of his/her administrator prior to setting up the site.
- The employee must set up the club, etc., as a group, accessible by all members of the school community. The employee will assume full responsibility for monitoring the social media site. Any changes from the original approved proposal must receive prior approval of the employee's administrator.
- Parents must be permitted to access any pages that their child has been invited to join.
- In the event that the social media site is no longer being utilized, the site manager must close it.
- Access to the site may only be permitted for educational purposes related to instruction, the club, activity, organization, or team.
- The employee's supervisor shall be permitted access to any site established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
- Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such district-sponsored social media activity.
- The District reserves the right to direct the employee to close the site in the event of mismanagement, misconduct, misuse or any other behavior addressed by this policy.
- In the event that the employee becomes aware of mismanagement or misuse of the site, he/she will immediately close the site and report the incident to his/her administrator.
- Employees may not link a district-sponsored social media page to any personal social media site or sites not sponsored by the District.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

Guidelines Concerning Social Media Activity Sponsored by District Schools (continued)

- An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purposes.
- An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board of Education, individual school or school district or in a manner that could be construed as such.

In addition to the above Guidelines Concerning Social Media Activity Sponsored by the District, the following guidelines apply to Personal Social Media Activity:

1. The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in the digital world. While online and by virtue of being a District employee, the employee may be connected to colleagues, students, parents and the school community. Therefore, you must ensure that content associated with him/her is consistent with the work he/she does in District in accordance with the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibilities for Educators. Employees must also ensure their profile and related content is consistent with how they wish to present themselves with colleagues, parents, and students. Employees must remember that how they represent themselves online should be comparable to how they represent themselves as a professional person.
2. Employees are required to comply with all Board policies and procedures with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks, or electronic devices when accessing social media sites while on school property. Any access to personal social media activities while on school property or using school district equipment must comply with those policies and may not interfere with an employee's duties and work.
3. The Administration has the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other district electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication or post made through social media while using district computers, district cellular telephones or other district information technology, as noted in the Acceptable Use Agreement. All posts on personal social media must comply with Board policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is unsure about the confidential nature of information he/she is considering posting, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to making the post.

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

Guidelines Concerning Social Media Activity Sponsored by District Schools (continued)

4. Employees are required to maintain professional boundaries with students, parents and colleagues. It is not appropriate for a staff member to “friend” a student or his/her guardian or to establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students or parents access to personal postings unrelated to school.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of this policy, or these administrative regulations, may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with State and federal law.

(cf. 6141.2 - Computer Acceptable Use Policy)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 1-19(b)(11) Access to public records. Exempt records
 10-15b Access of parent and guardians to student’s records
 10-184 Duties of parents
 10-209 Records not to be public
 10-220 Duties of Boards of Education
 11-8a Retention, destruction and transfer of documents
 11-8b Transfer or disposal of public records; State Library Board to adopt Regulations
 Section 46b-56(e) Access to Records of Minors
 31-48d Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees
 Section 53a-182b through Section 53a-183, Computer Related Offenses, as amended by Public Act 95-143, An Act Concerning harassment by Computer and Possession of Child Pornography
 Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended, added by section 513 of PL 93-568, codified at 20 U.S.C. 1232g.)

Personnel-Certified/Non Certified

Social Media

Legal Reference: (continued)

Dept. of Education 34 CFR Part 99 (May 9, 1980 45 FR 30802) regs. implementing FERPA enacted as part of 438 of General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g)-parent and student privacy and other rights with respect to educational records, as amended 11/21/96.

Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 (HR 4577, P.L.106-554) Communications Act of 1934, as amended (47 U.S.C. 254[h],[I])

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6801 et seq., Part F)

Public Law 94-553, the Copyright Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. 101 et. seq.

Regulation approved:

cps 4/16

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

A sample administrative regulation to consider/modify.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites

District employees are expected to behave honorably in online activities. Activities which are improper, unethical, and illegal or which may cause undue discomfort for students, employees, parents or other members of the school community should be avoided in both physical space and cyberspace. To that end, the following guidelines for school employees who use online social networking applications which may be frequented by current or former students are offered.

Guidelines for the use of social networking sites by professional staff:

1. Do not accept students as “friends” on personal social networking sites. Decline any student-initiated friend requests.
2. Do not initiate friendships with students.
3. Remember that people classified as “friends” have the ability to download and share your information with others. Post only what you want the world to see. Imagine your students, their parents, your administrator, visiting your site. It is not like posting something to your web site or blog and then realizing that a story or photo should be taken down. On a social networking site, basically once you post something it may be available, even after it is removed from the site.
4. Do not discuss students or co-workers or publicly criticize school policies or personnel.
5. Visit your profile’s security and privacy settings. At a minimum, educators should have all privacy settings set to “only friends.” “Friends of Friends” and “Networks and Friends” open your content to a large group of unknown people. Your privacy and that of your family may be a risk.
6. Exercise appropriate discretion when using social networks for personal communications with the knowledge that adult behavior on social networks may be used as a model by students.
7. Understand that the uneven power dynamics of the school, in which adults have authority over former students, continues to shape those relationships.
8. Remind all members of your network of your position as an educator whose profile may be accessed by current or former students, and to monitor their posts to your network accordingly. Conversely, be judicious in your postings to all friends’ sites, and act immediately to remove any material that may be inappropriate from your site whether posted by you or someone else.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Social Networking Websites (continued)

Guidelines for the use of educational networking sites by professional staff:

1. Let your administrator, fellow teachers and parents know about your educational network.
2. When available, use school-supported networking tools.
3. Do not say or do anything that you would not say or do in as a teacher in the classroom. (Remember that all online communications are stored and can be monitored.)
4. Have a clear statement of purpose and outcomes for the use of the networking tool.
5. Establish a code of conduct for all network participants.
6. Do not post images that include students without parental release forms on file.
7. Pay close attention to the site's security settings and allow only approved participants access to the site.

Guidelines for all networking sites by professional staff:

1. Do not use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous. Exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterizations.
2. Weigh whether a particular posting puts your effectiveness as a teacher at risk.
3. Due to security risks, be cautious when installing the external applications that work with the social networking site. Examples of these sites are calendar programs and games.
4. Run updated malware protection to avoid infections of spyware and adware that social networking sites might place on your computer.
5. Be careful not to fall for phishing scams that arrive via email or on your wall, providing a link for you to click, leading to a fake login page.
6. If a staff member learns of information, on the social networking site that falls under the mandatory reporting guidelines they must report it as required by law.

Regulation approved:

cps 4/10

Berlin's recent version of this administrative regulation to consider/modify.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media

The Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in the Board's policy or these administrative regulations is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges, for example, that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between the Board's policy or these regulations and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily, the use of social media by employees, including employees' personal use of social media, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy or regulation cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from social media use that:

- 1) interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
- 2) is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications;
- 3) creates a hostile work environment;
- 4) breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees; or
- 5) violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

Definitions

The rapid speed at which technology continuously evolves makes it difficult, if not impossible, to identify all types of social media.

Thus, the term Social Media includes a variety of online tools and services that allow users to publish content and interact with their audiences. By way of example, social media includes:

- 1) social-networking sites (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+);
- 2) blogs and micro-blogs (i.e. Twitter, Tumblr);
- 3) content-sharing sites (i.e. Scribd, SlideShare); and
- 4) image-sharing and video-sharing sites (i.e. Flickr, YouTube, Instagram, Vine, Pinterest).

Board of Education includes all names, logos, buildings, images and entities under the authority of the Board of Education.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media (continued)

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity

1. In order for an employee to use social media sites as an educational tool or in relation to extracurricular activities or programs of the school district, the employee must seek and obtain the prior permission of his/her supervisor.
2. If an employee wishes to use social media sites to communicate meetings, activities, games, responsibilities, announcements etc., for a school-based club or a school-based activity or an official school-based organization, or an official sports team, the employee must also comply with the following rules:
 - The employee must set up the club, etc. as a group list which will be “closed” (e.g. membership in the group is limited to students, parents and appropriate school personnel), and “monitored” (e.g. the employee had the ability to access and supervise communications on the social media site).
 - Parents shall be permitted to access any page that their child has been invited to join.
 - Access to the page may only be permitted for educational purposes related to the club, activity, organization or team.
 - The employee responsible for the page will monitor it regularly.
 - The employee’s supervisor shall be permitted access to any page established by the employee for a school-related purpose.
 - Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the establishment and maintenance of all such district-sponsored social media activity.
3. Employees are required to refrain from making harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate statements in their social media communications on district-sponsored sites.
4. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures and all applicable laws with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or devices when accessing district-sponsored social media sites.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media

Rules Concerning District-Sponsored Social Media Activity (continued)

5. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including employee blogging and social networking activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any communication made through social media while using district computers, cellular telephones or other data devices.
6. All communications through district-sponsored social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is considering sharing information and is unsure about the confidential nature of the information, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to communicating such information.
7. An employee may not link a district-sponsored social media page to any personal social media sites or sites not sponsored by the school district.
8. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications for private financial gain, political, commercial, advertisement, proselytizing or solicitation purposes.
9. An employee may not use district-sponsored social media communications in a manner that misrepresents personal views as those of the Board of Education, individual school or school district, or in a manner that could be construed as such.

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity

1. The Board understands that employees utilize social media and the web for personal matters in the workplace. The Board of Education reserves the right to monitor all employee use of district computers and other electronic devices, including a review of employee blogging and personal social media activity. An employee should have no expectation of personal privacy in any personal communication made through social media while using district computers, cellular telephones or other electronic data devices. While the Board reserves the right to monitor use of its computer systems, employees may engage in incidental personal use of social media in the workplace so long as such use does not interfere with operations and productivity, and does not violate other Board policies.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity (continued)

2. An employee may not mention, discuss or reference the Board of Education, the school district or its individual schools, programs or teams on personal social networking sites in a manner that could reasonably be construed as an official school district communication, unless the employee also states within the communication that such communication is the personal view of the employee of the school district and that the views expressed are the employee's alone and do not represent the views of the school district or the Board of Education. An example of such a disclaimer is: "the opinions and views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the position or opinion of the school district or Board of Education." For example, except as may be permitted by Board policy, employees may not provide job references for other individuals on social media that indicate that such references are made in an official capacity on behalf of the Board of Education.
3. Employees are required to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students, parents, and colleagues. For example, absent an unrelated online relationship (e.g., relative, family friend, or personal friendship unrelated to school), it is not appropriate for a teacher or administrator to "friend" a student or his/her parent or guardian or otherwise establish special relationships with selected students through personal social media, and it is not appropriate for an employee to give students or parents access to personal postings unrelated to school.
4. In accordance with the public trust doctrine, employees are advised to refrain from engaging in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications through personal social media. Such communications reflect poorly on the school district's reputation, can affect the educational process and may substantially and materially interfere with an employee's ability to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities.
5. Employees are individually responsible for their personal communications through personal social media. Employees may be sued by other employees, parents or others, and any individual that views an employee's communication through personal social media as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition, employees should consider refraining from posting anything that belongs to another person or entity, such as copyrighted publications or trademarked images. As all of these activities are outside the scope of employment, employees may be personally liable for such claims.

Personnel - Certified-Non-Certified

Rights, Responsibilities and Duties

Acceptable Computer Network Use (Employee Use of Technology)

Use of Social Media

Rules Concerning Personal Social Media Activity (continued)

6. Employees are required to comply with all Board of Education policies and procedures with respect to the use of computer equipment, networks or electronic devices when accessing personal social media sites through district computer systems. Any access to personal social media activities while on school property or using school district equipment must comply with those policies, and may not interfere with an employee's duties at work.
7. All communications through personal social media must comply with the Board of Education's policies concerning confidentiality, including the confidentiality of student information. If an employee is considering sharing information and is unsure about the confidential nature of the information, the employee shall consult with his/her supervisor prior to communicating such information.
8. An employee may not link a personal social media page to the Board of Education's website or the websites of individual schools, programs or teams; or post official Board of Education material on a personal social media site or webpage without written permission of his/her supervisor.
9. All of the Board of Education's policies and administrative regulations apply to employee use of personal social media in the same way that they apply to conduct that occurs in the workplace and off duty conduct.

Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of the Board's policy concerning the use of social media or these administrative regulations may lead to discipline up to and including the termination of employment consistent with state and federal law.

Legal References: U.S. Constitution, Amend. I
Conn. Constitution, Article I, Sections 3, 4, 14
Conn. Gen. Stat. §31-48d
Conn. Gen. Stat. §31-51q
Conn. Gen. Stat. §§53a-182; 53a-183; 53a-250
Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§2510 through 2520

Regulation approved: January 27, 2014
cps 7/14

BERLIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Berlin, Connecticut

Students**Electronic Devices****Use of Private Technology Devices by Students**

Students may possess privately owned technological devices on school property and/or during school sponsored activities, in accordance with the mandates of this policy and any applicable administrative regulations as may be developed by the Superintendent of Schools. The _____ Board of Education ("Board") considers allowing students to bring to school such devices to be a privilege and not a right. The Board reserves the right to revoke this privilege if a student fails to adhere to the following guidelines and/or the Board's acceptable use and student discipline policies.

Parents and/or guardians must read and sign the attached agreement form before a student may be permitted to bring to school a privately owned technological device.

Definitions**Board Technology Resources**

For the purposes of this policy, "Board Technology Resources" refers to the Board's computers and instructional technologies; communications and data management systems; informational technologies and the Internet; and any other technology resources used by the school district and accessible by students.

Privately Owned Technological Devices

For the purposes of this policy, "Privately Owned Technological Devices" refers to privately owned wireless and/or portable electronic hand-held equipment that can be used for word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture and recording, sound recording, information transmitting and/or receiving, storing, etc. These devices may include, but are not limited to, personal laptops, Smartphones, network access devices, Kindles, Nooks, cellular telephones, radios, walkmen, CD players and walkie-talkies, Blackberries, personal data assistants, I-Phones and other electronic signaling devices.

Use of Privately Owned Technological Devices

Privately owned technological devices may not be used during instructional time, except as specifically permitted by instructional staff. Privately owned technological devices may not be used during school recess or on a school bus.

Use of any such device for an improper purpose is prohibited. Improper purposes include, but are not limited to:

- Sending any form of harassing, threatening, or intimidating message, at any time, to any person (such communications may also be a crime);
- Gaining or seeking to gain unauthorized access to Board technology resources;
- Damaging Board technology resources;
- Accessing or attempting to access any material that is obscene or contains pornography;
- Cyberbullying;
- Taking pictures without the specific permission of the subject of the picture;
- Using a privately owned technological device to violate any school rules, including the unauthorized recording (photographic or audio) of another individual without the permission of the individual or a school staff member; or
- Taking any action prohibited by any Federal or State law.

Search of Privately Owned Technological Devices

A student's privately owned technological device may be searched if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Any such search shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

Responsibility for Privately Owned Technological Devices

Students are responsible for the safety and use of their privately owned technological devices. If a privately owned technological device is stolen, lost, or damaged, a report should be made to the building principal, who will investigate the loss in a manner consistent with procedures for stolen or damaged personal property. Students and parents should be aware that the Board is not liable for any privately owned technological device that is stolen, lost, or damaged while at school. Furthermore, the Board shall not be liable for any data plan charges or any other costs associated with the use of private technological devices. For that reason, students are advised not to share or loan their privately owned technological devices with other students.

Students shall take full responsibility for their device and shall keep it safely stored when not in use. Classroom teachers will determine the best storage location for such devices. Students are required to take home their privately owned technological devices at the end of each school day.

Disciplinary Action

Misuse of the Board's technology resources and/or the use of privately owned technological devices to access or utilize the Board's technology resources in an inappropriate manner or in a manner inconsistent with this policy will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. For students, a violation of this policy may result in loss of access privileges, a prohibition on the use and/or possession of privately owned technological devices on school property, and/or suspension or expulsion in accordance with the Board's policies related to student discipline.

Access to Board Technology Resources

It is the policy of the _____ Board of Education to permit students, using their privately owned technology devices, to access the Board's computers and instructional technologies; communications and data management systems; informational technologies and the Internet; and any other technology resources used by the school district and accessible by students. Additionally, it is the expectation of the Board of Education that students who access these resources while using privately owned technology devices will act at all times appropriately in ways which are fully in accord with applicable policies concerning technology use as well as all local, state, and federal laws.

Through the publication and dissemination of this policy statement and others related to use of the Board's computer systems, as well as other instructional means, the Board educates students about the Board's expectations for technology users.

The Board technology resources shall only be used to access educational information and to promote learning activities both at home and at school. The Board considers access to its technology resources to be a privilege and not a right. Students are expected to act at all times appropriately in ways which are fully in accord with applicable policies concerning technology use as well as all local, state, and federal laws when using the Board technology resources. Failure to do so will result in the consequences outlined herein and in other applicable policies (including, but not limited to, the Safe School Climate Plan, the Student Discipline Policy and the Use of Computers Policy).

Students must abide by the procedures outlined in this policy and all policies and applicable regulations outlined in the Board's computer use and other applicable policies. Students will be given specific information for log-on and access procedures using school accounts. No user may deviate from these log-on/access procedures. Students are advised that the Board's network administrators have the capability to identify users and to monitor all privately owned technological devices while they are logged on to the network. Students must understand that the Board has reserved the right to conduct monitoring of Board technology resources and can do so despite the assignment to individual users of passwords for system security. Any password systems implemented by the Board are designed solely to provide system security from unauthorized users, not to provide privacy to the individual system user. The system's security aspects, message delete function and personal passwords can be bypassed for monitoring purposes. Therefore, students should be aware that they should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of privately owned technological devices to access Board technology resources. This provision applies to any and all uses of the Board's technology resources and that any privately owned technological devices access same.

Harm to Board Technology Resources

Any act by a student using a privately owned technological device that harms the Board's technology resources or otherwise interferes with or compromises the integrity of Board technology resources will be considered vandalism and will be subject to discipline and/or appropriate criminal or civil action.

Closed Forum

This policy shall not be construed to establish a public forum or a limited open forum.

(cf. [5114](#) - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)

(cf. [5131](#) - Conduct)

(cf. [5131.8](#) - Off School Grounds Misconduct)

(cf. 5131.82 - Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material)

(cf. [5131.911](#) - Bullying)

(cf. 5131.913 - Cyberbullying)

(cf. 5144 - Discipline/Punishment)

(cf. [5145.5](#) - Sexual Harassment)

(cf. [5145.51](#) - Peer Sexual Harassment)

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-233j](#) Student possession and use of telecommunications devices

[31-48d](#) Employees engaged in electronic monitoring required to give prior notice to employees.

[53a-182](#) Obstructing free passage: Class C misdemeanor.

[53a-183](#) Harassment in the second degree: Class C misdemeanor.

[53a-250](#) Definitions.

Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 28 U.S.C. §§2510 through 2520.

Eisner v. Stamford Board of Education, 440 F. 2d 803 (2nd Cir 1971)

Trachtman v. Anker, 563 F. 2d 512 (2nd Cir. 1977) cert. denied, 435 U.S. 925 (1978)

Hazelwood School District v. Ruhlmeir, 484 U.S. 260, 108 S Ct 562 (1988)

Bethel School District v. Fraser, 478 US 675 (1986)

Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community Dist., 393 US 503, (1969)

Policy adopted:

Instruction

Electronic Resources/Internet Safety

Students are prohibited from using the Internet or other electronic technology whether on or off campus, to interfere with educational process in any way. Abuses and violations should be reported to the administration. In accordance with the Board of Education policies and the school's disciplinary procedures, the administrator may invoke consequences, up to and including permanent revocation of electronic resource use, additional disciplinary measures, or legal action.

Policy adopted: 1997

Policy amended: October 5, 2009

WPS Existing Regulation

Electronic Resources/Internet Safety

Procedures

Introduction

We are pleased to offer students access to the district's electronic resources and to their personal electronic resources while on campus solely for educational purposes.

The Board of Education and the Administration believe in the educational value of such electronic resources and recognize their potential to support our curriculum by expanding resources available for staff and student use. Our goal in providing these services is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication. The advantages afforded by the rich, digital resources available today through the World Wide Web outweigh any disadvantage. However, it is important to remember that access is a privilege, not a right, and carries with it responsibilities for all involved. The integrity of these electronic resources must be preserved for the benefit of all. Therefore, students will be required to adhere to a set of policies and procedures, as set forth in detail below.

If you have any doubt about whether a contemplated activity is educational, you may consult with the person(s) designated by the school to help you decide.

Definitions

Obscene – means any material or performance if, a) taken as a whole, it predominantly appeals to the prurient interest, b) it depicts or describes in a patently offensive way a prohibited sex act and c) taken as a whole, does not have serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. For the purposes of this section, "prohibited sex act" means erotic fondling, nude performance, sexual excitement, sado-masochistic abuse, masturbation or sexual intercourse.

Child pornography – means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, cartoon, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where -

- (a) the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- (b) such visual depiction is, or appears to be, of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- (c) such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

Harmful to minors – any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- (a) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;

(b) depicts, describes or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and

(c) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

Personal Electronic Devices- any electronic device brought in by the student that can:

- (a) access district electronic resources
- (b) take still images or record audio or video
- (c) access the Internet
- (d) send and receive electronic messages, images, files

Student Conduct

Students are permitted to use the district's electronic resources for legitimate educational purposes. Personal use of district computer systems is expressly prohibited. Conduct which constitutes inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to the following:

Private or commercial use of school owned resources;

- “ Sending any form of harassing, threatening, or intimidating message, at any time, to any person (such communications may also be a crime);
- “ Making statements or using the likeness of another person (e.g., website postings, instant messages, email messages, etc.) that: threaten students, staff or administrators, that are falsely attributed to others, that are intended to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate another student, staff members or administrators;
- “ Using games, social networking sites, or other online resources that are not sanctioned by a teacher for an educational activity;

Gaining or seeking to gain unauthorized access to computer systems;

- “ Interfering with communication by teachers or administrators to parents or guardians, including, but not limited to, blocking or intercepting email or other electronic communications;
- “ Blocking or interfering with other school system communications or service;
- “ Damaging or disrupting computers, computer files, computer systems computer networks, computer systems or performance;

Downloading or modifying computer software of the district in violation of the district's licensure agreement(s) and/or without authorization from a teacher or administrator;

Attempting to learn or using another person's passwords;

Trespassing in or tampering with any other person's folders, work or files;

Sending any message that breaches the district's confidentiality requirements, or the confidentiality of students;

Sending any copyrighted material over the system;

- “ Using computer systems for any personal purpose, or in a manner that interferes with the district's educational programs;
- “ Accessing or attempting to access any material that is obscene, contains child pornography, or is harmful to minors, as defined above;
- “ Transmitting or receiving e-mail communications or accessing information on the Internet for non-educational purposes;

- “ Uploading, linking, or embedding images or the likeness of self or others to a non-secured, public website without teacher permission;
- “ Circumventing the district filtering, monitoring, or access control systems;
- “ Cyberbullying.

In addition, as noted above, if a particular behavior or activity is generally prohibited by law, by Board policy or by school rules or regulations, use of these computer systems for the purpose of carrying out such behavior or activity is also prohibited.

Misuse of the computer systems, or violations of these policies and regulations, may result in loss of access to such computer systems as well as other disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion, depending on the specific conduct.

Anyone who is aware of problems with, or misuse of these computer systems, or has a question regarding the proper use of these computer systems, should report this to his or her teacher or principal immediately. Most importantly, the Board and the Administration urge *any* student who receives *any* harassing, threatening, intimidating or other improper message through the computer system to report this immediately. It is the Board's policy that no student should be required to tolerate such treatment, regardless of the identity of the sender of the message. *Please report these events!*

Internet Safety

The Administration will take measures: to assure the safety and security of students when using e-mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; to prohibit unauthorized access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities by minors online; to prohibit unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information regarding students; to educate minor students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response; and to restrict students' access to online materials harmful to minors, including obscene materials and child pornography.

Legal References:

Children's Internet Protection Act, Pub. Law 106-554, codified at 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)

Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub. L. 107-110, codified at 20 U.S.C. § 6777

Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act, Pub. Law 110-385, codified at 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)(5)(B)(iii)

18 U.S.C. § 2256 (definition of child pornography)

Miller v. California, 413 U.S. 15 (1973) (definition of obscene)

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ [53a](#)-182b; [53a](#)-183; [53a](#)-250 (computer-related offenses)

Conn. Gen. Stat. § [53a](#)-193 (definition of obscene)

Regulation approved: 1998

Regulation revised: 2006

Regulation revised: October 5, 2009

**Series 4000
Personnel**

**POLICY REGARDING EMPLOYEE USE OF
THE DISTRICT'S COMPUTER SYSTEMS AND ELECTRONIC
COMMUNICATIONS**

Computers, computer networks, electronic devices, Internet access, and e-mail are effective and important technological resources. The Board of Education provides computers, a computer network, including Internet access and an e-mail system, and other electronic devices that access the network such as wireless and/or portable electronic hand-held equipment that can be used for word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture and recording, sound recording, information transmitting and/or receiving, storing, etc. (including, but not limited to, personal laptops, Smartphones, network access devices, Kindles, Nooks, cellular telephones, radios, personal cassette players, CD players, iPads or other tablet computers, walkie-talkies, Blackberries, personal data assistants, iPhones, Androids and other electronic signaling devices) (referred to collectively as “the computer systems”), in order to enhance both the educational opportunities for our students and the business operations of the district.

These computer systems are business and educational tools. As such, they are made available to Board employees for business and education related uses. The Administration shall develop regulations setting forth procedures to be used by the Administration in an effort to ensure that such computer systems are used for appropriate business and education related purposes.

In accordance with applicable laws and the Administrative Regulations associated with this Policy, the system administrator and others managing the computer systems may access email or monitor activity on the computer system or electronic devices accessing the computer systems at any time and for any reason or no reason. Typical examples include when there is reason to suspect inappropriate conduct or there is a problem with the computer systems needing correction. Further, the system administrator and others managing the computer systems can access or monitor activity on the systems despite the use of passwords by individual users, and can bypass such passwords. In addition, review of emails, messages or information stored on the computer systems, which can be forensically retrieved, includes those messages and/or electronic data sent, posted and/or retrieved using social networking sites, including, but not limited to, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, and MySpace.

Incidental personal use of the computer systems may be permitted solely for the purpose of e-mail transmissions and access to the Internet on a limited, occasional basis.

Such incidental personal use of the computer systems, however, is subject to all rules, including monitoring of all such use, as the Superintendent may establish through regulation. Moreover, any such incidental personal use shall not interfere in any manner with work responsibilities.

Users should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of the computer system or other electronic devices that access the computer system. Use of the computer system represents an employee's acknowledgement that the employee has read and understands this policy and any applicable regulations in their entirety, including the provisions regarding monitoring and review of computer activity.

Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-40x
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-48d
Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53a-182; 53a-183; 53a-250

Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520

ADOPTED: _____

REVISED: _____

8/1/16

[Note: Although we have included this sample notice in our model policy documents for the convenience of our Board of Education clients, the notice does not need to be approved as a Board policy].

NOTICE REGARDING ELECTRONIC MONITORING

**[To be posted in a conspicuous place
readily available for viewing by employees]**

In accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 31-48d, the Board of Education hereby gives notice to all its employees of the potential use of electronic monitoring in its workplace. While the Board may not actually engage in the use of electronic monitoring, it reserves the right to do so as the Board and/or the Administration deem appropriate in their discretion, consistent with the provisions set forth in this Notice.

“Electronic monitoring,” as defined by Connecticut General Statutes Section 31-48d, means the collection of information on the Board’s premises concerning employees’ activities or communications, by any means other than direct observation of the employees. Electronic monitoring includes the use of a computer, telephone, wire, radio, camera, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical systems. The law does not cover the collection of information (A) for security purposes in any common areas of the Board’s premises which are open to the public, or (B) which is prohibited under other state or federal law.

The following specific types of electronic monitoring may be used by the Board in its workplaces: **[modify as appropriate for the school district in question]**

- Monitoring of e-mail and other components of the Board’s computer systems, including monitoring of electronic devices such as PDAs, Smartphones, and mobile or handheld devices that access the computer systems, for compliance with the Board’s policies and regulations concerning use of such systems.
- Video and/or audio surveillance within school buildings (other than in restrooms, locker rooms, lounges and other areas designed for the health or personal comfort of employees or for the safeguarding of their possessions), on school grounds and on school buses and other vehicles providing transportation to students and/or employees of the school system.
- Monitoring of employee usage of the school district’s telephone systems.

The law also provides that, where electronic monitoring may produce evidence of misconduct, the Board may use electronic monitoring without any prior notice when the Board has reasonable grounds to believe employees are engaged in conduct that (i)

violates the law, (ii) violates the legal rights of the Board or other employees, or (iii) creates a hostile work environment.

Questions about electronic monitoring in the workplace should be directed to the Superintendent.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes:

Section 31-48b

Section 31-48d

8/1/16

Telecommunications/Internet - Acceptable Use

The school district believes in the educational value of communications, the Internet, and electronic information services, and recognizes their potential to support its educational program, the curriculum and student learning. Resource sharing, communications, and innovation capabilities for both students and teachers have been increased with access to telecommunications and to the Internet. The district will make every effort to protect students and teachers from any misuses or abuses as a result of experience with an electronic information service. It is therefore imperative that members of the school community conduct themselves in a responsible, decent, ethical, and polite manner while using any network. Further, they must abide by all local, state and federal laws.

Guidelines for General Use

It is important to recognize that with increased access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of controversial material that may not be considered of educational value in the context of the school setting. Further, the school district recognizes the importance of each individual's judgment regarding appropriate conduct in maintaining a quality resource system. While this policy does not attempt to articulate all required or proscribed behavior, it does seek to assist in such judgment by providing the following guidelines.

1. All use of the Internet, electronic services or any telecommunications network must be support of educational objectives or research.
2. Any electronic mail accounts shall be used only by the authorized owner of the account. Account owners are ultimately responsible for all activity under their account.
3. All communications and information accessible via a network should be assumed to be private.
4. Any use of the district's computing resources or networks for illegal or inappropriate purposes accessing materials that are objectionable in a public school environment, or supporting such activities, is prohibited. Language that is deemed to be vulgar is also prohibited. Illegal activities shall be defined as a violation of the intended use of the service or network. Inappropriate use shall be defined as a violation of the intended use of the service or network. Objectionable is defined as materials that are identified as such by the rules and policies of the Board of Education that relate to curriculum materials and textbook adoption.
5. Any use of telecommunication opportunities for commercial purposes financial gain, product advertisement, political lobbying, or attempt to disrupt the use of the services by others, is prohibited.
6. The Board of Education has no control of the information on the Internet. Other sites accessible via the Internet may contain material that is illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people.
7. Violations of the provisions stated in this policy may result in suspension or revocation of access privileges to the Internet, electronic services or district networks.

The Superintendent shall identify one administrator as the "District Internet Administrator" who will have responsibility for implementing this policy, establishing procedures, and supervising access privileges.

Guidelines for Student Use

Student use of electronic services is considered to be a privilege. Students at the elementary level may use telecommunications or the Internet only when supervised by a teacher or teacher aide. Guidelines for the use of these electronic services by elementary students will be developed by the District Internet Administrator.

Students in grades 6-12 who wish to use electronic services and networks that are available to them may do so provided that they:

1. Read and agree to the Acceptable Use Policy;
2. Sign Internet Use Agreement" (contract);

3. Obtain the signature of one parent/guardian (if under the age of 18) on the contract;
4. Have at least one teacher sign the contract form as a sponsor; and
5. Submit the completed contract to the designated person in each building.

Any parent or student who wishes to appeal any decision relative to Acceptable Use Policy should contact the District Internet Administrator.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[51a-182b](#) Harassment in the first degree: Class D Felony (as amended by PA 95-143)

20 U.S.C. Section 6777, No Child Left Behind Act

20 U.S.C. 254 Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000

47 U.S.C. Children's Online Protection Act of 1998

Policy adopted:

6141.321

Agreement

Instruction

Telecommunications/Internet - Acceptable Use

_____ **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

_____, **CONNECTICUT**

Internet Use Agreement

Please read this document carefully before signing.

Internet access is now available to students and teachers in the School District.

The Board of Education is pleased to bring this access to _____ and believes the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to teaches and students is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. Students and teachers have access to:

- 1) electronic mail communication with people all over the world;
- 2) information and news from NASA as well as the opportunity to correspond with the scientists at NASA and other research institutions;
- 3) public domain software and shareware of all type;
- 4) discussion groups on a plethora of topics ranging from Chinese culture to the environment to music to politics; and
- 5) access to many University Library Catalogs, the Library of Congress and ERIC.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. The School District has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover controversial information. We firmly believe that the valuable information and interaction available on this

worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the district.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, and regional and state networks. In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to acquire. In general this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of the network resources. If a district user violates any of these provisions, his or her privileges/account will be terminated and future access could possibly be denied. The signature(s) at the end of this document is (are) legally binding and indicates the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully and understand(s) their significance.

1) **Acceptable Use** - The purpose of the National Science Foundation Network (NSFNET), which is the backbone network to the Internet, is to support research and education in and among academic institutions in the United States by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of telecommunications/an electronic mail account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the School District. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities, product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.

2) **Privileges** - The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. (Each student who uses the Internet or who receives an account will be part of a discussion with a district faculty member pertaining to the proper use of the network.) System administrators will deem what is inappropriate use and the decision is final. Also, the system administrators may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty, and staff may request the District Internet administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts.

3) **Network Etiquette** - You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

- a. Be polite. Do not get abusive in your messages to others.
- b. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- c. Do not reveal your personal address or phone number or those of students or colleagues.
- d. Note that electronic (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- e. Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users.
- f. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.

4) The School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The district will not be responsible for any damages such as loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors or omissions. The district specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy of quality of information obtained from the Internet.

5) **Security** - Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify a system administrator or your District Internet Administrator. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log on to the Internet as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to Internet.

6) **Vandalism** - Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the Internet, or any of the above listed agencies or other networks that are connected to the NSFNET Internet backbone. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses. If there is any cost involved in repairing such vandalism, the cost will be assumed by the parent/guardian or the student if he/she is 18 years or older.

Internet Use Agreement

Internet access is now available to students and teachers in the School District.

The Board of Education is pleased to bring this access to _____ and believes the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

STUDENT

I understand and will abide by the above Internet Use Agreement. I further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action.

Student Signature

Date

School

Grade

PARENT OR GUARDIAN

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the Internet Use Agreement. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. The School District has taken precautions to eliminate controversial material. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the district to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold them responsible for materials acquired on the network. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use is not in a school setting. I hereby give permission for my child to access the Internet, to have an account and certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent or Guardian's Name (Please Print)

Signature

Date

SPONSORING TEACHER

I have read the Internet Use Agreement and agree to review this agreement with the student. Because the student may use the network for individual work or in the context of another class, I cannot be held responsible for the student use of the network. As the sponsoring teacher, I do agree to instruct the student on acceptable use of the network and proper network etiquette.

Teacher's Name (please print)

Signature

Date:

WPS Existing Policy

3514

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Equipment

Authorized Use of School-Owned Materials

No school equipment may be used for other than school purposes except when used in connection with another town agency or as requested by a local, state or federal governmental body. The Board of Education shall permit school equipment to be loaned to staff members when such use is directly or peripherally related to their employment and to students when the equipment is to be used in direct connection with their studies. Proper controls shall be established to assure the lender's responsibility for, and return of, all such equipment.

Policy adopted: July 29, 2004

WPS Existing Regulation

3514

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Equipment

Authorized Use of School-Owned Materials

No school owned electronic equipment (TVs, VCR, computers, etc.) may be used for other than school purposes unless approved by the Superintendent or designee for use by another town agency or a local, state or federal government agency.

Other equipment and furniture may be used only by an organization that has contracted to use school facilities in accordance with the policy on community use of school facilities (1330), and by other town agencies, with the approval of the Superintendent (or designee).

Such users of school facilities wishing to borrow furniture or equipment from one school, to be used in another, must obtain the permission of the Principal of the school making the loan; all items must be returned to their original place in the school before 7:00 a.m. the next school day. Users must make arrangements to have items carried in and placed where they belong.

Equipment or furniture (excluding kitchen equipment, which may not be moved) used by renters of school facilities must be returned to its accustomed placed immediately after the activity, in the condition in which it was found. Users must pay for repair or replacement due to damage.

Special fees will apply for use of lighting and other technical state equipment, and user will be required to employ a technician designated by the school principal. Professional technicians brought in by the user must work under the supervision of the school's designated technical supervisor.

Regulation approved: July 29, 2004

Optional.

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Equipment

Authorized Use of School-Owned Materials

No school equipment may be used for other than school purposes except when used in connection with another town agency or as requested by a local, state or federal governmental body. The Board of Education shall permit school equipment to be loaned to staff members when such use is directly or peripherally related to their employment and to students when the equipment is to be used in direct connection with their studies. Proper controls shall be established to assure the lender's responsibility for, and return of, all such equipment.

Control of Equipment

Title to and control over equipment and/or property purchased with federal funds, such as Title I funds, shall be maintained in accordance with the pertinent federal regulations. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall develop written procedures outlining federal ownership and district use, loan, loss and disposal of such equipment/property for public and private/non-public schools.

(cf. 3220 – State/Federal Funds)
(cf. 3290 – Grants and Other Revenue)
(cf. 6161.3 – Comparability of Services)
(cf. 6172.41 – Title I)

Policy adopted:

rev 12/06

Another version to consider.

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Equipment

Authorized Use of School-Owned Materials

No school equipment may be used for other than school purposes except when used in connection with another town agency or as requested by a local, state or federal government body. The Board of Education shall not permit school equipment to be loaned to staff members. Proper controls shall be established to assure the lender's responsibility for, and return of, all such equipment.

Control of Equipment

Title to and control over equipment and/or property purchased with federal funds, such as Title I funds, shall be maintained in accordance with the pertinent federal regulations. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall develop written procedures outlining federal ownership and district use, loan, loss and disposal of such equipment/property for public and private/non-public schools.

(cf. 3220 – State/Federal Funds)
(cf. 3290 – Grants and Other Revenue)
(cf. 6161.3 – Comparability of Services)
(cf. 6172.41 – Title I)

Policy adopted:

cps 1/99
rev 12/06

Another version to consider.

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Equipment

Authorized Use of School Equipment

The Board of Education shall permit the use of District equipment by school personnel and community groups when such use does not interfere with the District educational programs. "District equipment" is defined as any movable hardware that is not normally identified as a part of a room or building, including chairs, risers, portable stages, audio-visual equipment, tools, physical education equipment, computers, etc.

User fees, if applicable, shall be paid in advance to cover actual costs, depreciation and insurance. Users shall be responsible for reimbursing the District for lost or damaged equipment.

The Board reserves the right to deny use of equipment for non-school use.

Principals, administrators and coordinators shall be authorized to release equipment assigned to their building or department in accordance with this policy and established administrative rules.

Personal Use of School Equipment by Employees

School equipment shall not be used by any employee for his/her personal use at any time. No equipment may be removed from school premises for personal use of the employee.

The Superintendent shall work with each principal to develop specific procedures for the use of school equipment by employees working in the regular or extracurricular program during times when school is not normally in session.

Similar procedures shall be developed for maintenance and custodial employees performing duties outside regular working hours.

Control of Equipment

Title to and control over equipment and/or property purchased with federal funds, such as Title I funds, shall be maintained in accordance with the pertinent federal regulations. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall develop written procedures outlining federal ownership and district use, loan, loss and disposal of such equipment/property for public and private/non-public schools.

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Equipment

Authorized Use of School Equipment

(cf. 3220 – State/Federal Funds)

(cf. 3290 – Grants and Other Revenue)

(cf. 6161.3 – Comparability of Services)

(cf. 6172.41 – Title I)

Policy adopted:

cps 9/03

rev 12/06

A sample regulation to consider/modify.

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Equipment

Authorized Use of School Equipment

1. School District Employees

a. Inter-building/out-of-building school use:

Employees who wish to use school equipment for a school purpose away from the building/office to which the equipment is assigned must have permission of the administrator in charge of the building or office prior to taking the equipment from the building/office.

b. In-building personal use:

Employees who wish to use equipment for personal use must obtain permission from the Principal or his/her designee.

c. Out-of-building personal use:

The Board of Education shall permit school equipment to be loaned to staff members when such use is directly or peripherally related to their employment. Authorization shall be granted by the Principal or his/her designee.

2. Students

a. Out-of-building personal use:

The Board shall permit school equipment to be loaned to students when the equipment is to be used in connection with their studies or extracurricular activities. Authorization shall be granted by the Principal or his/her designee.

3. Non-Profit Groups Located Within the Boundaries of the School District

a. In-building use:

Non-profit groups may use equipment within a District building when such use is authorized in advance on an "Application For Building Use" form.

b. Out-of-building use:

Non-profit groups may use equipment at a location within the District when such use is authorized by the Principal or his/her designee.

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Equipment

Authorized Use of School Equipment (continued)

4. Commercial, Political or Partisan Organizations and Individuals or Families

a. In-building use:

Commercial, political, religious or partisan groups, and individuals and families may use equipment when such use is requested in advance on an “Application For Building Use.” The building use request must be approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

b. Out-of-building use:

Out-of-building use is prohibited for these groups/persons, unless approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Regulation approved:

cps 9/03

WPS Existing Policy**Business/Non-Instructional Operations****Computer Loan Program**

To ensure that each student has equitable access to the technology needed to achieve learning outcomes that are dependent on technology, the Board authorizes the loan of computers and appropriate grade-level software for students with demonstrated financial need. The Board directs the administration to develop and implement procedures for carrying out this goal and for notifying parents of its availability.

Policy adopted: August 30, 2004

WPS**Business/Non-Instructional Operations****Computer Loan Program**

Scope: The Westport Public Schools will lend computers for home use to students in need for a one-year period in accordance with the guidelines stated below:

Guidelines

Building Principals will identify students in “need” and make a request to the Instructional Technology Coordinator to provide a loaner computer.

The Technology Department will provide refurbished computers for the loan program. Quantity and availability will depend on the district's replacement schedule.

The computer will come installed with grade/subject appropriate instructional software which is used in the district.

The computer will be a stand-alone machine. The district will not provide Internet access.

All computers will be distributed as a unit including: CPU, monitor, keyboard, mouse and two power cables.

Prior to distribution, the parent/guardian must complete the Loan Agreement below and forward it to the Technology Department.

Parents or guardians must pick up the computer at the Curriculum Center and agree to return it to the Curriculum Center in accordance with the Loan Agreement.

Upon damage to computer, the borrower should return the computer to the Curriculum Center immediately. The Technology Department will assess the damage and replace it under certain conditions.

The borrower will not lend computer equipment to any person and must return the computer at the end of the loan period.

The borrower will agree to monitor the use of the computer and insure that its use conforms to the District Acceptable Use Policy.

The Technology Department will monitor computers by an inventory tracking system by serial number.

The Westport Public Schools assumes no responsibility for files stored on the hard drive or the recovery of files accidentally left in the hard drive after the computer has been returned.

Regulation approved: August 30, 2004

Another version to consider.

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Equipment

Loan of School District Equipment

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes capital equipment purchased by District taxpayers for educational purposes needs to be properly used and inventoried. The Board further recognizes that from time to time such educational capital equipment may be used by students or the community while away from the school. When it becomes necessary to loan educational equipment, the following guidelines shall be followed:

1. A school equipment loan form needs to be completed by the borrower.
2. The equipment must be returned within the designated time stated on the loan form.
3. Prior approval of the Principal or the Principal's designee must be received.
4. A responsible adult, (i.e., parent, guardian, grandparent) must sign indicating their responsibility for the care and return of the equipment.
5. Pick up and return of the equipment must be made by the responsible adult not the student.
6. The borrower assumes all cost for the repair or replacement of any borrowed equipment.
7. Borrowed or loaned equipment except musical instruments should not be transported to and from school on the school bus.
8. Equipment will be borrowed or loaned for educational purposes or community sponsored functions, only.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-239 Use of school facilities for other purposes.

Policy adopted:

cps 5/13

EQUIPMENT LOAN AGREEMENT

Requested Item: _____

Requested Party: _____

Purpose of Request: _____

Date(s) To Be Used: _____

Date To Be Returned: _____

I agree to abide by Policy # 3514 - Loan of School District Equipment (copy attached).

Signature of Requesting Party

Date

Approved by Principal (designee)

Acknowledgement of Equipment Returned

Equipment returned on: _____

Principal (designee): _____

An optional and revised policy to consider on this issue.

Instruction

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes that a pandemic/epidemic outbreak is a serious threat that stands to affect students, staff, and the community as a whole. With this consideration in mind, the Board establishes this policy in the event the town/municipality and/or school district is threatened by a reasonably likely pandemic/epidemic outbreak. At all times the health, safety and welfare of the students shall be of foremost concern along with the health, safety and welfare of the District employees and mindful of the overall health and welfare of the community.

Planning and Coordination

The Superintendent shall designate the head School Nurse or other appropriate staff members who in conjunction with the School Medical Advisor, shall serve as a liaison between the school district and local and state health officials. This designee and the School Medical Advisor are jointly responsible for connecting with health officials to identify local hazards, determine what crisis plans exist in the school district and community, and to establish procedures to account for student well-being and safety during such a crisis. The designee shall work with local health officials and shall keep the Superintendent advised when the risk of a pandemic or an epidemic of a serious illness has materially increased.

The Principals and/or school nurse or other designee shall develop a curriculum component to health classes that is designed to teach students about preventing or limiting the spread of communicable diseases.

The District shall purchase and store supplies necessary for an epidemic/pandemic outbreak, including but not limited to disinfectant products, face masks, water, examination gloves, and other supplies as recommended by the school nurse and/or School Medical Advisor and the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

The Superintendent shall develop procedures and plans for the transportation of students in the event of an evacuation. Such procedures shall include provisions for students who cannot be transported to home at the time of the evacuation.

Response

In the event anyone within the school is discovered or suspected to have a communicable disease that may result in an epidemic/pandemic, that person shall be immediately quarantined pending further medical examination, as recommended by state and national protocols. Local and state health officials shall be notified immediately.

In conjunction with local and state health officials, the Superintendent shall ascertain whether an evacuation (school closing), lockdown, or shelter-in-place needs to be established. As soon as such a decision has been made, the school district shall notify the parents/guardians of all students.

Instruction

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies (continued)

In the event of an evacuation (school closing), the Superintendent is charged with determining when District schools shall re-open. In the event of a lockdown or shelter-in-place, the Superintendent shall notify all proper authorities and relief agencies to seek their assistance for the duration of the lockdown or shelter-in-place.

Infection Control

Any student or staff member found to be infected with a communicable disease that bears risk of pandemic/epidemic will not be allowed to attend school until medical clearance is provided by that individual's primary care physician or other medical personnel indicating that that person does not bear the risk of transmitting the communicable disease.

Students with excessive absences due to a communicable disease shall be given a reprieve from other Board policies relative to excessive student absences. Efforts will be made by the staff to determine what, if any, school work the student can complete while absent.

Staff members who are forced to miss excessive days of work shall first use any leave entitled to them through the Family and Medical Leave Act and/or accrued sick leave. If a staff member has still not received medical clearance to resume his/her work duties, absences in excess of a staff member's allotted leave be managed through existing contract provisions and will not affect the employee's right to continued employment.

Continuance of Education

The Superintendent shall develop a plan of alternate means of educating students in the event of prolonged school closings and/or extended absences. Such a plan may include, but are not limited to, providing students with assignments via mail or by email, local access cable television, or the school district's website.

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Board of Education, may amend the traditional class schedule and schedule of days. Such a plan may include extending the school day, having school days held on Saturdays if Connecticut statute changes, the use of previously scheduled vacation days, and/or extend the school year beyond the previously established end of school year, within applicable statutory requirements.

(cf. 5141.22 – Communicable/Infectious Diseases)
(cf. 5141.6 – Crisis Management Plan)
(cf. 6114 – Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness)
(cf. 6114.6 – Emergency Closings)

Instruction

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-154a Professional communications between teacher or nurse and student.

10-207 Duties of medical advisors.

10-209 Records not to be public.

10-210 Notice of disease to be given parent or guardian.

10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules.

19a-221 Quarantine of certain persons.

52-557b Immunity from liability for emergency medical assistance, first aid or medication by injection. School personnel not required to administer or render.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, 45 C.F.R. 99.

Policy adopted:

cps 1/07
rev 12/09
rev 2/20

Basic Components of Pandemic Planning

Every district should have an Emergency Management Plan that:

- ❖ Addresses all four phases of emergency management planning (Mitigation and Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery.)
- ❖ Is flexible enough to address multiple hazards (be “all hazards plans.”)
- ❖ Is practiced on a regular basis.
- ❖ Is developed in an interactive, cross-cutting manner, in collaboration with community partners and stakeholders.
- ❖ Is based upon sound data and information.
- ❖ Includes provisions for being continually reviewed and updated regularly.
- ❖ Is coordinated with community pandemic influenza planning efforts, as well as state policy and planning efforts.

Pandemic Plan

This plan is built upon components in existing emergency management plans and could contain elements unique to an influenza pandemic.

Communication Plan

- ❖ Identify audiences and key messages (students, parents, staff, etc.)
- ❖ Focus on clear, accurate, consistent, and timely communications.
- ❖ Identify trusted spokesperson (also, identify who will be lead for health matters.)
- ❖ Identify trusted media partners.
- ❖ Establish redundant communications methods identified in advance (primary, secondary and tertiary methods identified and all parties are familiar with them.)

Plan for continuity of learning or instruction

- ❖ Consider alternate learning strategies
- ❖ Consider potential restructuring of school calendar.

Identify stakeholders and partners. Identify a contact within the local public health department and collaborate with that entity to create complementary plans, coordinate with other partners, and communicate consistently with the public.

Identify and coordinate with other key stakeholders such as law enforcement, school security personnel, local emergency management office, businesses, community and faith-based organizations.

Basic Components of Pandemic Planning (continued)

Review and refine policies and authorities

Review school district's or school's Continuity of Operation's Plan (COOP) and Business Continuity Plans (BCP), which outline procedures for continued function during an extended emergency.

Consider:

- ❖ Essential functions, goods, and services that must be maintained under a variety of conditions;
- ❖ Essential tasks that can be performed from other locations such as home, as well as technology support necessary to implement such measures;
- ❖ Essential people and material support;
- ❖ Delegations of authority, and
- ❖ Personnel/Human Resources policies (leave, disability, payroll, potential high absenteeism).

Identify legal authorities for school closures, limitations on responsibilities and functions (such as school lunch provision), and school's potential responsibilities and liabilities.

Review and refine supply policies and contracts including potentially ordering and warehousing items such as tissues, soap, or hand sanitizer.

Initiate or expand prevention and education efforts

- ❖ Conduct preventative hand-washing and cough/sneezing etiquette campaigns.
- ❖ Encourage staff, faculty, and students to stay home when ill.
- ❖ Provide information to parents, staff and students about elements of pandemic plan.

Create and implement a surveillance system in partnership with state and/or local health departments to identify and track student absences due to illness, which would allow the rapid detection of unusual changes or trends in student health.

Develop an Incident Command System (ICS) specific to a pandemic, that identifies roles and responsibilities of educators, law enforcement, and health officials in advance of an incident.

Consider and plan with community partners to address issues specific to your school environment, such as:

- ❖ Students with special needs, including those who are in special education, receiving supplement services at school. English Language Learners, or have special health care needs;
- ❖ Working with Child Nutrition Directors to help families identify sources for feeding programs for students who receive meals at school in the event of long-term school closures;

Basic Components of Pandemic Planning (continued)

- ❖ Potential social services needed during and after pandemic has ended
- ❖ Possible alternative uses of school buildings during a pandemic (such as for mass immunizations or hospitals);
- ❖ Potential uses of school buses during pandemic and if/how this affects contracts;
- ❖ Current alternative uses for schools and determine necessary policies/procedures under school closures;
- ❖ Capacity to address requirements for cleaning the building if it was used for community health needs or if there were sick students;
- ❖ Fiscal, academic, emotional and physical recovery issues, including;
 - Return to learning;
 - Ability of students, family, and staff to access available mental health supports, particularly during a crisis if schools are cancelled;
 - Bereavement needs; and
 - Availability of mental health service providers, including community and faith-based organizations.



**PREPARING FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASE: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENSURE THE CONTINUITY OF TEACHING AND
LEARNING FOR SCHOOLS (K-12)
DURING EXTENDED STUDENT ABSENCE OR SCHOOL DISMISSAL**

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) wishes to remind states, districts, schools, students, staff, families, and guardians as well as communities about the importance of:

- 1. addressing the prevention of infectious disease in schools, including the seasonal flu, viral meningitis, enterovirus, and Ebola; and*
- 2. ensuring the continuity of teaching and learning in the event of student absences or school dismissals.*

The purpose of this document, therefore, is to provide recommendations to help schools maintain the continuity of teaching and learning for: 1) individuals or small groups of students who are out of school for extended periods; and 2) large groups of students and staff disrupted by school dismissals or large numbers of faculty absences.

These recommendations present points for education stakeholders to consider as they plan for and improve their ability to provide continuous learning, ranging from take-home assignments to online learning initiatives. This document offers key questions for states, districts, school leaders, teachers, parents, and students to think through as they prepare for continuity of teaching and learning, and provides information on resource opportunities and best practices.

There are a number of reasons why students may be absent from school for extended periods. For example, a student may have a chronic health issue or illness for an extended period of time. Using seasonal influenza as another example, a district may pursue *selective* dismissals of students at high risk of flu complications (i.e., to prevent the spread of flu to vulnerable communities), *reactive* dismissals (when a significant proportion of students in school have a documented fever), or *preemptive* dismissals (to proactively decrease the spread of flu). Whatever the reason and regardless of the duration of such interruptions, all education stakeholders should consider the effects of significant absences on student achievement and establish plans in advance that not only ensure health and safety, but also maintain a continuity of learning.

Options to get the material to students who are at home

ED is mindful that available resources will play a part in determining how each school creates its continuity of teaching and learning plan. This framework offers several options for consideration when preparing in advance, all aimed at helping districts, schools, and teachers plan and execute distance learning with whatever resources they have or are able to obtain. The strategies outlined below range from sending copies of assignments home to students to web-based distance learning course work. Specifically, they include:

- **Hard copy packets:** Textbooks, packets or portions from textbooks, photocopies of reference materials, curricula, and assignments can be prepared in advance for distribution to affected students;
- **Online materials or other content:** Digital copies of textbooks, reference materials, assignments, and audiovisual learning supports can be made available on the Internet using online learning platforms and websites;
- **Teacher check-ins and tutorials:** A variety of technologies (telephone, e-mail, web conferencing) can be used to facilitate one-on-one interaction between students and teachers, counselors, and other appointed adults (e.g., tutors) during prolonged absences or dismissals;
- **Recorded class meetings:** Using audio or video technology, recorded class meetings can be given to some or all absent students via podcasts, live or on-demand television, DVD, captioned closed-circuit or public access television, or online;
- **Live class meetings:** Schools can use available tools such as conference calling or webinars, online courses, or virtual schools with two-way interaction between the teacher and students;
- **Other student supports:** Schools can use any of the above methods to promote non-classroom priorities, such as college and other counseling support, including student loan preparation (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or study groups that are enabled through web-based tools.

Considerations for ensuring continuity of learning

The following five guiding questions will help districts and schools develop learning continuity strategies and action plans:

1. How will affected parties communicate during short-term or prolonged absences or during school-wide dismissals?
2. How will students understand and access available academic resources and other supports from home?
3. What equipment and other resources are available or need to be acquired to enable school and district learning continuity plans?
4. What additional training or experience is required to prepare all parties to respond appropriately when needed?
5. How will the district or school ensure access to all materials, including for students with disabilities?

A decision table attached to these recommendations (Appendix A) includes detailed questions that schools, districts, and states can use to inventory instructional content and available technology; evaluate educator, student, and parent readiness to participate successfully in distance learning; and evaluate state and district operating plans to support various distance learning options.

Potential resources and partnerships to close the gaps

Some states, districts, and schools have some or all of the resources and capabilities to fully develop and implement their continuity of teaching and learning plans; however, most will require additional planning and support to ensure these strategies are effective across all schools and student populations. To assist in these efforts, ED has assembled helpful examples from prior state and district responses to similar circumstances (see Appendix A). State and local education agencies can assess their capacities now to increase the accessibility of resources in a variety of forms to all affected parties. These tools and resources may include:

- **Comprehensive learning continuity planning and implementation support:** Guidance regarding how to develop and implement a systematic plan, including technology resources to ensure that all students, including students with disabilities, can learn in a variety of environments;
- **Physical instructional resources:** Publishers' and other instructional material can be made available in hard copy to students unable to physically attend school;
- **Digital instructional resources:** Publishers' and other instructional material can be made available digitally so that it can be shared via e-mail and through other web-based tools or transformed into additional, accessible formats (e.g., braille);
- **Organization and distribution of digital content:** Technology that offers tools and systems to share not only instructional content, but also teaching and learning experiences via the Internet;
- **Phone conferencing:** Conference calls to allow teachers to interact with multiple students simultaneously using the telephone;
- **Webinar support:** Web-based technology that allows teachers not only to interact with multiple students on a conference call, but also to simultaneously show students instructional tools such as literature passages or math solutions on a shared Internet site;
- **Online courses and virtual classrooms:** Electronic learning communities where students and teachers interact in real time using web-based tools;
- **Virtual server capacity:** Working with service providers to enable safe and redundant storage and delivery of larger amounts of instructional content using the Internet.

By reflecting on how existing tools may be used to develop effective distance learning strategies and accessing new resource opportunities, state and local education agencies as well as schools can work to sustain student attainment and achievement during prolonged absences or school dismissals.

Appendix A: Continuity of Teaching and Learning – Decision Table

Instructional delivery options	Considerations	Resource Opportunities and Examples**
General planning to ensure continuity of teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are distribution plans in place to ensure student access to resources in the event of sudden absences or school dismissal? • Are contact information records for students, parents, guardians, and all staff (e-mail addresses, physical addresses, phone numbers, including mobile, etc.) on file, and do teachers have access to that information to check in with absent students regarding academic progress? Are policies regarding privacy and sharing of personal information in place and clear to all parties? • How can schools and districts leverage distance learning resources from other sources, including current vendors, community colleges and universities, and online sources of open content? • Are policies in place for awarding credit for courses in the event of sustained distance learning (e.g., credit without seat time, credit if 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ED’s Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center (accessible at http://rems.ed.gov) supports the development of high-quality school emergency operations plans (EOPs), building capacity in preparedness. The REMS TA Center provides training and technical assistance addressing school emergency management, including continuity planning and infectious disease control. • Los Angeles County Office of Education: Continuity of Instruction Resources: http://www.laschooltoolkit.com/gp_hh_5.html • Standards for online programs in schools: http://www.inacol.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/NACOL-Standards-Quality-Online-Programs.pdf

	<p>courses are taken online from a commercial provider or from another district)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are defined staffing plans in place to support distance learning in the event of small or large student or faculty absences? • Will staff be permitted to return to school to use school-based equipment and resources? 	
Hard copy packets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are adequate resources or agreements in place to support copying and distributing learning packets and materials for students to use at home for up to 12 weeks if necessary? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical instructional resources presented by the Federal Registry for Educational Excellence (FREE) including teaching and learning resources from dozens of federal agencies accessible at http://free.ed.gov

* All hyperlinks and URLs were accessed in November 2014.

** The tools and resources identified in this document are not intended as endorsements, and are merely offered as examples that you may take into account in your own continuity of learning planning efforts.

An administrative regulation to consider.

Instruction

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

Introduction to Administrative Procedures for Pandemic Flu

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. A pandemic occurs when a new virus emerges for which people have little or no immunity. The disease spreads easily person-to-person, causes various levels of illness, and can sweep across the country and around the world in a very short time. Although pandemic events are extremely rare, the global mobility of our population and that of other countries raises the possibility of such an event and the school district must plan accordingly.

In consultation with the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), Health District officials and other medical advisors and area school administrators, the following administrative guidelines have been developed. These guidelines need to be reviewed regularly and modified as necessary as additional knowledge and understanding of a pandemic event is expanded.

To locate the appropriate contact for the district's local health department or health district, contact:

<https://portal.ct.gov/dph/Local-Health-Admin/LHA/Local-Health-Administration---Site-Map>.

The purpose of these administrative guidelines is to establish clear information and procedures that should be the core of a coordinated plan in order to plan for, respond to, mitigate, and recover from a possible pandemic event.

Exposure to a Pandemic–Causing Virus

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has stated that the coronavirus is most often spread when an infected person comes into close contact with another person, usually through coughing or sneezing of the infected person. It is also believed the coronavirus can be spread from an infected person not showing symptoms. CDC believes symptoms may appear from 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus. Flu-like symptoms such as cough, fever and difficulty breathing are indicators of exposure. Such symptoms can range from mild to very severe. Therefore, the best prevention, because a vaccine is not available, is to minimize the chances for exposure.

Preventative Measures for Schools to Protect Students and Staff

The DPH recommends schools consider the following to prevent the spread of influenza and other respiratory viruses:

1. Adhere to existing school health protocols for any staff/student(s) presenting as ill or any staff/student(s) who may have been exposed to a contagious disease. Follow established exclusion recommendations for acute respiratory illness (patients should be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications before returning to school.)
2. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Instruction

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

Preventative Measures for Schools to Protect Students and Staff (continued)

3. Provide adequate soap, paper towels and other cleaning supplies in bathrooms and other wash areas.
4. Avoid close contact with people who are sick and encourage families to keep ill students at home.
5. Remind students to cover their mouths and nose with a tissue or sleeve (not hands) when coughing or sneezing.
6. Have custodial staff clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces according to product directions and their facility's policy.
7. Strongly promote the annual flu shot for all students and staff.
8. Check the CDC website to determine whether students/staff should be permitted to travel on field trips to countries with a high incidence reported of a coronavirus outbreak.

The school district must stay informed, listen to public health messages and implement good public health practices to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses. The local health department should be contacted regarding questions about individuals who have recently traveled to countries with a high incidence of respiratory illnesses.

School District Emergency Response

In the event of a declared pandemic, a **four level system** shall be used with guidelines to provide interventions and activities in which the district shall engage. These activities involve areas such as communication with parents and students, field trips and other school activities, school closings or modified school schedules, school access and instructional issues. Although it is important that staff be trained in and employ these procedures, it must also be understood that the administration may need to make changes on a case by case basis as new information or events rapidly evolve.

It is important that all plans be coordinated and aligned as much as possible with neighboring school districts, appropriate emergency medical services, public health, mental health, law enforcement, fire department and emergency management representatives.

In terms of the difficult decision to close schools, two main reasons exist for this action:

1. In the event where an increase in school absenteeism is noted between either or both students and staff, reporting to the School Medical Advisor and the local health department shall be communicated by the school nurse on a regularly scheduled basis.
 - a. Such communication will be made by the school nurse when observed illnesses or absences for respiratory, gastrointestinal or vaccine preventable illnesses are deemed to be excessive.

Instruction

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

School District Emergency Response (continued)

- b. Reporting shall include influenza-like illness with symptoms of fever greater than 100 degrees F, AND sore throat or cough to the local health department and School Medical Advisor weekly during an outbreak.
 - c. Depending on illness or exposure, social distancing measures may be instituted including school closures.
2. There could be levels of absenteeism among staff and/or students that make it difficult to achieve the education mission of the school. The decision to close on this basis is an individual district decision made in conjunction with the Board of Education, the School Medical Advisor and the local health department. District schools may be closed if absenteeism is in the range of 30% to 40%.
3. Schools could close specifically to slow the spread of influenza. Close contact among many persons in schools make them a center for respiratory disease transmission. If school closing for this purpose is to be effective, it should be done early in an epidemic before absenteeism rates climb very high and in concert with other schools and agencies and upon the advice of the Connecticut Department of Education and/or the Connecticut Department of Public Health.
4. In addition, to be effective, students and staff must stay apart from each other when they are not in school. A decision for school closing for this reason is usually made under advice or command from state agencies or the local health department. The length of school closing shall be made under guidance from these agencies and can vary from several days to several weeks. Superintendents in the neighboring districts will work together to make decisions on how each school's closing impacts the other schools, in terms of transportation, child care, instruction, and family issues.

As new issues develop, the **incident coordination system** would be implemented and would involve the **Four Response Levels** contained within the District's crisis management plan. Districts will rely heavily on the advice of the local health district which, in turn, would be in communication with the State Department of Health. In addition, as stated previously, every effort would be made to closely coordinate and align these interventions with the neighboring school districts and communication among the Superintendents would be frequent and ongoing.

Regulation approved:

cps 12/09
rev 2/20

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

Administrative Procedures

For the School District, the following individuals would be involved (with back up staff as appropriate):

Incident Coordinator:	Superintendent
Building Operations:	Principals
	Nurses
	Other Staff Members
Planning/Information:	Health Director, Local Health District Officials, Designated Office Staff
Logistics:	Principals, Lead Teachers, Department Heads, Administrative Clerical Staff
Finance/Administration:	School Business Affairs Coordinator

Other Important Contacts:

Commissioner, Dept. of Public Health	_____, M.D. (telephone number)
State Police,	
_____ Police Department	Chief _____

Area Health District:

Director

District School Nursing Staff:

Lead School Nurse

School Medical Advisor:

Communications

Media communication would normally be handled through the Superintendent's office. The District would communicate to the public via its website, through press releases, written notices/factsheets, and the School Notification System.

Surveillance Protocols

During a pandemic, the Connecticut Department of Public Health will be monitoring hospital admissions, emergency department visits, deaths and, potentially, school and workplace absenteeism. The District will monitor student and staff absenteeism through its attendance module and report to the _____ Area Health District and the State, as appropriate.

In addition, when directed by the administration, the school secretaries will initiate procedures for screening calls to the school related to student absences (see form A). Based on the results of these questions, the information may be forwarded to the Lead School Nurse for additional questioning. Once initiated, this information will be collected daily and copies sent to the Superintendent.

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

Administrative Procedures

PANDEMIC INFLUENZA RESPONSE LEVELS (FOUR):

LEVEL 1

LOW RISK – SITUATION:

First pandemic flu case reported in country. No reported cases in local community. School community (employees, students, parents) are encouraged to take temperature regularly as recommended by the school nurse. If temperature is 100°F or 37.7°C or greater, please stay home.

School hours will remain on regular schedule.

Communication: (All pandemic information from W.H.O., CDC/State/Superintendent only). Preventative information will be shared with parents and the school community through the website, fact sheets, newsletters, and the telephone alert system.

School Access: Access to school grounds per normal school policy.

Educational Delivery: Regular school programming. Daily homework provided by teachers for any student who stays at home and is healthy enough.

Co-curricular Program: All regularly scheduled activities allowed.

Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel: Field trips allowed, as per normal school policy. (restrict field trips to countries with identified outbreak of coronavirus)

Personnel: Normal working conditions. All school employees returning from affected areas have their health monitored for 14 days.

Emergency Care: Contact physician if temperature is over 100°F or 37.7°C. Nurses implement steps to minimize potential influenza outbreak through education/information such as encouragement of handwashing. Nurse staff also stockpile personal protective supplies as appropriate, (e.g., masks, gloves, alcohol, hygienic soap, etc.)

School Provided Transportation: All bus routes run as usual.

School Operations/Cafeteria: Normal cleaning and maintenance. Continual disinfecting by cleaning personnel. Review food handling procedures with staff.

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

Administrative Procedures

LEVEL 2

MODERATE RISK – SITUATION:

First pandemic flu/respiratory illness case reported in town, increasing number of cases reported in country. School community members (employees, students, parents) are strongly encouraged to take temperature daily. If temperature is 100°F or 37.7°C or greater, students or staff will be asked to stay home.

School hours will remain on regular schedule.

Communication: (All pandemic information from W.H.O., CDC/State/Superintendent only)

Periodic updates will be made by the Superintendent to the community on status of pandemic flu/respiratory illness in country and impact on school program. In-class instruction to insure students understand protocol and proper hygiene.

Communication with parents will encourage those that have students with a fever of 100°F or 37.7°C or greater to remain home until cleared by their physician or as per protocol from the local Health District officials, Department of Public Health or CDC.

Data Collection procedures by secretaries and nurses should be initiated at this level.

School Access: Visitors are welcome by appointment only. School community members with temperature over 100°F or 37.7°C, report to school health office. Any student or staff member with a cough (but no temperature) may be required to wear a medical mask. Nursing staff will assess this on a case by case basis.

Educational Delivery: Regular school program. Daily homework will be provided by email to students ill at home for more than 3 consecutive days and well enough to complete the work.

Co-curricular Program: All scheduled co-curricular programs allowed.

Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel: All events will be reviewed. Events may be cancelled for risk exposure on a case by case basis.

Personnel: Normal working conditions. Staff are advised to stay home if symptomatic.

Emergency Care: School Nurse in concert with Area Health District will determine whether individual who has recovered from flu can return to school. If temperature is over 100°F or 37.7°C, individual must go home ASAP.

School Provided Transportation: All bus routes run as usual. Bus access may be denied for those with temperature over 100°F or 37.7°C.

School Operations/Cafeteria: All Food Service workers must wear gloves. Continual disinfecting throughout the day. Full disinfection every three days.

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

Administrative Procedures

LEVEL 3

MEDIUM RISK – SITUATION:

Increased spread of pandemic flu/respiratory illness in town with transfers in public places. School community (employees, students, parents) are strongly encouraged to take temperature daily. If temperature is 100°F or 37.7°C or greater, students or staff **MUST** stay at home.

Communication:

(All pandemic information from W.H.O., CDC/State/Superintendent only) Regular updates to faculty and community by Superintendent through the School Notification System.

STRICT CARE TAKEN TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY PROTOCOLS.

Daily classroom instruction to explain situation and to emphasize proper hygiene.

School Access: Visitors must report to nurse to assess temperature. Anyone with temperature 100°F or 37.7°C or greater will not be admitted.

Educational Delivery: School hours will remain on regular schedule but after school programming/activities will be canceled on a case by case basis in consultation with medical and health department officials. Work will be provided to students ill at home for more than 3 consecutive days via email. Instruction to parents via email for students to access lessons and assignment via computer.

Teachers healthy enough to do so will maintain weekly contact with students via email for academic reflection.

Co-curricular Program: Co-curricular programs are suspended on a case by case basis. Large gatherings are discouraged and may be canceled by the administration as necessary and in consultation with the health officials.

Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel: All special events, field trips, travel, etc., discontinued on a case-by-case basis. Large faculty or staff gatherings discontinued without permission of administration. Field trips discontinued unless special permission provided by administration. Students and parents are advised to not congregate in large groups in outside community activities.

Personnel: All faculty and staff report to work after assessing temperature at home. Incident Command Team meets to determine how best to continue school operation.

Emergency Care: School Nurse determines if individual who has recovered from flu/respiratory illness can return to school. If temperature is 100°F or 37.7°C or greater, individual must go home.

Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies

Administrative Procedures

School Provided Transportation: All bus routes run as usual. Bus access may be denied for those with temperature over 100°F or 37.7°C. Bus service may be discontinued at this level.

School Operations/Cafeteria: Some form of Food Services in place for staff and students who are attending school. Continual disinfecting throughout the day.

LEVEL 4

HIGH RISK – SITUATION:

Spread of pandemic flu/respiratory illness within the school community. Government directs the schools to close OR Superintendent closes school due to level of absenteeism and interruption of instruction.

Communication: (All pandemic information from W.H.O., CDC/State/Superintendent only) Daily updates by Superintendent through the School Messenger System.

Further communication via website.

School Access: No classes held on campus. School facility closed to all but essential personnel for indeterminate period of time. School quarantine, no visitors.

Educational Delivery: Students may access lessons and assignments via computer. Teachers healthy enough to do so will maintain weekly contact with students via email for academic reflection.

Co-curricular Program: School facility closed.

Community Gatherings/Events/Field Trips/Travel: School facility closed.

Personnel: Administration reviews process of school closure and academic support.

Emergency Care: School facility closed. Use hospitals for pandemic flu prevention and containment. Prepare for possible use of schools for vaccination procedures.

School Provided Transportation: School facility closed.

School Operations/Cafeteria: School facility closed. Necessary cleaning and maintenance.

<u>POST PANDEMIC FLU EVENT PLAN:</u>

- Determine criteria and timing for re-opening of school(s),
- Determine impact on school calendar and need for possible changes,
- Determine impact on student instruction and need for additional or compensatory instruction,
- Determine what steps necessary to ensure staff are in place and prepared for the return of students,
- Determine what kinds of mental health support may be necessary for students and staff.

Public Health Instructions During a Pandemic Flu

Throughout a pandemic flu, people may be asked or required to do things to help hold back the spread of the disease in our community.

Here are some examples of what public health officials may ask people to do:

STAY HOME

People who are sick should stay home. Children should not go to school if they are sick. Staying home will be absolutely necessary during a pandemic flu to limit the spread of the disease.

AVOID LARGE GROUPS

People – even those who are well – should stay away from gatherings of people such as sporting events, movies and festivals. During a pandemic flu these kinds of events could be cancelled because large gatherings of people help spread the flu virus.

Isolation and quarantine are public health actions used to contain the spread of a contagious disease. If asked, it will be important to follow isolation and/or quarantine instructions.

ISOLATION

Isolation is for people who are already ill. When someone is isolated, they are separated from people who are healthy. Having the sick person isolated (separated from others) can help to slow or stop the spread of disease. People who are isolated can be cared for in their homes, in hospitals, or other healthcare facilities. Isolation is usually voluntary, but local, state and federal government have the power to require the isolation of sick people to protect the public.

QUARANTINE

Quarantine is for people who have been exposed to the disease but are not sick. When someone is placed in quarantine, they are also separated from others. Even though the person is not sick at the moment, they were exposed to the disease and may still become infectious and then spread the disease to others. Quarantine can help to slow or stop this from happening. States generally have the power to enforce quarantines within their borders.

FACT SHEET: Stopping Germs at Home, Work and School

How Germs Spread: The main way that illnesses like colds and flu are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This is called "droplet spread." This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air and are deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Sometimes germs also can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk and then touches his or her own eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands. We know that some viruses and bacteria can live 2 hours or longer on surfaces like cafeteria tables, doorknobs, and desks.

How to Stop the Spread of Germs: In a nutshell: take care to:

- Cover your mouth and nose.
- Clean your hands often.
- Remind your children to practice healthy habits, too.

Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing: Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away. Cover your cough or sneeze if you do not have a tissue. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

The "Happy Birthday" song helps keep your hands clean? Not exactly. Yet it is recommended that when you wash your hands – with soap and warm water – that you wash for 15 to 20 seconds. That's about the same time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice!

Alcohol-based hand wipes and gel sanitizers work too: When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used. You can find them in most supermarkets and drugstores. If using gel, rub your hands until the gel is dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in it kills the germs on your hands.

Germs and Children: Remind children to practice healthy habits too, because germs spread, especially at school.

The flu has caused high rates of absenteeism among students and staff in our country's 119,000 schools. Influenza is not the only respiratory infection of concern in schools – nearly 22 million school days are lost each year to the common cold alone. However, when children practice healthy habits, they miss fewer days of school.

More Facts, Figures, and How-Tos: CDC and its partner agencies and organizations offer a great deal of information about handwashing and other things you can do to stop the germs that cause flu, the common cold, and other illnesses.

_____**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
_____, **Connecticut**
ILLNESS REPORT

Date: _____

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Secretaries: Please ask the following questions when a parent/guardian calls into the school stating that their student will not be attending on a regularly-scheduled school day **DUE TO ILLNESS ONLY**. Please fill in and check the appropriate answers. Thank you.

1. Is your student ill? ☐YES ☐NO
Describe Symptoms:

2. Do they have a fever? ☐YES ☐NO
How high? _____

- 3) Contact Name _____

- 4) Telephone Number: _____

The Health Office Nurses may call you back to obtain more details. This is a precautionary measure our school is taking due to potential contagious diseases. Thank you.

(Please submit this form to the Health Office and include the daily absence list.)

PUBLIC SCHOOLS
_____, Connecticut

HEALTH OFFICE FOLLOW-UP REPORT

Date: _____ Time: _____

Contact Person: _____

Fever: ☐ YES ☐ NO Temperature: _____

Date of Onset: _____

Cough: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Vomiting/Diarrhea: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Sore Throat: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Body Aches/Chills: ☐ YES ☐ NO

Seen by MD or MD appointment: _____ Date: _____

Instructions to the Parent/Guardian by school nurse after gathering above information:

- 1) **If your child has both:** Fever ($>100^{\circ}\text{F}$ or 37.7°C) **and** a sore throat or cough, then you must keep your child home until they are fever free for 24 hours without medication. Your child may have the flu. Other symptoms can include runny nose, body aches, vomiting, and diarrhea.
- 2) **But if your child has:** Fever alone, **OR** vomiting or diarrhea, **OR** sore throat or new cough with no fever, then you must keep your child home until symptoms are gone for 24 hours.
- 3) Please remember to call into school every day your child will be absent. The local district will be monitoring for influenza-like illness in the school. This our effort to assure you that we have the health and safety of your children as our number one priority. Thank you for helping us to keep the school environment as healthy as possible for all students and staff.
- 4) Guidance on how long to keep a child with influenza-like symptoms home is subject to change. Our information is obtained from the Connecticut Flu Watch website <http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch>

Health Office Nurses: You may have to use the back of this form to follow-up with this child's daily absences and progress concerning health issues. Please remember to document date, time, contact person and pertinent information such as symptoms, underlying chronic diseases, and other family members who may become ill. All information is confidential according to CT State Laws and the Department Health and Education.

IMMEDIATE
DISPOSITION _____

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #1: Prevention Letter

Use this letter to help prepare parents for pandemic flu – before there are verified pandemic coronavirus cases in the U.S.

Dear Parents,

This letter will help your family prepare for a flu pandemic that could make many people sick.

It is important to know that at this time, there is no pandemic flu of any kind in the United States.

Public health officials are worried the flu/respiratory illness virus may change so that it can infect people and spread easily from person-to-person. This would cause a worldwide flu outbreak, called a pandemic.

Public health officials want people to protect themselves against pandemic coronavirus. Here are some ways to protect your family:

- Keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.
- Teach your children to wash hands a lot with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick.
- People who are sick should stay home from work or school and avoid other people until they are better.

Enclosed with this letter is a checklist to help families get ready for a pandemic flu outbreak. This information can also help your family get ready for any kind of emergency.

If you have questions, please contact your School Nurse or healthcare provider. You can call the school (INSERT NUMBER)

You can get more information from _____:

The federal government website with information on planning for individuals and families:
<http://www.pandemicflu.gov>

American Red Cross
<http://www.redcross.org>

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER #2 FIRST CORONAVIRUS CASE: Use this letter to help prepare parents for pandemic flu after first coronavirus case is found in United States.

Dear Parents:

As expected, the coronavirus is now in the United States. It is important to know that, at this time, there are known human cases of coronavirus in the United States.

Health officials are worried that the coronavirus may change so that people can get sick from it. If that happened, it could spread from person-to-person. This would cause a worldwide respiratory illness outbreak, called a pandemic.

So even though there is no pandemic now, we want to remind you about some ways to protect your family from getting sick:

- Keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.
- Teach your children to wash hands a lot with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay at least three feet away from people who are sick.
- People who are sick should stay home from work or school and avoid other people until they are better.

Enclosed with this letter is a checklist to help families get ready for a pandemic respiratory outbreak. This information can also help your family get ready for any kind of emergency.

If you have questions, please contact your School Nurse or healthcare provider. You can call the school (INSERT NUMBER).

You can get more information from _____:

Visit online at _____ or call _____

The federal government website with information on planning for individuals and families:
<http://www..cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS: Initial Pandemic Outbreak #3: Use this letter to let parents know schools are open.

Dear Parents:

This letter will give you information about a respiratory illness outbreak in our area. Every year, some people get sick with the flu during the fall and winter months. This year, there is a new virus that is making many people in our community sick. So many people are sick locally and in the United States that health officials call it a “pandemic flu”.

A lot of students and teachers in our school are sick with respiratory illness. We hope they will all get better quickly.

At this time, the county/state health department tells us that students who are not ill can safely come to school. The schools will remain open. We will keep you updated with any important information.

To keep the coronavirus from spreading to more people, we ask you to keep sick children home. Any children who are sick in school will be sent home.

Public health officials want you to protect yourself and your family against pandemic coronavirus. Here are some ways to stop the spread of germs and sickness:

- Keep children who are sick at home. Don’t send them to school.
- Teach your children to wash hands a lot with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
- Teach your children to stay away at least three feet away from people who are sick.
- People who are sick should stay home from work or school and stay away from other people until they are better.
- Stay away from shopping malls, movie theaters or other places where there are large groups of people.

We are also giving you some tips about how to care for your family if they are ill.

If you have questions, please contact your School Nurse or healthcare provider. You can call the school hotline (INSERT NUMBER). You can get more information from _____. If the pandemic flu continues to spread and more students become ill, schools may close for days or weeks. The purpose of closing schools will be to keep children from getting sick. If schools are closed, children should stay at home. Begin planning now for childcare in your home. Recommendations may change during the course of a pandemic flu outbreak.

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS #4 Expanded Outbreak: Use this letter to let parents know schools are open and urge ill children to stay home.

Dear Parents:

We wrote to you recently to tell you about a pandemic flu outbreak in our community. Here is some new information.

There are now even more students in our school who are ill with this coronavirus. Still the county/state health department tells us that students who are not ill can continue to attend school. The schools will remain open. We will keep you updated with any important information.

To keep the flu from spreading to more people, we ask you to keep sick children home. Any children who are sick in school will be sent home.

Public health officials want you to protect yourself and your family against pandemic flu. Here are some ways to stop the spread of germs and sickness and take care of your family:

- ✓ Keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.
- ✓ If some of the people in your home are sick with the flu, keep them away from the people who are not sick.
- ✓ If some of the people in your home are sick with the flu and you cannot see a health provider, some things you can do to help them are:
 - Have them drink a lot of liquid (juice, water).
 - Keep the ill person as comfortable as possible. Rest is important.
 - For fever, sore throat and muscle aches, in adults, use ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol). Do not use aspirin with children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life-threatening illness.
 - Keep tissues and a trash bag within reach of the sick person.
 - Be sure everyone in your home washes their hands frequently.
 - Contact a healthcare provider for further advice. If the ill person is having difficulty breathing or is getting worse, contact the healthcare provider right away.

Call the school hotline (INSERT NUMBER) or _____.

If the pandemic coronavirus continues to spread and more students become ill, schools may close for days or weeks. The purpose of closing schools will be to keep children from getting sick. If schools are closed, children should stay at home. Begin planning now for childcare in your home.

SAMPLE LETER TO PARENTS School Closure #5: Use this letter to inform parents schools are closed.

Dear Parents:

The Superintendent of Schools, upon consultation with appropriate District/State health officials, has ordered all schools in the District to close. This order is because of the pandemic coronavirus situation in our community/area. All schools are immediately closed until further notice and children should stay home. *(or specify which schools and for how long)*

Schools may be closed for days or even weeks to reduce contact among children and stop the spread of the flu. We know that many students and their families are very sick. We know this is a hard time for our community and our hearts go out to those who are ill.

Because the coronavirus is easily spread from person-to-person, it is not safe for large groups of people to gather. During this time, both children and adults should stay away from other people and groups as much as possible. They should not gather in other locations such as shopping malls, movie theaters or community centers.

We know that it may be hard to get a doctor's appointment, go to a clinic or even be seen in a hospital emergency room. Here are some tips for helping those who are sick with the flu:

- Have them drink a lot of liquid. (juice, water)
- Keep the sick person as comfortable as possible. Rest is important.
- For fever, sore throat and muscle aches, use ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol). Do not use aspirin with children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life- threatening illness.
- Keep tissues and a trash bag within reach of the sick person.
- Be sure everyone in your home washes their hands frequently.
- Keep the people who are sick with the flu away from the people who are not sick.

For more information, call your healthcare provider or _____.

We will contact you as soon as we have information about when school will reopen.

SAMPLE LETER TO PARENTS School Re-Opens #6: Use this letter to inform parents schools are re-opened.

Dear Parents:

Local/State health officials have declared the pandemic coronavirus is under control. Our school will open again on _____. At this time, students may safely return to class.

Even though school is opening, there are still some people who are sick from the coronavirus. Health officials say that pandemic flu outbreaks sometimes happen in waves. This means more people could become sick soon again. If more people get sick, schools may need to close again.

We will continue to give you any important information.

Because the flu can still be spread from person-to-person, please keep children who are sick at home. Don't send them to school.

We are looking forward to seeing your children again.

Tips for Parents on Coping with Pandemic Coronavirus

Plan for an extended stay at home during a pandemic.

- Ask your employer about how business will continue during a pandemic.
- Ask your employer if you can work from home during a pandemic.
- Plan for a possible reduction or loss of income, if you are unable to work or your place of employment is closed.
- Check with your employer or union about leave policies.
- Plan home learning activities and exercises. Have materials, such as books, on hand.
- Plan recreational activities that your children can do at home.

Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

Examples: Non-perishable foods, health and emergency supplies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready to eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, soups • Protein or fruit bars • Dry cereal or granola • Peanut butter and jelly • Dried fruit, nuts, trail mix • Crackers • Canned juices • Bottled water • Fluids with electrolytes, such as Pedialyte® • Canned or jarred baby food • Baby formula 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soap and water or alcohol based hand wash • Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin) • Thermometer • Vitamins • Prescribed medical supplies such as, glucose and blood pressure monitoring • Flashlight with extra batteries • Portable radio with extra batteries • Manual can opener • Pet food • Garbage bags • Tissues, toilet paper, disposable diapers
---	--

If someone in your home develops flu/respiratory illness symptoms (fever, cough, muscle aches):

- Encourage plenty of fluids to drink.
- Keep the ill person as comfortable as possible. Rest is important.
- For adults with fever, sore throat and muscle aches, use ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- Do not use aspirin in children or teenagers; it can cause Reye's syndrome, a life threatening illness.
- Sponging with tepid (wrist-temperature) water lowers fever only during the period of sponging. Do not sponge with alcohol.
- Keep tissues and a trash bag for their disposal within reach of the patient.
- All members of the household should wash their hands frequently.
- Keep other family members and visitors away from the person who is ill.
- Contact a healthcare provider for further advice. If the ill person is having difficulty breathing or is getting worse, contact the healthcare provider right away.

For more information, call your healthcare provider or visit the Connecticut Department of Public Health website at <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Public-Health-Preparedness/Main-Page/2019-Novel-Coronavirus>

SAMPLE KEY MESSAGES FOR SCHOOL OFFICIALS – AN OUTBREAK

- We know this is an anxious time for our community and our hearts go out to those who are ill. We are working closely with local health officials to deal with the situation and will keep parents updated with any important information.
- At this time, under the guidance of the county health department, we believe students can safely attend classes and schools will remain open. Our thoughts are with all of our families and children who are affected.
- If pandemic coronavirus continues to spread and more students become ill, health officials may need to close schools for an extended period of time (for example, up to 6 weeks).
- The purpose of closing schools will be to decrease contact among children in order to decrease their risk of getting sick and to limit the spread of infection. If schools are closed, children should stay at home.
- We urge parents to plan now for the possibility of schools closing. Arrange day care, and home schooling.
- Parents can help protect their children and prevent the spread of pandemic flu as they would colds and other flu by taking the following precautions:
 - Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds. Be sure to set a good example by doing this yourself.
 - Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow.
 - Teach your children to stay away from people who are sick and stay home from work or school if you are sick.
- Recommendations may change during the course of a pandemic. We will make public announcements through the media and parents can call the school district's hotline at (INSERT HOTLINE).
- For more information on the pandemic and prevention, visit _____ or call the Health Emergency Information Line: _____.

Personnel -- Certified/Non-Certified

Non-School Employment

Personnel of the schools may receive compensation for outside activities as long as these activities do not interfere with the proper discharge of their assigned duties, do not constitute a conflict of interest, or do not cause poor public relations within the community. It is expected that any outside activity should be carried on in a business-like and ethical manner.

Personnel -- Certified/Non-Certified

Non-School Employment

Outside Work Activities of Special Education Pupil Personnel Staff

The following are recommended ethical practices for Westport ~~PPS~~ [Pupil Personnel Services](#) staff members who wish to work outside of the system in jobs related to their school positions.

A. Medical, Psychiatric and Psychological Consultants, and Private Professional [Involvement with Westport and Regional Students](#)

1. The role of consultant does not prohibit private professional contact with Westport students.
2. If a student is a current patient of a consultant, that consultant should communicate with the school staff as the student's physician and/or psychotherapist. If the school needs a formal consultation, another consultant should be engaged.
3. If the ~~PPS~~ [Pupil Personnel Services](#) staff member(s) feel that any consultant is an appropriate private referral, they may include that person's name on the list of three referral sources.
4. The consultant may not suggest himself or herself as a referral source.

B. Pupil Personnel Staff (Counselor, Psychologist, Social Worker)

1. No Pupil Personnel staff member (counselor, psychologist, social worker) may provide for a fee any assessment, evaluation, or short-term counseling services to a student eligible for receiving these through Westport school services (students enrolled in any Westport public, private, parochial, or nursery school, or non-enrolled pre-schoolers or drop-outs under 21, where eligible for services under Special Education law).
2. No Pupil Personnel staff member (counselor, psychologist, social worker) may provide therapy to any Westport or regional students in their assigned case load or a family member of a student in their case load.
3. In no instance should any member of the Pupil Personnel staff initiate with the parents discussion of private purchase of their own services for any students currently being serviced by the Pupil Personnel Department.

Additionally, no counselor or other staff member shall refer to parents for private outside services without first exhausting, through the divisional coordinators and the Central Planning and Placement Team, the student's eligibility for services

during the school day.

**R-4138(b)
4238**

~~Personnel---Certified/Non-Certified~~

~~Non-School Employment~~

~~Outside Work Activities of Special Education Pupil Personnel Staff (continued)~~

~~B.---Pupil Personnel Staff (Counselor, Psychologist, Social Worker) (continued)~~

4. There are no restrictions on the professional services that may be offered to students not attending public, private, parochial, or nursery schools in Westport, or to students who reside outside of Westport and who are not attending Westport school programs.

C. Special Education Teachers and Speech Therapists

1. Special Education teachers and Special Education speech therapists may ~~not~~not provide teaching, tutoring, or therapy services to any Special Education student in his/her school privately during the school year.
2. Special Education teacherss or speech therapistss may teach, tutor, or provide speech therapy privately to any non-Special Education student during the school year (including students in his/her building).
3. A Special Education teacher may teach or tutor privately any Special Education or non-Special Education student outside of the school year at the request of the parent. However, in no instance should any member of the Special Education staff initiate with the parents a discussion of the private purchase of their own teaching or tutoring services for any student currently being serviced by the Special Education Department.
4. Unusual circumstances require permission from the Assistant Superintendent ~~of~~for ~~Special Education and~~ Pupil Personnel Services.
5. The Westport staff member should insist that the school be informed that parents are seeking private tutoring. If the parent refuses, it is not appropriate for that staff member to work with that child.
6. Diagnostic labels and special education related issues should not be discussed with the parent. Parents should be referred to the child's counselor or school psychologist.

Regulation re-reviewed: 2006

Revised:

WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Westport, Connecticut

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Participation in Political Activity

A. Participation

Professional employees of the Westport school system may participate in political activities and may hold political office, with the following provisions and/or exceptions, and

1. In compliance with Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-232, a professional employee elected to the Westport Board of Education must resign from the school system upon taking office.
2. A professional employee must comply with other existing town ordinances and state statutes.

B. Leaves of Absence:

~~The following leave policies will be applied to professional employees of the Westport Board of Education who participate in campaigning or who seek political office:~~

- ~~1. A professional employee may be granted a leave of absence during the campaign period for a political office for which he is a candidate.~~
- ~~2. A professional employee who is elected to a political office may be granted a leave of absence (unless required by ordinance or statute to resign from the system).~~
- ~~3. Length of Leave~~
 - ~~a. Leaves of absence for political office holding shall be considered as long-term leave and will normally extent to the end of a given school year, unless a shorter period is mutually agreed upon by the employee and the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.~~
 - ~~b. Leaves for campaigning shall be considered as routine leaves and shall be subject to the policy governing leaves of this type.~~

The Westport Board of Education will not discriminate against, discipline, or discharge any employee because such employee is a candidate for the Office of Representative or Senator in the Connecticut General Assembly or because he/she is elected to or holds such office or because he/she loses time from work in order to perform duties as such Representative, Senator, or member elect, provided the failure to pay wages or salaries for any such time lost shall not be considered discrimination. Any employee elected to said office may request, in writing, an unpaid personal leave of absence from the Board for a designated time period of consecutive school days in a given school year not to exceed two consecutive terms of such office. During the unpaid leave the employee may maintain his/her health and life insurance benefits by paying

the premiums on a stipulated schedule at the Board rate. The request for the leave must be forwarded to the Board no later than 45 days prior to the beginning of the requested leave. No employee on such leave shall lose any seniority status retirement, fringe benefits and other service credits which may have accrued to him/her, unless the circumstances have so changed as to make it impossible or unreasonable to do so.

(cf. 4118.23/4218.13 – Conflict of Interest)

Policy adopted: February 20, 1967
Policy revised: 2003
Policy revised:

WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Westport, Connecticut

Personnel - Certified

Staff/Student Non-Fraternization

Staff members who have contact with children and adolescents through school activities have the responsibility not to betray or misuse their privileged position. Students develop a special trust in school staff by virtue of the school system's authority and the important role the schools play in their lives. Staff members must never take advantage of students' vulnerability or of their confidence that staff members in school will behave appropriately in relationships with them. While the Board encourages employees to be warm and supporting of students, personnel may not allow students to regard them as peers.

It is the policy of the Westport Board of Education to prohibit any sexual relationship, contact or sexually nuanced behavior or communication (verbal or non-verbal) between a staff member and a student, while the student is enrolled in the school system. The prohibition extends to students of the opposite sex or the same sex as the staff member, and applies regardless of whether the student or the staff member is the initiator of the behavior and whether or not the student welcomes or reciprocates the attention.

Further, school system personnel (employees, contractors, and agents of the school system, shall provide no assistance to an employee in finding another job, beyond the routine transmittal of personnel or administrative files, if the employee engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor or student in violation of the law (ESEA, 20 U.S.C. 7926(a)).

Definitions:

Staff Members: part-time and full-time employees, and those individuals who are employed as substitutes, consultants, coaches, tutors, bus drivers, bus monitors, student-teachers, interns, volunteers and others who work with or have contact with children under the auspices of or through contract with, the Board of Education. This term shall include all professional employees.

Professional Employee: a person employed by a school who (A) holds a certificate from the State Board of Education, (B) is a member of a faculty where certification is not required, (C) is an administration officer of a school, or (D) is a registered nurse employed by or assigned to a school.

Professional Communication: any communication made privately and in confidence by a student to a professional employee of such student's school in the course of the latter's employment.

Prohibited Behavior: includes, but is not limited to: flirting and bantering with sexual overtones, dating, courting or engaging in a personal relationship on or off campus that is sexually motivated or nuanced, having any physical sexual contact or sexual intercourse with any student.

Complaints: should be reported to the Principal, who will investigate to determine whether a violation has occurred. The Principal will inform the Superintendent that the investigation is being conducted.

Violations: will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Employees' due process

rights will be safeguarded.

P-4118.24(b)

~~Personnel-Certified~~

~~Staff/Student Non-Fraternization (continued)~~

The Principal will consult with the ~~Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel~~ or his/her designee to determine whether any alleged violation falls into the category of sexual harassment and/or child abuse or sexual abuse; if so it might need to be addressed according to those policies and/or also reported to the police or another agency.

Procedures: Procedures for filing complaints and for conducting investigations will be developed by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Professional Communications

Prompt and open home-school communications and understanding have been and will continue to be central to the philosophy of the Westport schools.

Connecticut law provides that professional employees “shall not be required to disclose any information acquired through a professional communication with a student, when such information concerns alcohol or drug abuse or any alcoholic or drug problem of such student...” Specifically excluded from this provision of law is information of a criminal nature which, when learned by a professional employee, is required to be reported to appropriate law enforcement officials.

This law makes it possible for a student to share certain problems with or seek help from a trusted adult without fear of immediate incrimination. This protection applies only to professional communications between a student and a professional employee that concern alcohol or drug abuse or any alcohol or drug problem of the student. In responding to this plea for help, and in recognition of their professional obligations to continue to maintain good home-school communications, and to protect a child's health and welfare, professional employees who elect to maintain this confidence should use the following guidelines to provide that help as effectively as possible.

- a. Inform the student that, if in their judgment, maintaining the confidence is not in the student's best interest they will feel obliged to break it.
- b. Encourage the student to discuss the matter with his/her parents.
- c. If not the student's counselor, encourage the student to confer with his/her counselor.
- d. Make the student aware of the school's supportive and rehabilitative interest and inform him/her of the school and community resources available to him/her.
- e. Make the student aware of the potential hazard to his/her health and inform him/her about the laws pertaining to drug and alcohol use and abuse.

2. Every member of the school staff bears a professional and personal obligation as an adult to act wisely and responsibly in the best interest of a child.

If the point is reached at which the professional employee feels he/she has failed in his/her efforts to persuade the student to seek the help he/she needs, fear for the student's health and safety or of the danger posed to others, and elects to break the confidence, the following procedures are recommended:

- a. Inform the student of his/her strong concern for his/her welfare and need to divulge the confidence.
 - b. Arrange for a conference to include the student, his/her parents, his/her Principal and his/her school counselor.
3. Each principal will arrange to inform his/her faculty, student and parent body about Connecticut General Statutes 10-154a and these administrative guidelines.
 4. **Notwithstanding anything contained in this policy**, if the professional employee receives physical evidence that a crime has been or is being committed by the student, such evidence must be turned over to school administrations or to law enforcement officials within two days from when it is received. In turn, a school administrator receiving such evidence must turn it over to either the Commissioner of Consumer Protection or the appropriate law enforcement officials within three days of receipt.

[\(cf. 4118.112/4218.112 - Sexual Harassment\)](#)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[10-53a-71 Sexual assault in the second degree: Class C or B felony.](#)

[10-151 Employment of teachers. Definitions. Notice and hearing on failure to renew or termination of contract. Appeal](#)

[PA 15-205 An Act Protecting School Children](#)

[17a-106 Cooperation in relation to prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse/neglect](#)

[Elementary and Secondary Education Act \(ESEA\), as amended ESSA, 20 U.S.C. 7926\(a\); Prohibition on aiding and abetting sexual abuse \(aka "don't pass the trash"\)](#)

~~10-154a Professional communication between teacher or nurse and student.
Surrender of physical evidence obtained from students.~~