



Hebron Public Schools
High Expectations, Bright Futures
Family Handbook
2020-2021

Opening Message

Dear Families,

On behalf of the entire Hebron Public Schools faculty and staff we would like to welcome you to the 2020-21 school year. As we embark on this unprecedented year, we look forward to welcoming your child back to our school. While many aspects of our school, classrooms, and operations look different, the underlying devotion to building relationships, creating communities, encouraging growth, and experiencing joy together remains.

We would like to express our appreciation to the many staff and community members who spent countless hours this summer synthesizing guidance from the Connecticut State Department of Education, the Office of Early Childhood, the Centers for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and Chatham Health to create a ReEntry Plan with the ultimate goal of keeping everyone safe and healthy.

Please take some time to review this Handbook for Students and Parents with your child. The handbook provides important information about the policies, procedures, and expectations of our schools. In it you will find details about our school day, procedures for arrival and dismissal, health related items, attendance expectations, details about school and community resources and support, building a positive school climate, copies of important board of education policies, and a great deal of other information that will help support a safe environment that is conducive to learning for all children.

Included with your child's opening day information is a signature form. Please indicate on that form that you have read the handbook and reviewed it with your child and return the signed copy to the school by Friday, September 18th.

In addition to the Handbook for Students and Parents, please keep informed about the many wonderful happenings in our schools by accessing our website (www.hebron.k12.ct.us), reviewing "Tuesday

Papers”, and signing up for School Messenger as these are our primary tools for communication.

We always welcome your questions, concerns or suggestions in assuring that we are working collaboratively to make this a successful school year for everyone.

Sincerely,

Michael Larkin
Principal
Hebron Elementary School
mlarkin@hebron.k12.ct.us

Katie Uriano
Principal
Gilead Hill School
kuriano@hebron.k12.ct.us

Mission

Hebron Public Schools inspires children to be resilient, confident, respectful, well rounded and prepared to discover and follow their dreams.

Vision

Students are champions for equity who demonstrate passion, innovation, academic and artistic excellence, wellness and leadership.

Board of Education

Heather Petit, Chair

Christopher Aker, Vice Chair

Amanda Veneziano, Secretary

Joseph Margaitis

Keith Petit

Allyzon Schmeizl

Joseph Zuzel

Administration Office

580 Gilead Street, Hebron, CT 06248

Phone: 860-228-2577, Fax: 860-228-2235

Dr. Thomas Baird, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Donald Briere, Director of Educational Services

Ms. Kaitlyn O'Leary, Business Manager

The Hebron Board of Education prohibits harassment and discrimination in educational programs, services, or employment on the basis of race, religion, national origin, alienage, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability (including pregnancy), gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other basis in accordance with Titles VI, VII, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1973, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, and appropriate state laws.

The Hebron Board of Education reserves the right to modify, change or update the policies contained herein.

HEBRON SCHOOL DISTRICT 2020-2021 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

<p>August/September 17</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>31</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8+</td><td>9+</td><td>10+</td><td>11+</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25+</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>31-4 Staff Development 7 Labor Day 8 School Begins 8-11 Early Dismissal 19 Rosh Hashannah 25 1/2 day Prof. Dev.—Early Dismissal 28 Yom Kippur</p>	M	T	W	Th	F	31	1	2	3	4	7	8+	9+	10+	11+	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25+	28	29	30			<p>October 20</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>12 Columbus Day Observed 13 Staff Development Day</p>	M	T	W	Th	F				1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	29	30	<p>November 17</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25+</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>3 Parent Conferences 4 Evening Parent Conferences 11 Veterans' Day Observed 25 Early Dismissal 26 & 27 School Recess</p>	M	T	W	Th	F	2	3	4	5	6	9	10	11	12	13	16	17	18	19	20	23	24	25+	26	27	30					<p>December 17</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9+</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23+</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>9 1/2 day Prof. Dev.—Early Dismissal 23 Early Dismissal 24–31 School Recess</p>	M	T	W	Th	F		1	2	3	4	7	8	9+	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23+	24	25	28	29	30	31		<p>January 18</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1 School Recess 18 M. L. King Jr. Day 19 Staff Development Day</p>	M	T	W	Th	F					1	4	5	6	7	8	11	12	13	14	15	18	19	20	21	22	25	26	27	28	29
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First Day of School: September 8, 2020
Last Day of School: June 17, 2021

Marking Periods

- 1st Marking Period - Sept. 8th through November 30th
- 2nd Marking Period - December 1st through March 5th
- 3rd Marking Period - March 8th through the last day of school

Parent/Teacher Conferences—November 3 & 4, March 25 & 26

June 18th—29th are designated as make up days for snow or other emergency closings. If by February 1st six school days have been used, any additional cancelled school days will come from April vacation, February recess, or Professional Development Days.

Approved: 7/22/2020

Gilead Hill School

PreK through Grade 2

580 Gilead Street, Hebron, CT 06248

Phone: 860-228-9458, Fax: 860-228-1106

Mrs. Katie Uriano, Principal

Hebron Elementary School

Grade 3 through Grade 6

92 Church Street, Hebron, CT 06248

Phone: 860-228-9465, Fax: 860-228-1378

Mr. Michael Larkin, Principal

School Hours

AM Pre-Kindergarten	8:30 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.
PM Pre-Kindergarten	12:20 p.m. - 3:10 p.m. (M, T, TH, F)
Grades Pre-K (Full day) K-6,	8:30 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.

Early Dismissal Days

Grades Pre-K (Full day), K-6	8:30 a.m. - 1:10 p.m.
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Delayed Opening Days

All Grades PK-6	10:30 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.
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Emergency Early Closings / No School / Delayed Openings

At times, school schedules may be adjusted due to a sudden change in the weather or other emergency. Early closings follow the schedule listed above. On delayed opening days, school starts 2 hours later than the typical start time.

The stations listed below will provide this information. Announcements begin about 6:00 a.m. and will be broadcast over the following stations:

Television:

- Channel 3
- Channel 30
- Channel 8
- FOX 61

Radio:

- WTIC 1080 AM
- WDRC 102.9 FM
- WILI 98.0 FM

*Follow us on Twitter for
up-to-the-minute info
on delays and closings!*

@HebronSchoolsCT

In addition, School Messenger System will send an automated call to the phone numbers on file. We strongly advise you to develop a family emergency school closing plan. A family plan might include the following:

- Three to five homes, listed in specific order, that your child could go to until you could reach him/her.
- Ensure your child has your phone number to contact you.

Please take the time to practice your family emergency school closing plan with all children. If your child attends a preschool program, please check with the school for specific program schedules.

Other Emergencies

There have been times when it has been necessary to evacuate the school in order to ensure the safety of students. In that event, students will be transported to another site, where their school day can continue. Under the advice of police, phone lines must be kept clear and the creation of a secondary hazard must be avoided. Our School Messenger System will notify parents as soon as possible.

School Messenger System

Hebron Public Schools uses the School Messenger System to notify parents, guardians, and/or the designated student emergency contact, of pertinent information regarding your child and school. The district uses this notification system for the following:

- Daily notification of student absence
- Delayed school openings
- Early release due to weather or school emergencies
- School or district surveys
- Notification of upcoming school or district events
- Other unforeseen emergencies or circumstances

Student Data Sheet/Emergency Information

It is essential that every student have emergency information on file in the school office and the health office. A phone number for a responsible adult other than the parents must be included, as office personnel must be able to get in touch with someone who can take responsibility for each student. A data sheet is sent home with each child on the first day of school and should be updated in PowerSchool immediately. Please remember to update the information (change of address, phone numbers, place of employment, new emergency contact, etc.) now and at any time during the school year.

Under the Buckley Amendment and Hebron Board of Education policy, we are allowed to release information such as class lists with addresses and phone numbers to anyone with a legitimate educational purpose. Parents/Guardians may request annually that such information about their child will not be shared. Please see Permission/Information Form which will be sent home on the first day of school for this purpose. Please return this form promptly.

Surveillance equipment may be used on buses, in certain areas of campus, and at school events for security, safety, and discipline purposes. These video/audio records may be utilized as evidence for certain disciplinary procedures. This evidence may be maintained as part of a student's record and available to the parent. Parental notice restricting photographs or videos will not apply to the use of surveillance equipment for safety, security, and disciplinary procedures.

Transportation

While we understand that there are occasions where students need to be dropped off or picked up by a parent, we encourage all students who are able to do so, to ride the bus daily. With so many students and limited parking lot space, fewer drop-offs and pick-ups increase safety and student entry to and dismissal from school. Please refer to our full Transportation Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Student Drop-Off

- Parents may use curbside drop-off, which is supervised by school personnel. Drop-off at both schools is between 8:15 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. If a staff member is not supervising the drop-off, parents must bring the child into the school office.
- Student's should exit from the side of the vehicle closest to the sidewalk.
- Students are not permitted in the building before 8:15 a.m. Supervision is not available before this time.
- If you need to park your car and enter the building, park in the designated parking lot. Only buses are permitted in front of the schools.

Student Pick-Up

Please send in a signed note to the teacher so that they will be aware of the change in routine at dismissal. (Indicate the name of the person who will be picking up your child; students will be released only to parents or an adult authorized by parents.) If you find out during the day that it will be necessary to pick up your child and you have not sent a note, call the school office and we will notify your child and the teacher. We ask that these calls come in prior to 2:00 p.m. whenever possible.

- Dismissal time is 3:10 p.m.
- Please use the Gym entrance. A staff member will be present to sign out all students. Then, and only then, should parents take students out of the building.
- Parents should not go to classrooms or ask the teacher to dismiss their child. Teachers are authorized to release children only on a direct call from the office and children are only released through our after school student pick up or through the office. Children will not be released to people waiting in cars.
- For safety reasons, children will not be allowed to be taken off buses once they have boarded.

Passing School Buses

It is a state law for all vehicles to STOP whenever the school bus driver has activated the red SOS lights. When the SOS lights are activated, cars must not pass the school bus, and no one should direct traffic to pass the school bus. When the SOS lights are activated, it means "STOP", even in a parking lot. Violators are subject to a \$450 fine for each bus which is passed when the school bus has the SOS lights activated.

Changing Buses

With the number of requests received to accommodate childcare/ babysitting needs, the district has set established procedures to ensure the safety of the children it transports and the reasonableness of its transportation operation. K-6 students will not be allowed to ride a bus other than their assigned bus.

If a parent wishes to request that a child be picked up or dropped off at a location other than their home to accommodate childcare/ babysitting needs, such a request must be submitted in writing on forms available in the school offices by July 1st prior to the ensuing school year for children in grades K—6. (New students registering after July 1st and late requests may be granted, if all requirements are met.) Requests for transportation of students to and from daycare providers will be honored with the following stipulations:

- That the location of the requested daycare provider is on an existing bus route to and from the school to which the student is assigned.
- That there is space available on the bus to which the student would be assigned if the day care request is honored.
- That the location of the a.m. pickup must be the same Monday through Friday and the location of the p.m. drop off must be the same Monday through Friday.
- Any student whose daycare request is honored will relinquish their seat on the bus on their home bus route.
- Any requested change in transportation during the school year will be honored only if the above conditions are met. This change must be in effect for a minimum of three

months. Any such requests must be submitted to the school office at least one week in advance. Forms are available in the school offices.

If space is not available on existing bus routes, requests will be granted in order received. Temporary exceptions may be granted by the superintendent or designee in the event of family emergencies. The Building Administration will notify all parents of this policy prior to the close of each school year. New parents will be informed at the time they register students. In the event that the parents disagree with a decision to deny a route change, the parents may file a written request to review the matter with the superintendent who will meet with the parents within ten working days of the receipt of the request. If a route change is approved, it will go into effect within five working days after a decision has been made.

Please note: Children are allowed to get on or off their regular assigned bus at a different stop, but only with a written permission slip issued by the school office. Requests of this nature are to be in writing and submitted to the office early in the day.

Please note that video cameras are installed on all buses and are periodically reviewed by administration to monitor student behavior. Consequences for unacceptable bus behavior is dependent upon frequency and severity of behavior and are dependent upon the driver and school administrator. Repeated infractions will result in behavior being documented and shared with administration on a bus referral form which will be sent home to parents.

Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal reminders/warnings
- Change of seat/assigned seat
- Meeting with administrator with phone call to parents
- Meeting with student and family
- Loss of privilege as determined by school administrator
- Verbal or written apology
- Temporary denial of bus privileges

Other Transportation: Bicycle and Walking

Due to the heavy traffic patterns outside of both schools, walking and biking are not prohibited but are strongly discouraged for safety reasons. Crossing guards are not available at either school. Students will be dismissed from school to walk or ride their bike home only after all buses have left the school. If a student plans to ride a bicycle to school or walk parents must submit a permission letter indicating dates that the child will be walking or biking to school.

Attendance

Daily, on-time attendance is critically important for students. We ask that our parents assure that students arrive at school on-time and remain in school until the end of the day. Frequent late arrivals and early dismissals disrupt the learning process. In the event of frequent absences, late arrivals, and early dismissals, a call will be made from the principal to the child's parent.

According to the State Board of Education Policy, a student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at their assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day.

Excused Absences

Any absence before the student's tenth absence, is considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate written documentation; and for the student's tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused only for the following reasons:

- Personal illness (verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional);
- religious holidays;
- Mandated court appearances (documentation required);
- Funeral or death in the family, or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
- Lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends.
- Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by the district administrators and in accordance with CT State Department of Education guidance:
 - The opportunity must be educational in nature. It must have a learning objective related to the student's course work or plan of study. Not all memorable and/or life experiences would be considered educational and, therefore, would not be available for this exemption.
 - It must be an opportunity not ordinarily available to the student.
 - It must be grade and developmentally appropriate.
 - The content of the experience must be highly relevant to the student. While some opportunities will be relevant to all students, others will contain very specific content that would limit their relevance to a smaller group of students.

Unexcused Absences

Absences for reasons other than those listed as "excused" are considered "unexcused". In such cases, the amount and kind of assistance provided to the student is at the discretion of the student's teacher and the principal. According to CGS 10-198a, a student who accrues four unexcused absences in one month, or ten unexcused absences in one year will be considered truant and reported to the state on the required state reporting form as such.

Please refer to our full Attendance Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Absence Due to Illness

If your child is absent from school because of illness, please call the Health Office at Gilead Hill School: 860-228-4933 Hebron Elementary School: 860-228-8420 on the first day of the illness. Both schools have answering machines so messages can be left the night before at any time if you know your child is going to be absent. If the Health Office does not hear from you and your child is absent, the nurse will call you to confirm that the child is home. If we are unable to reach you, we will call all emergency numbers until we are able to reach someone who can verify the child's absence. Please do not send **your child to school with a sore throat, fever, nausea, and cold or flu symptoms**. With children in close proximity to each other on a daily basis, controlling the spread of illness can prevent "mini-epidemics". Please be sure your child is "24-hours symptom free" before returning to school. Students with strep throat must be on medication a full 24 hours before returning to school.

Making Up Work Due to Absences

Due to the nature of assignments, teachers will make determinations about “making up work” that has been missed when a student is absent. Some assignments require further instruction before they can be completed, and this work is generally not sent home. Teachers will determine which assignments the student can reasonably complete on their own.

Release of Pupils from School

Administration is obligated to release a child during the school day to either parent, even when the parents live apart, are legally separated, or the marriage has been dissolved by the courts, unless the administration has received written legal documentation to the contrary. No student under the age of eighteen is to be released from school to any person, other than a parent or guardian or someone designated by parent or guardian.

Picking Up Early

Families are reminded that the instructional day ends at 3:05 p.m., and should only pick up their child(ren) in the case of an appointment or emergency. Should it be necessary to pick up a child, parents should send in a note on that day or call the school office. Notes should include student’s name, teacher name, date, time of pick-up, and parent signature.

Family Engagement

We value parent and family involvement in the schools. In an effort to ensure the emotional and physical safety of our students, all who are interested in volunteering in the schools will be required to complete a Hebron Volunteer Application Form and an Authorization for Release of Information for DCF CPS Search. These forms are sent home at the start of the school year and are available on the district website. Please refer to our full Family Engagement Policy and Volunteer Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Steps in Communication

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, the following channels of communication have been established. Parent concerns should be made in the following sequence:

- Teacher
- Principal
- Superintendent

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

The PTA helps build a close relationship between home and school. Please join and support this group. PTA meetings will be held in conjunction with Education Updates where the school administration will address various topics. Meeting dates will be published in our monthly calendar.

Music Boosters

This parent support group promotes activities for the Band and Chorus as well as sponsoring music-oriented assemblies for the entire school. For more information, please contact your child’s music teacher.

Art Boosters

This parent support group organizes fundraisers where parents can purchase their child's art work as featured on notecards, t-shirts, mugs and other items. Proceeds support various art initiatives.

Classroom Visits

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit classrooms. Visits are opportunities to see the class in action; however, teacher conferences are not held during these visits. Visits can be scheduled through the teacher. Whenever you visit the school for any purpose, please enter through the main entrance at the front of the building and sign-in at the school's office where you will receive a visitor's badge to wear while you are in the building. A government issued photo I.D. is required and will be run through the Raptor System before gaining entry into the school beyond the office. Throughout the school year there are school wide concerts, plays, art shows, as well as a number of classroom projects open to parents, relatives and friends. Check the school newsletter each month for special notices. Please refer to our full Visitor Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Photographing of Students

From time to time, photographs or videos are taken of classrooms "in action" to demonstrate a particular aspect of the curriculum or the implementation of a special program. These photographs or videos are sometimes used in a presentation to the Board of Education, teachers, parent groups, and community groups. On occasion photographs of students are placed in newspapers or on other on-line communication concerning events at school. If for any reason you do not want your child photographed or videotaped, you may make this request on a form that will come home in your first day packet.

Guests and Visitors

On special occasions, parents may request that their child bring a guest or visitor to school with them. Requests must be made to the school administrator at least 24 hours in advance of the visit. The school administrator with teacher input will decide if the visit is approved. All visitors to our school must wear a visitor's badge throughout the duration of their visit and must provide a government issued photo identification.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Close contact between the school and the home throughout the school year is strongly encouraged. If you need to speak to a teacher, either send a note, call the school to leave a message with the teacher or e-mail the teacher directly. We cannot call teachers from class to take a telephone call during instructional time but can assure you that your call will be returned within 24 hours.

Birthday Celebration Practices/Parties and Invitations

The Hebron School District has introduced a practice for student birthday celebrations. The School Wellness Committee decided on a non-food birthday celebration policy. Not only does this help promote the idea of healthy eating in school, it helps reduce the potential for exposure to allergens for students with allergies. When food is a part of a classroom celebration or lesson, our school nurse will be available to check food ingredients. This practice in no way takes the "celebration" out of birthdays in school. Each classroom teacher has adopted a birthday celebration plan for their classroom. These plans will be shared with students and parents at the

beginning of the school year. At the beginning of the school year parents will be asked to give permission for their child's phone number, address and email to be shared with classmates only. Regarding parties outside the classroom, we prohibit the distribution of party invitations within the classroom unless every child in that classroom is being invited. Please refer to our full Wellness Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Hebron Board of Education Meetings

The Hebron Board of Education meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Gilead Hill School music room or activity room. Families and community members are able to share their ideas and opinions with the board during the Public Comment portions of the meeting. It is an important way for parents to understand decision-making at the board of education level.

Newsletters and Other Notices

To avoid confusion and a constant flow of paper, we generally send home school papers on Tuesdays. It is not unusual to have children forget to give their parents these communications. Please be sure to ask for bulletins, notices and letters on a regular basis.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued three times a year. The report card is only one means of communicating student achievement. Together with notes, telephone calls, conferences and homework, parents should have an on-going understanding of student progress.

Student Records

Individual student records are maintained for each pupil in the school, including students receiving special education out of district, according to current laws, regulations, and guidelines. The Superintendent of Schools shall develop and implement regulations which define the terms and procedures necessary to this policy. Student records shall include only information which is appropriate and necessary for the operation of the school system and of importance in helping the child or protecting others. Unneeded records shall be destroyed subject to limitations of present federal and state laws, regulations, guidelines and outstanding requests for review by eligible persons. Families have a legal right to access student records for their child. We take all steps to fully ensure that these records are kept confidential under our policy. Please refer to our full Student Records Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Transfer of Records

Student records shall automatically be transferred to RHAM Middle School upon a student's promotion to seventh grade and maintained in accordance with existing administrative regulations upon graduation or termination of schooling. Student records will be transferred by mail to officials of another school or school system in which the student intends to enroll, in accordance with appropriate sections contained herein, upon notification by the parents that the student is withdrawing. Such records shall be designated to be official copies.

Special Education

The Hebron Board of Education provides special education and student personnel services (speech and language counseling, etc.) to students who are identified as special education students and to those who are identified as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

If you believe that your child's program is not meeting their educational needs, you can request in writing, through a building principal, a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting to review your concerns. Parents or guardians are notified five (5) days in advance by mail of the PPT meeting to discuss the referral. If the PPT determines that an evaluation is necessary, the responsibilities for the evaluations are assigned. A multidisciplinary evaluation must be conducted to determine eligibility. Within forty-five (45) school days, the completed evaluations are reviewed at the PPT meeting to determine eligibility. If the student is eligible, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed and implemented. If the student is not eligible as a special education student, but does qualify for eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, a plan is developed and implemented. 504 is a regular education service with accommodations for students who have a lifelong medical condition that impacts one of the major areas of life.

A team approach consisting of school staff, parents and administration is used in developing the educational plan.

Parents' rights for Procedural Safeguards and Due Process under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and parents' rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are noted at every PPT meeting. Subsequent to identification under Section 504, parents' rights are recognized at each Section 504 meeting. The district maintains compliance under federal statute and regulations through the State Department of Education.

Records shall be maintained for each student from entrance into school to graduation or withdrawal. Retention of certain types of records is required by law. Access to and security of student records and requests for amendments are assured by the Connecticut General Statutes, the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and their respective regulations.

English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

The ESOL program provides targeted instruction in academic and social English, while respecting the dominant language and cultural values of the students and their families. Students can receive native language support in this program but the goal is developing academic and social English language proficiency in the domains of speaking, listening, reading and writing. ESOL students are assessed annually using the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) to measure their growth in acquiring English. Results are communicated with ESOL families in the Spring of each school year.

Student Interventions (SRBI) Support Process

Procedures for classroom support are designed to ensure that efforts are made to assist students in maximizing their educational success. Support personnel are available to assist students specifically with their reading and mathematics performance, as well as behaviors. When a student experiences academic or behavioral difficulties, the teachers provide accommodations and interventions to broaden the opportunities for the child to perform successfully. There are many ways to help struggling learners to succeed. Connecticut supports the use of "scientific research-based interventions" (SRBI) as one way to help assist students academically, socially, and behaviorally.

SRBI provides a continuum of support to struggling students. A student's progress is studied and results are used to make decisions about teaching and other learning supports. The SRBI continuum of support has three tiers that provide different kinds and degrees of support. The quality instruction that all students receive in the general classroom setting is referred to as Tier I.

Components of SRBI include universal common grade level assessments called universal screens that are given three times during the year to help identify children who may need additional support or alternative instruction. Additional teaching strategies or methods that have been proven to be effective in helping children learn are used in Tier II classroom support. When higher levels of support are needed, children are given the individualized instruction they need to be successful learners, provided by specialists in what is referred to as Tier III support. Another component of SRBI is "progress monitoring." This helps the teacher determine whether a strategy is successful or needs to be altered.

When a student experiences ongoing difficulties, as determined by a lack of expected progress over time towards a specified academic or behavioral goal, teacher teams will meet in Data Teams and SRBI teams to continue developing strategies or to make a referral to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) process. Parents will be apprised of these steps on a consistent basis. Scientifically based research-based interventions do not replace the special education process. If at any time parents believe that their child has a disability that is affecting his or her learning, they have a right to request a PPT meeting.

Title I

Students in Hebron Public Schools are served by Title I federal funds. It is the largest federal program for education. Money must be used to serve students who require remediation in their studies. The money provided is above what the Board of Education normally spends on students. Each year the school has an open house. At the open house, parents will be provided with a description and explanation of the Title I programs available in the district, curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used, the challenging State academic standards, and information regarding the importance of parental involvement. We welcome this opportunity to speak with families to inform you of the important work being done within our school. All families of students participating in Title I programs are encouraged to attend and participate. As our schools both receive Title I funds, any parent has the right to know of teacher and paraprofessional qualifications. Please contact your school office with any such requests.

Andover, Hebron, Marlborough Family Resource Center Programs (AHM)

The AHM Family Resource Center provides a variety of programs for parents and children through the year, including the following:

- Play and Learn Groups for children from birth to age five.
- Parent Workshops ranging from one time programs to 6 week series.
- Home visits which consists of discussion with the parent(s) regarding child development, interaction with the child, and also parenting information.
- Family Daycare Provider Workshops are held on a quarterly basis.

Resource and referral parenting books can be loaned out and many pamphlets and brochures are available. The AHM Resource Center Staff is able to refer families to other agencies when necessary. AHM social workers work at both of our schools with our students and families. The

AHM Family Resource Center is located at Gilead Hill School. For further information, please call 860-228-0871 or 860-228-9488.

Support for Homeless Populations

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act is a federal law that ensures immediate enrollment and educational stability for homeless children and youth. If your family lives in any of the following situations:

- Shelter
- Motel or campground
- Car, park, abandoned building or bus or train station
- Doubled up with other people

Your family may be eligible for assistance. Please contact our Homeless Liaison, Dr. Donald Briere at (860) 228-2577 for more information.

School Work

Weekly, all students will bring home a collection of papers and work done in school during the previous week. Look for the papers and return any notes or requested materials. If you have any questions about the school work, please contact your child's teacher.

Homework

Homework is an integral part of the learning process. It is necessary reinforcement to classroom instruction as well as a means by which independent study skills and intellectual curiosity can be fostered in the home. Homework assignments might include completion of class work, reports, projects, studying for tests, drill questions from texts, reading, written work, research, etc. The following are general time expectations for the frequency and duration of homework.

- Grade K-Grade 2: 15-20 minutes of reading, daily
- Grade 3: 20 minutes + 20 minutes of reading, daily
- Grade 4: 30 minutes + 20 minutes of reading, daily
- Grade 5: 40 minutes + 20 minutes of reading, daily
- Grade 6: 45 minutes + 30 minutes of reading, daily

Field Trips

Field trips are carefully planned educational experiences and are part of the curriculum. When going on a field trip, students are expected to return a signed permission slip to the teacher in charge. Permission will not be taken over the telephone. On the rare occasion when students do not participate in a field trip, students are expected to come to school; arrangements will be made to involve students throughout the school day. Financial assistance is available to cover field trip expenses. Parents of students who are eligible for free or reduced priced lunches may request a bag lunch for their child if students are purchasing lunch at the field trip or are required to bring their own lunch.

Recess

Students have a daily 30 minute recess. Each day, we assess the weather conditions using our rooftop weather station as a guide to determine if students can go outdoors. Children will remain indoors for recess when the temperature is below 20°; the wind chill factor is used to make accurate determinations before the daily recess block. We will continue to attempt to get students outdoors whenever possible during the winter. Please be sure your child has

appropriate clothing for being outside for 30 minutes during the day. Students with stitches, crutches, slings, an orthopedic brace or other doctor noted reasons will not be allowed to participate in outdoor recess activities. Students with a doctor's note excusing them from PE will also be excluded. Students will be allowed to do an alternate activity at the discretion of the nurse. All other students are expected to participate in outdoor recess. Children will be sent to the health room to borrow clothing or a jacket by the teacher or recess duty personnel if their clothing does not allow them to fully participate in recess.

Progressive Discipline and Consequences

We employ a system of progressive discipline at our schools with an emphasis on educating our students about the importance of demonstrating kindness to all, respect for oneself and others, and responsibility for one's actions. Students are usually given the opportunity to improve on their own. If improvement does not occur, the school will work together with families to develop a behavior program for the student.

Should a student continue to behave inappropriately, the seriousness of the offense determines the severity of the discipline. In general, students can expect to receive a range of consequences, including verbal reminders, a parent phone call, after-school detention, loss of a privilege (field trip), a disciplinary form mailed to the parent, removal from the classroom, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or mandatory expulsions.

Mandatory Expulsions

A principal must recommend expulsion proceedings in all cases against any student in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, whom the administration has reason to believe:

- was in possession on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity of a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, martial arts weapon, or firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921 as amended from time to time; or
- off school grounds, possessed a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921, in violation of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-35, or possessed and used a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921, a deadly weapon, a dangerous instrument or a martial arts weapon in the commission of a crime under chapter 952 of the Connecticut General Statutes; or
- was engaged on or off school grounds in offering for sale or distribution a controlled substance (as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-240(9)), whose manufacturing, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting, or possessing with intent to sell or dispense, offering or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Conn. Gen. Stat. §§21a-277 and 21a-278.

Please refer to our full Discipline Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol

Smoking or other uses of tobacco related products, and the possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs and alcohol are prohibited on school property at any time, on any transportation provided by the Board of Education, or during the course of any trip or activity sponsored by the Board of Education. Compliance with these standards of conduct are required and mandatory. Please refer to our full Smoking, Drugs, and Alcohol Policies on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Weapons

In order to maintain a safe environment for all our children, please be aware that state law is very specific about what could be considered a weapon in schools. Besides the obvious guns or knives, any metal pocket knife, the kind you might pack in a lunch bag, a small knife attached to keys, a paper cutter or similar item that can be used to puncture, or any sharp instrument may be considered a dangerous instrument or weapon. Items of this type are not allowed in school. Toy weapons should not be brought to school.

Bullying

The Board is committed to creating and maintaining a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe educational environment free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. Bullying behavior is strictly prohibited, and students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. The district's commitment to addressing bullying behavior, however, involves a multifaceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a positive school climate in which bullying will not be tolerated by students or school staff.

1. Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation

- a. The Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by Board of Education.
- b. The Board also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;
- c. In addition to prohibiting student acts which constitute bullying, the Board also prohibits discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying.
- d. Students who engage in bullying behavior in violation of Board Policy and the Safe School Climate Plan shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with the Board's policies on student discipline, suspension and expulsion, and consistent with state and federal law.

2. Definition of Bullying

- a. **"Bullying"** means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student attending school in the same district that:
 - i. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;
 - ii. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
 - iii. creates a hostile environment at school for such student;
 - iv. infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
 - v. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

- b. Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

3. Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Complaints of Bullying

- a. Students and parents (or guardians of students) may file written reports of bullying. Written reports of bullying shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the alleged conduct, the number of incidents, the target of the suspected bullying, and the names of potential witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any building administrator and/or the Safe School Climate Specialist (i.e. building principal or their designee), and all reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist.
- b. Students may make anonymous reports of bullying to any school employee. Students may also request anonymity when making a report, even if the student's identity is known to the school employee. In cases where a student requests anonymity, the Safe School Climate Specialist or their designee shall meet with the student (if the student's identity is known) to review the request for anonymity and discuss the impact that maintaining the anonymity of the complainant may have on the investigation and on any possible remedial action. All anonymous reports shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that does not disclose the source of the report, and is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- c. School employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying shall orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable, **not later than one (1) school day** after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying. The school employee shall then file a **written report not later than two (2) school days** after making such an oral report.
- d. The Safe School Specialist shall be responsible for reviewing any anonymous reports of bullying and shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports. In order to allow the district to adequately investigate complaints filed by a student or parent/guardian, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied should be asked to provide a consent to permit the release of that student's name in connection with the investigation process, unless the student and /or parent has requested anonymity.
- e. In investigating reports of bullying, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegations and the ages of the students involved. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will interview witnesses, as necessary, reminding the alleged perpetrator and other parties that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

4. Responding to Verified Acts of Bullying

- a. Following investigation, if acts of bullying are verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall notify the parents or guardians of the students against whom such acts were directed as well as the parents or guardians of the students who commit such acts of bullying of the finding **not later than forty-eight (48) hours** after the investigation is completed. This notification shall include a description of the school's response to the acts of bullying. In providing such notification, however, The Norwich Public Schools will take care to respect the statutory privacy rights of other students, including the perpetrator, of such bullying. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the perpetrator, or personally identifiable information about a student other than the parent/guardian's own child, may not be disclosed except as provided by law.
- b. In any instance in which bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also invite the parents or guardians of the student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student/victim and to prevent further acts of bullying. The invitation may be made simultaneous with the notification described above as it must include a description of the school's response to such acts, along with consequences, as appropriate. Normally, separate meetings shall be held with the respective parents; however, at the discretion of the Safe School Climate Specialist and with written consent of the parents/guardians involved, the meeting(s) may be held jointly.
- c. If bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall develop a student safety support plan for any student against whom an act of bullying was directed. Such support plan will include safety measures to protect against further acts of bullying.
- d. A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. The written intervention plan may include counseling, discipline and other appropriate remedial actions as determined by the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee, and may also incorporate a student safety support plan, as appropriate.
- e. Notice to Law Enforcement If the Principal of a school (or his designee) reasonably believes that any act of bullying constitutes a criminal offense, they shall notify appropriate law enforcement. Notice shall be consistent with the Board's obligations under state and federal law and Board policy regarding the disclosure of personally identifiable student information. In making this determination, the Principal or their designee, may consult with the school resource office, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.
- f. If a bullying complaint raises concern about discrimination or harassment of the basis of a legally protected classification (such as race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability), the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also coordinate any investigation with other appropriate personnel within the district as appropriate (e.g. Title IX Coordinator, Section 504 Coordinator etc.)

Please refer to our full Safe School Climate Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Food Service

Menus are sent home the last Tuesday of the month. Students may purchase breakfast for \$1.60 before reporting to their rooms. Lunches including milk are \$2.90. Milk is \$.50. Snacks are available and are sold separately. Families are encouraged to put money on their child's account and may do so by sending in cash, a check made payable to "Hebron Public Schools", or on-line. Children will bring cash or checks to the cafeteria before lunch time and their account will be credited. Please send money in an envelope or baggie with your child's name clearly indicated. During the lunch wave, students will enter their Pin code into the keypad (HES) or use their swipe card (GHS) and the appropriate amount will be deducted from their account. Parents can share their email address with the food service department and will be notified via email when their child's balance is negative. Families are expected to pay all debts immediately. Parents will be contacted via email, phone, and/or mail regarding the debt. If there is still no payment, debt collection will commence according to BOE policy 3009. Please refer to our full Food Service Policies on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Food Allergies

Children with a life threatening food allergy buying hot lunch during the school year must have a "Medical Statement for Children with Disabilities" form on file. The cafeteria provides hot lunches for children with severe and life threatening allergies. In order to ensure that this is done safely, the following safety checklist has been developed. This procedure will be followed each day the child is buying hot lunch. Parents can check ingredients with Ruth Campbell, Cafeteria Manager. This should be done as often as possible. The family should send a note or an email to the school nurse every time their child is buying hot lunch. A form that lists multiple days is available for your convenience. If a label has changed since a parent has checked the ingredients, the cafeteria manager will contact the parent and discuss the appropriate substitution. If the child requires a separate item different than the general hot lunch menu, the tray will be prepared ahead of time and wrapped separately on the counter. Every effort will be made to serve allergy children first. As the child is going through the lunch line, they will indicate to the lunch servers that they are buying hot lunch by stating their name to the server. This allows the servers to take an extra moment to make sure the child received the correct tray in a time that can be very hectic. In the event the cafeteria does not have a specific allergen free item, it will provide a safe allergy free hot lunch for your child. The cafeteria will have substitute lunches available at all times. In the event that there is a substitute nurse or substitute cafeteria manager/server, the parent will be contacted and ingredients will be reviewed.

Free and Reduced Lunch

Free/reduced priced lunches are available to those who qualify. Application forms are sent home in the opening day packet, but are also available in the school office or on-line. These forms must be completed whether parents are requesting qualification for free or reduced priced lunches. Families may apply at any time during the school year. Students who qualified for this support last year, and who have not yet completed the form, will receive free or reduced lunch until October 1st. In order for this support to continue, parents or guardians must complete the forms for the current school year. Please call the school office with any questions.

Medications

Medication will be administered in school under the following guidelines:

- A physician, dentist, APRN or PA feels there is a need for the medication to be administered during school hours.
- A completed and signed authorization form from the physician, dentist, APRN or PA is presented to the school nurse as required by Connecticut State Law.
- As required by Connecticut State Law, the parent/guardian will be expected to provide the appropriate completed authorization before medication is administered in school.

The parent/guardian or assigned adult must bring medication to the school office. Medication must be supplied in a physician, dentist or pharmacy prepared and labeled container.

Medication is not to exceed a forty-five (45) day supply. Please refer to our full Administration of Medication Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

Physical Examinations

Parents of kindergarten students must submit their child's physical report prior to the first day of school. Physicals are required prior to entering seventh grade. Vision and hearing tests are given annually to all pupils in grades K-6. Parents will be notified of any deviation from the expected norm.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

All Hebron Public Schools staff are mandated reporters and must report suspected child abuse to the the Department of Children and Families. The role of staff members as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect is taken very seriously by the school staff and a report of suspected abuse must be made. The school will cooperate with DCF, local or state police authorities and other appropriate state agencies in the investigation of such a report. Please refer to our full Child Sexual Abuse and Assault Response Policy on our district website under the Board of Education Policy section.

School Accident Insurance

School accident insurance is available to all students. An on-line brochure is available and information will be sent home with the first day packet. Purchase is optional. Information regarding Connecticut's HUSKY Insurance Plan for children will also be included in your child's first day packet and is on-line as well

Lost and Found

Students who find articles are asked to take them to the office. Students and parents looking for lost items should be sure to check the "Lost and Found Box" located in the entry hallway. Unclaimed items are donated to charity in December and June.

Lost or Damaged Books and School Property

Books and materials that are lost or damaged beyond normal wear must be paid for in full replacement cost by the student/family responsible.

Items from Home

Students are discouraged from bringing any toys or electronic devices to school. Although the school recognizes that students use electronic devices to and from school, it is expected that these devices be secured immediately upon entrance to the school building. Improper use of these devices may result in confiscation and will be returned only to the parent. **It should be**

noted that the school will not be held liable for lost, stolen, or broken electronic devices/items from home.

Technology Guidelines

Computing devices, networks (includes wireless), internet access, and electronic communications are effective and important technology resources in today's educational environment. The Board of Education (BOE) has installed computing devices and a network infrastructure including internet access that is referred to collectively as computing systems. This is in place in order to enhance both the educational opportunities for our students and the business operations of the district. Further, the district actively monitors student use of technology applications both at school and when engaged in remote learning due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

All computing devices (hardware and software) as well as materials produced on such equipment remains the property of the Hebron Public Schools. Any misuse or abuse of this property or any violation of the Computing Systems Use Agreement of the Hebron Public Schools is prohibited. In recognition of rapid technological and legal developments, the BOE authorizes revision to the Computing System Use Agreement by the Superintendent. The Superintendent may also establish additional guidelines and rules.

The District provides individualized instruction to students through a variety of technological resources including educational web applications. These resources utilize personal information of students, such as name and district-created user name. This information is provided for educational purposes only in order to customize and individualize instruction.

The District complies with [Public Act 16-189, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA), and [Children's Online Privacy Protection Act](#) (COPPA) and makes every effort to avoid websites and applications that market or sell student personal information. Please find our full Administrative Regulations Regarding Student Use of the District Computer Systems and Internet Safety on our district website under the Board of Education policy section.

Student Data Privacy

A listing of all the contracts maintained by the district that store student information are listed on our website.

Classroom Placement

The choice of your child's teacher is a professional decision made in a collaborative effort by the staff and the school principal. Many factors enter into the decision, including academic ability, gender, friendships, behavior, student strengths and interests. Parent input regarding a student's particular learning style may be shared with the assigned teacher at the beginning of the year. Placement decisions for a transferring student in a classroom are not considered final until records from a sending school are received.

Asbestos Management

A written notice of the availability of asbestos management plan is available upon request from your school office.

Green Cleaning Program

A written description of our green cleaning program is available upon request from your school office.

Indoor Air Quality

The results of the inspection/evaluation procedure is available upon request from your school office.

Pesticides

Hebron Public Schools will provide a 24 hours notice of the application of pesticides on school grounds. For information on how to receive a written notice of pesticides including name of active ingredients, target pest, location and date of application, contact the Facilities Supervisor, Wayne Durocher at (860) 228-2577.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Board of Education complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws prohibiting the exclusion of any person from any of its educational programs or activities, or the denial to any person of the benefits of any of its educational programs or activities because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, or gender identity/expression, subject to the conditions and limitations established by law.

District Discrimination, Harassment, Title IX, Section 504/Americans with Disabilities and Special Education: Complaint Resolution Procedures

For additional information contact our District Safe School Climate/Title IX Coordinator, Director of Educational Services, Dr. Donald Briere at (860) 228-2577.

State Department of Education Complaint Resolution Procedure

- Connecticut State Department of Education
- Complaint Resolution Procedure
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 299 (10)(a)

1. Filing of Complaint

a. Violation of Law

A written complaint may be filed by an organization or individual with the Connecticut Commissioner of Education alleging that the state educational agency (SEA) or an agency or consortium of agencies is violating a federal statute or regulation that applies to the following applicable programs:

- i. Part A of Title I (Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies).
- ii. Part B, Subpart of Title I (Reading First).
- iii. Part B, Subpart 3 of Title I (Even Start Family Literacy Programs).
- iv. Part D of Title I (Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk of Dropping Out).
- v. Part A of Title II (Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund).
- vi. Part D of Title II (Enhancing Education Through Technology).
- vii. Part A of Title III (English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act).

- viii. Part B, Subpart 4 of Title III (Emergency Immigrant Education Program).
- ix. Part A of Title IV (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities).
- x. Part A. of Title V (Innovative Programs).

b. Review of an Appeal

A written complaint may be filed by an individual with the Connecticut Commissioner of Education appealing the decision of an agency or consortium of agencies based on prior written complaints presented by an individual to such agency or consortium of agencies.

c. Content of Complaint

The complaint shall be in writing, signed by the complainant and contain the following:

- i. A statement that the SEA or an agency or consortium of agencies has violated a requirement of federal statutes or regulation regarding the applicable program, or in the case of an appeal, a statement of aggrievement with the decision rendered by the agency or consortium of agencies based on a prior written complaint.
- ii. A clear and concise description of the facts on which the statement is based and the specific alleged violation or aggrievement.
- iii. A description of prior efforts to resolve the complaint, including information demonstrating that the SEA, agency or consortium of agencies has taken action adverse to the complaint or has refused or failed to take action within a reasonable period of time.
- iv. Complainant's and respondent's name, address and telephone number.
- v. Other materials or documents containing information which support or clarify the statement.

2. Review of Complaint

a. Analysis

Within three business days of receipt of the complaint, the Commissioner shall assign a review official. Within five business days of the assignment, the review official shall determine whether the complaint has been properly filed in accordance of Section I. If necessary, the review official shall interview the complainant.

b. Dismissal of Complaint

The review official may dismiss the complaint in writing stating an explanation for such action. The grounds for dismissal shall include, but not limited to, the following:

- i. Failure to file a proper complaint pursuant to Section I.
- ii. The allegations fail to state a bona fide violation of federal statute or regulations by the SEA or an agency or consortium of agencies.
- iii. The allegations fail to state a bona fide aggrievement with the decision rendered by an agency or consortium of agencies based on prior written complaint.
- iv. The allegations were not caused by the actions or failure to act by the SEA, agency or consortium of agencies.

3. Notification of Complaint and Investigation

If a complaint is not dismissed, the review official shall forward the complaint to the respondent immediately along with a copy of the Complaint Resolution Procedures.

4. Response to Complaint

Within 10 business days of the receipt of the complaint from the review official, the respondent shall file with the Commissioner a written response to the complaint.

a. Content of Response

The response shall address each and every allegation of the complaint and shall list the respondent's name, address and telephone number.

b. Interview

The review official or the respondent may request an interview to discuss the response and to resolve the dispute informally.

5. Complaint Investigation

Upon completion of Section IV or the failure of the respondent to file a response, the review official shall conduct an investigation. All parties may be duly notified that an investigation has begun. At any time during the investigation, the review official shall attempt to resolve the dispute informally.

60 calendar days of the receipt of the complaint, an investigation of the complaint shall be completed and a written report shall be mailed to both parties. Information shall be gathered in a timely manner, while minimizing any inconvenience or disruption to the complainant or respondent.

Concerning a review of an appeal of the decision of an agency or consortium of agencies, the review official may elect to disregard the procedures contained in this section using in lieu thereof the following abbreviated procedure:

- i. Review all of the appropriate records and determine whether the decision of the agency or consortium of agencies shall be affirmed, reversed or modified.
- ii. Draft a letter of review of an appeal addressing, but not limited to, the issue in dispute, the facts found, the affirmation, reversal or modification of the lower decision and recommendation for improved practices, policies or procedures.

b. Data Collection

The complainant and respondent shall provide the review official with copies of all relevant records requested in writing. Telephone interviews of the complainant, respondent and others with knowledge of the allegations may be conducted.

Pursuant to 34 CFR 99-35(a) the review official, acting on behalf of the SEA, is authorized to have access to education records in connection with an evaluation of federal or state-supported education programs or for the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements which relate to those programs.

c. Independent On-Site Investigation

The review official may conduct an on-site visit to investigate the complaint if the official deems it necessary.

Any on-site visit shall be coordinated with the respondent.

d. Complaint Investigation Report

The Complaint Investigation Report shall be completed by the review official and mailed to the parties within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the complaint by the SEA. The Commissioner may grant an extension for the completion of the report upon written request of the review official or respondent if exceptional

circumstances exist with respect to the particular complaint. Such extension shall be in writing and shall be mailed to the parties.

The report shall contain the following contents:

- i. Summary of all investigation activities including, but not limited to, date of receipt of complaint, allegations, parties interviewed, documents received and dates of on-site visits.
 - ii. Specific allegation of the complaint, the findings of fact, conclusions and final decisions rendered regarding each allegation, including citation to applicable federal statute or regulation.
 - iii. Specific corrective action plan that resolves the complaint or ensures future compliance of the respondent regarding the violation of federal statute or regulation.
 - iv. Recommendations for improved practices, policies or procedures shall be offered when no violation of federal statute or regulation is found.
- e. Corrective Action Plan
If the Complaint Investigation Report finds that the respondent is violating federal statute or regulations, the respondent shall be requested to submit a corrective action plan within a specified period of time as determined by the review official.

Respondents may request technical assistance from the SEA in order to prepare a plan to achieve compliance.

6. Review of Final Decision

The complainant may file a written request with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education to review the final decision of the SEA.

All local educational agencies shall disseminate information about the complaint procedures to teachers, staff, parents and appropriate private school officials or representatives.

A private school official shall have the right to complain that a local educational agency did not engage in consultation that was meaningful and timely, or did not give due consideration to the views of the private school official.

Acknowledgement

Our Family Handbook went through a major revision during the Summer of 2020. We would like to thank our attorney, Shipman and Goodwin, as well as the Norwich Public Schools for providing us with model language to use throughout this document.