

# WHEELER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

*HOME OF THE LIONS*  
297 Norwich-Westerly Road  
North Stonington, CT 06359  
[www.northstonington.k12.ct.us](http://www.northstonington.k12.ct.us)

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## School Phone Numbers

Main Office: (860) 535-0377  
Guidance: (860) 535-0377 x2150  
Fax: (860) 535-1117  
Attendance: (860) 535-0377 x8  
Superintendent: (860) 535-2800  
Special Services: (860) 535-4451  
Facilities: (860) 535-2800 x177  
M&J Bus Co: (860) 535-8051  
Aramark Food Services: (860) 535-2800 x179

## School Hours

Normal: 7:45 am - 2:25 pm  
Early Closing: 7:45am - 12:05 pm  
Two Hour Delay: 9:45 am - 2:25 pm

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*Student Name*

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Dear Students and Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to returning students and families! This is an exciting year for Wheeler as we are now a grade 7-12 school in a brand new facility! We are grateful for this new environment that our staff and students are housed in and we look forward to continuing our work with all of our students this school year. Our mission remains to *work in partnership with families and community, to provide students with the education that will best help them to live a life of accomplishment and satisfaction in a complex and changing world.* This mission continues to be embedded in all of our educational programs at Wheeler. Whether you are new to our school or you are a returning member of the community, your presence at Wheeler as an active and engaged citizen is highly valued. Wheeler High School/Middle School is a superb institution of higher learning. We offer a challenging academic curriculum, a fine athletic and arts program and we provide opportunities for all of our students to have a real voice in our school community. We make it a goal at Wheeler to provide our students with opportunities to attain all of their future goals and aspirations. On behalf of our faculty and staff, I extend a warm welcome to each of you with sincere wishes for an enjoyable and successful school year.

Wheeler is a wonderful place that is rich with history, tradition, and is energetic, lively and nurturing. It is our goal for all students to be challenged meaningfully, to grow personally and to achieve academic, athletic, and artistic success while also gaining a level of civic fulfillment. The staff members at Wheeler are dedicated individuals who are committed to helping make this happen for every student, and in partnership with the families and community, we have every reason to believe that it can happen.

All communities have rules and expectations of behavior and Wheeler High School/Middle School is no different. Within this handbook, we have tried to chronicle all the major expectations and procedures we have that enable us to thrive and prosper together. It is very important for you to read this handbook thoroughly, because with a clearer understanding of what the school expectations are, we can better cohere as a school community.

I want to wish you all the best for the 2019-2020 school year! Please know that at Wheeler, there is always someone here to help you. Whether it is our school counseling office, our administrative team, our teachers, our coaches- someone will always be there to lend a hand when one is needed. **#weareWHEELER**

My door is always open to students and families. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Kristen St. Germain  
Principal

# WHEELER HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**By signing this acknowledgement, I am voluntarily agreeing that:**

- I have reviewed the online version of the Wheeler High School Handbook;
- I understand that the Wheeler High School Handbook contains a number of rules governing student behavior and provides that students may be disciplined for violating many of these rules, including being suspended or expelled from school;
- I have had a chance to read and review the Wheeler High School Handbook and I have done so;
- I have reviewed and discussed the Wheeler High School Handbook with my child; and
- I understand and accept the contents of the Wheeler High School Handbook.

**Parent or Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Parent or Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Wheeler High School Faculty and Staff**

### **Board of Education**

Mrs. Christine Wagner, Chair  
Mr. Alex Karpinski, Vice Chair  
Mr. Walt Mathwich, Secretary  
Mr. David McCord  
Mr. Phillip Mendolia  
Mr. Darren Robert  
Mrs. Pamela Potemri  
Ms. Jen Welborn

### **Administration**

Mr. Peter L. Nero, Superintendent  
Mrs. Kristen St. Germain, Principal  
Associate Principal - TBD  
Mrs. Susan Costa, Special Services  
Coordinator

### **Secretarial Staff**

Ms. Cara Walz-Burton, Secretary to  
the Administration  
Mrs. Melody Melia, Attendance  
Secretary  
Mrs. Emily Knowles, Guidance  
Secretary

### **Special Services/Counseling**

Ms. Nancy Liner, School Counselor  
Ms. Christine Rogers, School  
Counselor  
Mrs. Carley Higginbotham, School  
Psychologist  
Mrs. Linda Costanza, Social Worker  
Mr. Ryan Austin, Special Education  
Mrs. Jessica Kessler, RN  
Mrs. Tina Leiper, School Health  
Aide

### **English Department**

Mrs. Jessica Cawley  
Mr. Joseph Cawley  
Mrs. Marybeth Tavares  
Mrs. Claire Benedict

### **Science Department**

Mr. William O'Leary  
Mr. Andreas Connal-Nicolaou  
Mr. Michael Shugrue

### **Social Studies Department**

Mrs. Shannon Curioso  
Mr. William Heughins  
Mr. Seth Mann

### **Math Department**

Mrs. Allison Reyes  
Mr. James Cervini  
Ms. Jessica Riesel  
Mr. David Grande

### **World Language**

Mrs. Paloma Autran  
Mrs. Janet Devaux  
Ms. Ivelisse Hernandez

### **Unified Arts Team**

Mrs. Sarah Booker, Art  
Mrs. Melissa Lincoln-Fortier, Art  
Mr. Carl Weber, Physical Education/  
Health  
Mrs. Ellen Turner, Physical  
Education  
Mrs. Trish Albamonti, Physical  
Education/Health  
Ms. Liz McCusker, Computer/Business  
Education  
Mr. David Bradanini, Technology  
Education  
Ms. Noel Devine, Technology  
Education  
Mr. Christopher Zyrllis,  
Business Education  
Mrs. Annie Oosterwyk, Library  
Media Specialist  
Mrs. Paloma Autran, VHS  
Mrs. Carolyn Bennett, Chorus  
Band-TBD



*A Wheeler Graduate demonstrates aptitude in the following school-wide expectations:*

**ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS**

Analysis  
Collaboration  
Communication  
Literacy

**SOCIAL/CIVIC EXPECTATIONS**

Respect  
Responsibility  
Resiliency

## MISSION

The Mission of Wheeler High School/Middle School, in partnership with families and community, is to provide students with the education that will best help them to live lives of accomplishment and satisfaction in a complex and changing world.

## CORE VALUES

We are committed to the belief that ALL children are capable and have a fundamental right to attain high levels of educational achievement so they can lead highly rewarding lives and demonstrate responsible citizenship.

We believe that in order to have the largest impact upon student learning and to provide opportunity for high level achievement, it must start with the instructional core, specifically through:

- Changing the role of the students in the instructional process to be active participants;
- Ensuring a high level of complexity of the content within the curriculum;
- Supporting the knowledge and skill development of teachers;
- Assessing student work using our school-wide rubrics and using the data to drive instruction across ALL grade levels and departments.

We believe that in order to ensure an environment for continuous improvement we must constantly review and improve systems and structures so our focus can remain on learning for ALL students.

### **Significant North Stonington Board of Education Policies/Programs**

*The following policies are posted on the North Stonington Board of Education website. If you do not have access to a computer, please contact the Main Office at (860) 535-0377.*

Building Visitation (Board Policy #1250)  
Community Relations (Board Policy #1000)  
Discrimination (Board Policy #6121)  
Equal Employment Opportunity (Board Policy #4111.1 & #4211.1)  
Hazardous Materials in Schools (Board Policy #3524)  
Psychotropic Drug Use (Board Policy #5141.231(a) & #4118.234)  
Residency Policy (Board Policy #5118)  
Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure (Board Policy #5145.52)  
Smoking on School Property (Board Policy #1331)  
Soliciting Funds from and by Students and School Fund-Raising (Board Policy #1324)  
Use of Facilities (Board Policy #1330)  
Homework Policy (BOE Policy # 6154)  
Gang Activity (BOE Policy #5131.9)  
Confiscation of Possessions (BOE Policy #5145.12)

### ***Child Abuse Reporting Policy (BOE Policy #5141.4)***

Non-Discrimination Compliance Title VI, Title IX and 504 Compliance (BOE Policy #6120)  
Youth Suicide Prevention Policy and Procedure (BOE Policy #5141.5)  
School wide Rubrics  
Advisory Program Information

# GENERAL HIGH SCHOOL POLICIES

## ADVISORY PROGRAM

Mission Statement: *The Advisory Program of Wheeler High School will provide the opportunity for every student to feel safe, known, heard and respected. Advisory will facilitate and build caring relationships based on open communication, trust and respect.*

The Advisory Program at the high school level consists of students in grades 9-12, working in small groups with a randomly matched teacher, working on activities tied into the quarterly themes that align with our social/civic expectations at Wheeler. These activities are designed to promote positive interactions between students and a teacher who might not normally get the chance to get to know each other. Advisory will also provide opportunities for students in 9-12 to mentor and work collaboratively with our middle school students, grades 7-8. All students are expected to be present in their assigned Advisory classrooms during the scheduled Advisory time and unexcused absences will be dealt with by the administration. **Advisory Homeroom** is another opportunity for students to feel connected to that same staff member at Wheeler. Advisory Homeroom (AHR) takes place four days a week, Tuesday through Friday, from 2:00-2:25 p.m.

## ASSESSMENTS (FINALS & MIDTERMS)

For one-credit, full-year courses, examinations are given at the conclusion of each semester—one at the midpoint and one at the end of the school year. For half-credit courses, a final will be given at the end of the semester. All examinations, except in selected classes, are one and one-half hours in length. All students must arrive on time and remain in class for the full duration of the exam period. Students taking the AP test will not be required to sit for a final exam. Seniors are exempt from taking a final exam with a 90% or higher in that class. This is for second semester exams only, or for semester courses only. **Normally, no excuse for missing an exam other than illness will be accepted. The Principal must give such permission. You will receive exam instructions to advise you on what to do if your child is unable to make an exam when it gets closer to each exam cycle.**

## COURSE LEVELS (BOE Policy #6146.11)

Students need not be in the same level for all courses.

Advanced Placement Courses: These courses are college courses and are extremely rigorous. Students may receive college credit for them if they score a 3, 4, or 5 on the Advanced Placement Examination given in May each year. Grade prerequisites and teacher recommendations are required. (Level 2 on Quality Point Table)

Honors Courses: These rigorous courses are intended for students who are in the top 20% of their class. Grade prerequisites and teacher recommendations are required. (Level 1 on the Quality Point Table)

Academic Courses: These courses are for very serious students who are planning to attend college. These are students who are committed to a challenging program that will prepare them academically for the rigors of college. (Level 0 on the Quality Point Table)

General Courses: General courses are for those students who are not yet ready for the challenges of the Academic courses, but who are looking for a solid educational foundation. These courses will prepare the student for further education or work. (Level 0 on the Quality Point Table)

## CLASS RANK\* / GPA (BOE Policy #6146.11)

Class rank will be determined by multiplying the grade point value weight of the grade earned in a course by the credit value (F grades receive no weight). The result is then divided by the total number of units attempted. Class rank is published at the end of a class' junior year.

\*Students transferring to Wheeler after the close of Semester 1 of their Junior year will not be included in class rank.

### Grade and Quality Point Table

Grade	Level 0 (Non-Honors)	Level 1 (Honors)	Level 2 (AP)
A+	4.30	4.63	4.96
A	4.00	4.33	4.66
A-	3.70	4.03	4.36
B+	3.30	3.63	3.96
B	3.00	3.33	3.66
B-	2.70	3.03	3.36
C+	2.30	2.63	2.96
C	2.00	2.33	2.66
C-	1.70	2.03	2.36
D+	1.30	1.63	1.96
D	1.00	1.33	1.66
D-	0.70	1.03	1.36
F	0.00	0.00	0.00
I	0.00	0.00	0.00
P	0.00	0.00	0.00
W	0.00	0.00	0.00

#### **FULL TIME STUDENT CREDIT POLICY**

All students attending Wheeler High School must carry a minimum of six (6) credits each year. A total of six (6) credits, including English, must be earned for promotion. Administration deems the right to determine changes to this policy should there be extenuating circumstances which may warrant reconsideration.

#### **GRADE LEVEL PROMOTION**

At the end of Grade 9: A student must have earned six credits (6), including a credit in English I, for promotion to Grade 10.

At the end of Grade 10: A student must have earned twelve (12) credits, including a credit in English II, for promotion to Grade 11.

For promotion to Grade 12: A student must have earned eighteen (18) credits, including a credit in English III.

#### **GRADES AND COURSE CREDIT**

Grades earned in any course shall reflect the student's daily attendance, as well as the fulfillment of other academic requirements as may be established by the teacher. A penalty shall be assessed by the teacher for any unexcused absence in accordance with the policy established by the school.

Incompletes: All incomplete grades must be converted to a letter grade within two weeks of the close of the marking period. Extenuating circumstances will be dealt with by Administration and Guidance Department on a case-by-case basis.

#### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS** (BOE Policy #6146)

Please note that the Board of Education voted on revising the graduation requirements in 2018 to allow Wheeler students more opportunities to take elective courses. The idea behind this shift comes from a recommendation from the State of Connecticut to allow students more opportunities to explore various careers before entering college. As we continue to phase in these new requirements our high school is now split down the middle, with seniors and juniors in the old requirements and sophomores and freshmen in the new. Both sets of requirements are listed on next page:



**Wheeler High School Graduation Requirements**

<u>Graduation Requirements</u>	Classes of 2019 - 2021		Class of 2022 and beyond	
	Total 25 Credits		Total 26 Credits	
	# Credits	Total Credits by Cluster	# Credits	Total Credits by Cluster
Cluster 1: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics		8		9
Math	4		3	
Science	3		3	
STEM Elective	1		3	
Cluster 2: Humanities		9		9
English	4		4	
Social Studies	3		2	
Fine Arts	1			
Humanities Electives	1		3	
Cluster 3: Career and Life Skills		3.5		8
Physical Education	2		1.5	
Health	1		1	
Personal Finance	0.5		0.5	
World Language		2	1	
Electives		1.5	3	
Senior Project		1	1	

## Senior Project

The Wheeler Senior Project challenges students to demonstrate and display mastery of the skills acquired while attending Wheeler High School. One of the goals of the Senior Project is to allow students to take control of and have a powerful voice in their own education and development, both as learners and as individuals. Student choice and personal interest are valued and recognized during each phase of the Senior Project. It is an opportunity for students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do by showcasing these achievements in a real world situation.

This graduation requirement provides students with the opportunity to apply and broaden their knowledge and skills in an area of personal interest. Throughout their senior year, under the guidance of their senior English teacher, community mentors and the Senior Project Committee, seniors will complete an educational experience determined to be worthy in scope and content. Students will receive a grade based on their completed portfolio, presentation, paper and professional skills checklist. The Senior Project Committee, evaluation team, community mentor and English teacher will determine the final grade. See your school counselor with questions or see the Senior Project Handbook on the Wheeler website: [www.northstounington.k12.ct.us](http://www.northstounington.k12.ct.us).

## **INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAM** (BOE Policy #6141.4)

The primary objective of the independent study program is to provide students an opportunity to design, with assistance of faculty members, an individual course or project that is above and beyond the required academic experience. Independent study is for serious, mature, and well-motivated students who possess the intellectual ability and self-discipline to pursue a program of intense and focused study. It will be the primary responsibility of the supervising teacher to help the student in his/her pursuit of the independent study goals.

The following criteria will be applied in determining whether a student should be allowed to participate in this program:

1. A completed form must be submitted to guidance by **September 15** for any proposed independent study to take place in the fall semester, and by **February 1** for any proposed independent study to take place in the spring semester.
2. Students must have met or show evidence that they will meet all Wheeler course requirements.
3. Independent study credits cannot be used to meet credit or distribution requirements for graduation, EXCEPT on those rare occasions when the schedule of our small school will make it impossible to schedule required courses. In these rare instances on-line courses may be accepted to meet credit and distribution requirements. This will occur only after all other possibilities have been exhausted.
4. The student must have exhausted all departmental courses that relate to the independent study.

The following requirements will apply to all students who are accepted to participate in the Independent Study program:

1. The student must spend a minimum of sixty-three (63) hours per semester for ½ credit and 126 hours per semester for 1.0 credit. The expectation is that credited independent study requirements will include work both in and outside of school.
2. The student must maintain a weekly log of the activities and time associated with the independent study. The supervising teacher will sign off on the log on a weekly basis.
3. The student must maintain a journal with a minimum of bi-weekly, one-page reflections on his/her experiences, his/her insights and growth, and his/her learning challenges and frustrations.
4. The student must present a performance outcome to an audience beyond the immediate supervising teacher at the conclusion of the independent study. The audience may be comprised of faculty, administration, parents, students, and the general public.
5. The student must complete a one page narrative self-evaluation at the conclusion of the independent study.
6. The student may withdraw from the Independent Study without penalty provided he/she withdraws prior to the beginning of the second quarter of the semester.
7. The student participating in the independent study will be awarded either academic credit or transcript recognition dependent upon the nature of the course design. Independent study courses that are an extension of the academic "core" curriculum will be considered and reviewed on a case-by-case basis for their inclusion in our GPA rank system.

## **ADD DROP OR SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Students may add or drop a course, however there is a time frame that needs to be adhered to. If the add/drop is taking place within the first three days of the new semester, students may do so with a counselor's approval.

**If an add/drop takes place after the first three days of the semester, students must adhere to the following:**

Student must make an appointment with their school counselor to request an Add/Drop Form, and to discuss reasons for the schedule change.

1. Student must arrange a conference with the classroom teacher to discuss reason for the drop.
2. If applicable, student must arrange a conference with the classroom teacher they are hoping to add to their

schedule.

3. Students have a three week add/drop window to make a schedule change without receiving a W (Withdrawal) on their transcript.
4. A class drop will not be allowed if it causes the student to go below the minimum required credits.
5. Parent approval on the Add/Drop form is also required.

**If an add/drop takes place after the allotted three week window, students must do the following:**

1. Student must make an appointment with their school counselor to request an Add/Drop Form, and to discuss reasons for the schedule change.
2. Student must arrange a conference with the classroom teacher to discuss reason for the drop.
3. If applicable, student must arrange a conference with the classroom teacher they are hoping to add to their schedule.
4. Students will receive a W (Withdrawal) on their transcript for any class dropped after the three-week window has expired unless deemed otherwise by administration.
5. A class drop will not be allowed if it causes the student to go below the minimum required credits.
6. If a student is failing a course at the time of the drop, that student will automatically lose eligibility for honor roll for that marking period.
7. Parent approval on the Add/Drop form is also required.

### **PARENT OVERRIDES**

If a parent and student choose to appeal the recommendation of a teacher for level placement in a particular course, they must follow the outlined procedure:

1. Turn in an override form with all necessary signatures by the date that all schedule requests are due.
2. Override forms received after the assigned date will be considered on an individual basis after the master schedule is developed, depending on class sections and size.
3. If a student/parent overrides a class against a faculty recommendation, parents and students understand that a future level change may not be possible as outlined on the course override form.
4. Override students will be reviewed at the end of the first month of class and students who are struggling may be recommended by a classroom teacher to drop back down to a lower level if there is an available seat in the class.

### **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY** (BOE Policy #6145.51)

Selection to the National Honor Society is a privilege, not a right. Students **with a GPA of 3.7 (A-)** are invited to apply for membership during the fall of their junior year as well as during the fall of their senior year. Membership is granted only to those students selected by the NHS Faculty Council, by meeting the requirements of service, leadership and character. Besides submitting a completed application and essay, students must submit one faculty referral proving authentic leadership at Wheeler High School.

All students should understand that accountability for their actions plays an important role in the selection process for National Honor Society. Any student with a serious, documented violation of the WHS Code of Conduct (including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, vandalism, drug and alcohol violations, and harassment) will be denied membership in the National Honor Society. In turn, violations of the WHS Code of Conduct will be grounds for dismissal from the National Honor Society.

### **STUDENTS DRIVING TO CAMPUS** (BOE Policy #5142.3)

Parking on school grounds is a privilege extended to students by the school administration. Students who park on the property of Wheeler High School/Wheeler Middle School do so at their own risk. The North Stonington Board of Education assumes no responsibility for damage to or theft from any vehicle parked or driven on WHS property. Students must register their cars by returning the appropriate form to the Main Office and obtain a parking pass BEFORE driving to school. Forms may be obtained from the Main Office.

Automobiles will not be used for any purpose during the school day. Once the student enters the school, he/she cannot return to their vehicle until the time of dismissal. No motor vehicle of any kind is to be driven or parked on the lawns, walkways, or athletic fields at any time. Automobiles illegally parked (fire lanes, handicapped spaces, faculty spaces, lawn, etc.) will be towed at the owner's expense.

Failure to obey all traffic regulations will mean loss of the privilege of parking on the school grounds and possible further disciplinary action. Some (not all) of the traffic regulations are:

1. Speed limit—10 mph on school property
2. No “peeling out” or driving in a reckless manner
3. Pedestrians have the right of way

Violation of any of the regulations listed above, or any others deemed unsafe by school administrators, will mean loss of the privilege of parking as follows:

1st offense: one week

2nd offense: two weeks

3rd offense: remainder of the school year

### **STUDENT SOCIAL EVENTS – HIGH SCHOOL**

All social events involving the students are planned by student committees and supervised by the faculty sponsors of the classes, clubs, or activities. **Students should be reminded that these opportunities are privileges and that administration deems the right to deny access to such events based on significant disciplinary infractions.** Students are expected to follow all the school rules and policies during all social activities. Reservation for space and time for such events must be approved **by the Administration** for school calendar availability.

#### Dance Guidelines:

1. Wheeler High School students will be allowed one out-of-town guest. Students wishing to bring a guest to a Wheeler High School dance must return a Student Information Form to the Main Office prior to 12:00 p.m. on the DAY BEFORE the dance.
  - a) The guest is the sole responsibility of the student, and disciplinary action can result to a Wheeler High student for the behavior of the guest.
  - b) Student Information Forms MUST be signed by a parent and a school administrator if the guest attends another school
  - c) If a guest is out of high school, the Student Information Form MUST be signed by a parent and the driver's license number and date of birth of the guest must be written on the form.
  - d) All guests outside of high school will be run through our school RAPTOR program to identify any background issues that the school needs to be aware of.
  - e) Administration reserves the right to deny a guest ticket to anyone that has any background disciplinary action that is concerning to the safety of the Wheeler student body.
  - f) Guests over the age of 21 will not be permitted to a school dance.
2. No middle school students are allowed
3. Any student determined to have consumed alcohol or other drugs at the time he or she is admitted to the dance will be detained, reported to the police, and have his or her parents/guardians notified. Disciplinary action will be taken per Board of Education Policy.
4. Students who break school rules, or whose conduct is unacceptable, will be removed from the dance and their parents/guardians will be notified. Disciplinary action will be taken.
5. Student members of the organization sponsoring the dance are to assist in the setting up and cleaning up.
6. Once a person leaves the dance, he or she shall not be readmitted. No one will be permitted to loiter on the school grounds during or after a dance.
7. Students must be in attendance at school for a minimum of four hours on the day of the social event or, in the case of a Saturday event, the student must be in attendance at school for a minimum of four hours the school day prior to the social event.
8. If an outsider creates a disturbance, or violates Board Policy or school rules, he or she will be removed and not allowed to participate in any future events. The student inviting a guest who creates a disturbance may be restricted from inviting guests to future activities.
9. Students must have a ride to and from the event. Parents should be at the school to pick up their child when the event is over.
10. Students must arrive at the dance within one half hour of the starting time unless prearranged in writing with an administrator. Anyone arriving more than one half hour after the start of the dance will not be admitted.

### **SUMMER SCHOOL** (BOE Policy #6174)

Wheeler High School does not offer a summer school program, but students may attend summer school at neighboring high schools or LEARN. The following rules apply to summer school:

1. The student and parent assume costs.
2. Credit for summer school will be granted only if, during the regular school year, the student has previously taken, completed, and failed the course with an F grade.
3. A course may not be dropped and then taken for credit in summer school.

4. Credit will be granted based upon the credit value of the course failed. For example, a student failing a one- credit course will be granted one credit upon successful completion of that course in summer school. Under no circumstance will a student receive more credit for a summer school course than would have been earned if the course had been passed during the school year.
5. Students receiving an "R" grade in a course may not attend summer school or be tutored in that subject.
6. Students are responsible for having their summer school grades sent to Wheeler High School.
7. Summer school grades will be recorded on the permanent record. Summer school grades will be averaged in the G.P.A. as a D-.

## **GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **MORNING ARRIVAL**

*High School:* High school students should be in their first period class no later than 7:45 a.m. each day. Students who arrive to school prior to 7:30 a.m. must remain in the Commons until 7:30 a.m.

### **CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL / DELAYED OPENINGS / EARLY DISMISSALS**

If weather conditions require that schools will be cancelled, a Power Announcement call will be made to each household. Please be sure to update your contact information in PowerSchool. Announcements will also be made on local radio and television stations no later than 6:00 A.M.

*Two (2) Hour Delayed Openings:* Weather conditions may dictate the need to delay the starting time of school. When this occurs, a Power Announcement call will be made to each household. Delayed opening announcements will also be found on local radio and television stations no later than 6:30 A.M. Bus pick-up times will be adjusted accordingly.

*Early Dismissals:* In an emergency situation, early dismissals are the most difficult because many parents have to make alternate arrangements for childcare. If this were to occur, a Power Announcement will be made, the times of the early dismissals will be posted on our website, and the dismissal will be announced on the local radio and television stations.

**Please note:** If school is canceled or dismissed early, all extra-curricular activities are also canceled for that afternoon and evening.

### **ATTENDANCE** (BOE Policy #5113.2)

The North Stonington Public Schools believes that regular school attendance is essential for an effective and productive learning experience. The sequential presentation of school learning requires a continuity of instruction. The maximum benefits for each individual child can be achieved only from participation and interaction in daily activity. In addition to instruction, other learning processes take place each day that are vital to a student's overall emotional and social growth. Time lost in school is irretrievable in terms of instructional opportunity and social interaction.

The primary responsibility for adherence to regular attendance rests with the student's parents/guardians and the individual student. The Connecticut General Statutes requires students over five and under eighteen years of age to attend school on a regular basis. Appropriate legal action will be taken against parents/guardians whose children fail to abide by the Connecticut Compulsory Attendance Law.

*A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at their school, or an activity sponsored by the school (i.e., field trip), for at least half of the scheduled school day. Any student in school for less than half of the scheduled school day will be considered absent. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion will be considered absent.*

### **Excused Absence**

The Board believes a student should not be absent from school without the parents' knowledge and consent, therefore verification of an absence should be in writing by a parent or guardian. The first nine (9) absences will be considered excused if a parent approves the absence and if it is properly documented with a signed note from a parent or a notation is made in the student's attendance record by a school official who received either a verbal or electronic communication from the parent. Family vacations are discouraged during the school year.

For the tenth (10) absence and all absences thereafter, absences will be considered excused for the following reasons:

- a. Student Illness (verified by a medical professional);
- b. Student observance of a religious holiday;
- c. Death in a student's family or emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
- d. Mandated court appearance
- e. Extraordinary educational opportunities (i.e., college visits) pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with SDE guidelines.

There shall be no penalty for an excused absence, however, a phone call from a parent does not necessarily constitute an excused absence. Students are encouraged to bring notes from their parent/guardian or physician to the Main Office on the day of return to school. These notes must specify the reason(s) for the absence and must conform to the Board of Education Policy # 5113. Excused absences will be listed on the morning bulletin of the day the note is received and marked in PowerSchool, and students will be allowed to make up all work missed. When a student is absent for extended periods of time--more than three days-- parents may obtain assignments from the teachers through the counseling office. Failure to make up assignments may result in a grade of zero for each missing assignment. A student may expect to have one day for each day of absence in order to make up missed work. If a student is absent from school, he/she may not be on school grounds. Extenuating circumstances will be dealt with on a case by case basis by the administration.

#### Unexcused Absence

An unexcused absence occurs when a student is out of school beyond the first nine (9) absences, parent documentation is not provided for the first nine (9) absences and the absences does not meet one of the excused absence reasons listed above. For every unexcused absence, the student will not be allowed to make up or receive credit for work missed.

#### Protocol

When a student reaches ten absences the attendance board at Wheeler will review their days absent in order to determine a plan of action to encourage success for the remainder of the year.

#### Tardy to Class

If a student is more than fifteen (15) minutes late for class, other than because of a school-sanctioned event, he or she will be considered absent from class.

#### Limit on Total Number of Absences (High School Only):

No student will receive course credit for a full year course after having been absent from that course for more than twenty (20) class periods (excused or unexcused) during the school year for reasons other than school sponsored activities (i.e. field trips). The total number of absences will be pro-rated for less than full year courses and for courses which meet other than five times per week.

### **TRUANCY POLICY** (BOE Policy #5113.2)

The Board of Education believes that regular attendance is essential to the academic success of students. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board of Education to monitor school attendance so as to identify students who are truant or habitually truant, and to enlist the cooperation of parents, child and family service agencies and, when necessary, the juvenile system, in order to address the problem when it arises.

#### Procedures for Monitoring Truancy

In accordance with the Truancy Policy of the Board of Education, the following procedures are hereby adopted.

For purposes of these procedures, "truant means a child enrolled in Kindergarten through Grade 12 who has four (4) unexcused absences from school in any one (1) month, or ten (10) unexcused absences from school in any school year. "Parent" means the parent, guardian, or other person having control of a child who is enrolled in Kindergarten through Grade 12.

1. When a child is identified as truant, the Superintendent or his or her designee will conduct a meeting with the parent, the child, if appropriate, and with such school personnel whose involvement is determined appropriate by the Superintendent or his or her designee. The meeting will occur not later than ten (10) school days after the child's fourth (4th) unexcused absence in a month or tenth (10th) unexcused absence in a school year and will be for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating the reasons for truancy.
2. The parents of each child enrolled in Kindergarten through Grade 12 in the school district will be notified in writing annually at the beginning of the school year of their statutory obligation to ensure that their child attends school. Parents of children enrolling during the school year will be similarly notified.
3. When parents are notified in accordance with Paragraph 2 above, they will be asked to provide the principal of the school in which their child is enrolled with a telephone number or some other means of contacting them during the school day.
4. Parents will be informed by the school principal or his or her designee that it is their responsibility to contact the school office when it is necessary for their child to be absent from school. If a child is absent and no notification has been received by the parent, the school principal will designate a staff member to notify the parent of the child's absence.

5. When the need is identified, the principal or his or her designee will coordinate services with and make referrals to community agencies providing child and family services.

6. If the parent or other person having control of the truant child fails to attend the meetings required under Section 1 of this policy or otherwise fails to cooperate in attempting to resolve the truancy problem, the Superintendent shall file a written complaint with the Superior Court (pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes, '46b-149) or a complaint with the North Stonington Juvenile Review Board alleging that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his or her family is a family with service needs.

Notification Procedures: With PowerSchool, it is the responsibility of the student and parent to monitor student attendance. Periodically, the school will notify the student and parent by phone or mail of the student's total number of absences. Please use this notification to check which absences need documentation to be submitted.

Appeal Procedures

1. Any student who has accumulated more absences than allowed under this policy, and who is thus threatened with loss of credit in a particular course or courses, may appeal to the attendance committee, which consists of the Associate Principal, the appropriate school counselor, and one faculty member for a waiver of the applicable provisions of this policy. A statement of the reason or reasons, which the student feels warrants the waiver, shall accompany the appeal. Upon receipt of the appeal, the committee will meet with the student and, if requested, the student's parents/guardians. Any information which the student feels justifies the granting of the appeal may be presented to the committee for consideration.

2. Any student whose appeal of a loss of course credit has been denied by the committee may request an appeal of such denial by the building principal.

**The Two-level Approach to Excused Absences**

The State Board of Education definitions establish two levels of criteria for an absence to be considered an excused absence (see table below).

Level	Total # of Days Absent*	Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to Be Considered Excused	Documentation Required within 10 Days
1	One through nine	Any reason that the student's parent or guardian approves.	Parent or guardian note only.
2	10 and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student illness (<i>Note: to be deemed excused, an appropriately licensed medical professional must verify all student illness absences, regardless of the absence's length.</i>)</li> <li>• Student's observance of a religious holiday.</li> <li>• Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.</li> <li>• Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required).</li> <li>• The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (parental documentation is not required for this reason).</li> <li>• Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators. (Opportunities must meet certain criteria. See below for details).</li> </ul>	Parent or guardian note and in some cases additional documentation (see details of specific reason).

\* Note: The total number of days absent includes both excused and unexcused absences.

**TARDINESS TO SCHOOL**

Students arriving at school late because of bus issues will be admitted without any disciplinary consequence. After the 5<sup>th</sup> tardy (excused or unexcused) per quarter, an office detention will be assigned. Please note: after the 6<sup>th</sup> tardy (unexcused) per quarter, two office detentions will be assigned for each additional tardy. Students who are continuously late, even after these consequences are issued, will be required to attend a meeting with their parents to discuss a plan of action to change the behavior. All tardiness

to school should be accompanied with a note explaining the reason for being tardy. This note should be presented to the attendance person in the main office upon arrival so that the appropriate code may be entered into PowerSchool.

### **STUDENTS REQUESTING EARLY DISMISSAL**

If a student must be dismissed before the close of school, a written request from the parent or guardian stating the reason for dismissal must be presented to the main office and the student will be given an early dismissal pass. At dismissal time, the student informs his/her teacher and reports to the office and signs out prior to leaving. The administration reserves the right to confirm any early dismissal with the parent/guardian or physician if necessary. Doctor, dentist, and business appointments should be made after school hours whenever possible.

Students are responsible for obtaining information regarding the work and assignments from classes that will be missed. Except for certain circumstances, students are to obtain that information before school that morning or prior to the day of early dismissal.

### **FAMILY TRAVEL / VACATION**

Student's absence from class for purposes of family travel or vacation is a loss of valuable class time. If circumstances demand that students accompany their parents during the school year, disciplinary action will not be taken, but the number of days missed will be counted in the total number of days absent in determining course credit. Students are encouraged to talk with their teachers prior to missing school to obtain any assignments. Class work (such as science labs or presentations) may not be able to be made up. Students who plan to be absent should seek approval by speaking with an administrator prior to missing school.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOTAPING OF STUDENTS** (BOE Policy #5131.111)

Throughout the school year, there may be occasions when your child's photograph or video image may be taken for our school newsletter, website, or local newspapers. For your child's safety and protection, we ask that you complete and return the permission slip included in the packet of paperwork received during registration or on the first day of school so we may be made aware of your wishes regarding this matter. If the permission slip is not returned, we will assume implied consent.

The Board of Education authorizes the use of video cameras on district property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to district property, and to safeguard district facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. The district shall notify staff and students through the proper handbooks that video surveillance may occur on district property. Video recordings may become a part of a student's educational record. The district shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

It is essential that regular, ongoing communication be maintained between the school and the parents of our students. Conferences to discuss student progress and/or concerns can be scheduled at any time during the school year by simply contacting the teacher and scheduling an appointment. Parents or guardians desiring to confer with any faculty member, administrator, or school counselor are encouraged to telephone the main office (860-535-0377) for an appointment. Upon arrival at school, the parent or guardian must report to the main office to obtain a visitor's pass. That pass must be worn while on school grounds and in any of the school buildings. There will be a scheduled parent/teacher conference opportunity in the fall as well as in the spring at parents' request.

### **PASSES AND ID BADGES**

At all times during the school day, each student is scheduled to be in a specific room. Whenever it is necessary to leave that room, the student is responsible for obtaining a pass with the destination and time of departure indicated. Tardiness to a class may be excused only if the student has a pass explaining his/her tardiness. Teachers will monitor the hallways during class time and ask for a hallway pass. If students cannot produce a pass, an office detention may be assigned.

Students have all been issued ID badges that they need to use when they pass between school buildings. These badges also give them access to school after normal school hours. Students are encouraged to have their ID badges on them at all times.

Whenever possible, students who wish to speak with the school social worker or psychologist should make appointments during study halls or in the morning before school. A sign-up sheet will be available in the guidance office for that purpose.



## MEDITATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (BOE Policy # 6115)

**Meditation:** Consistent with the mandate of State law, it is the policy of the Board of Education of North Stonington to provide an opportunity at the start of every school day for each student and each teacher to observe a time of silent meditation. At such time those students and teachers who wish may utilize such period for silent meditation. Any student who chooses not to engage in such silent meditation shall nevertheless remain quietly seated in the classroom. Any teacher who chooses not to engage in such silent meditation shall nevertheless remain in the classroom to provide professional supervision.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Each school within the district shall provide time each school day to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Such recitation is voluntary consistent with the mandate of Federal and State law. If, because of some personal philosophy or belief, a student/staff member has made the decision not to recite the "Pledge," he/she may choose to remain silent. Non-participants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

## NORTH STONINGTON PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

All parents, teachers, and administrators in the North Stonington School System are automatically members of the N.S.P.T.O. There are no formal registration requirements or dues. We are all working for the same goals:

1. To open the lines of communication between parents, teachers, students, administrators, the Board of Education, and residents
2. To work within the current system to improve the quality of education for the entire community

To achieve our goals, we need your help. By becoming active in the N.S.P.T.O., you will demonstrate your commitment to the education of our children, and you will be an informed, contributing partner in education.

## TELEPHONE USE

Students are allowed to use the Main Office phone for emergencies only. Calls home due to illness will be made by our nurse. **Please discourage your child from calling you directly from a cell phone to be dismissed if they do not feel well.** Students who are not feeling well **MUST** be seen by our school nurse for such a dismissal. If it is necessary to leave a message for a child, contact the school office and the teacher will be notified. In the event of an emergency, students will be called to the office.

## VISITORS

Generally, students and teachers may not have visitors during the school day, which includes the lunch periods. On occasion, prospective students or foreign exchange students may be allowed to visit for a part of the school day after prior approval of the administration. School buildings are closed to the public and no member of the public can enter the school without first getting approval from the principal.

It should be strongly stressed that the facilities of the school are for the use of registered students of Wheeler High School/Wheeler Middle School only. For the safety of the children, all visitors, volunteers, parents, and guardians must report to the school office upon entering the school building to sign in. All visitor's will be screened through our RAPTOR program to receive this badge. A license or form of picture ID will be necessary and these visitor's badges must be worn by all visitors. The Administration will report to the State Police the name of anyone located in the school without such a pass first obtaining permission of the administrator of the building.

## WORKING PAPERS

All individuals under 18 years of age must have working papers issued by the school for employment. Each applicant must appear in person with evidence of age and a written signed statement from the employer on his/her letterhead stating the conditions of employment. Please see the Central Office Administrative Assistant.

## DRESS CODE (BOE Policy #5132)

Students are expected to dress in a manner which exhibits common courtesy to others and conforms to health and safety standards. Any clothing, in the opinion of the faculty and administration that disrupts the educational process is not acceptable. **The final decision as to what is appropriate and in good taste rests with the administration.**

- Footwear must be worn in school at all times.

- Clothing (or other items) that advertises, promotes, or expresses racism, discrimination, bigotry, illegal activities, tobacco products, or alcohol are not permitted. Also, clothing that contains obscene language, explicit sexual references or sexual innuendo is not permitted.
- Sunglasses, unless medically required, may not be worn in school.
- Dresses, skirts, pants and shorts must provide appropriate and reasonable coverage. Undergarments must not be visible.
- All shirts must cover undergarment straps and must not have plunging necklines. Midriffs must not be exposed.
- Hats may be worn in the hallways and cafeteria only. Students must remove them upon entering classrooms or the library.

**Any student that violates the dress code will have the opportunity, without consequence, to change his or her attire to conform to the appropriate standard.**

**Parents will be contacted if a student refuses or is unable to change their attire and that student will receive a Level 1 blue slip from the office. (1<sup>st</sup> offense a warning; 2<sup>nd</sup> offense a lunch detention; 3<sup>rd</sup> offense two after school detentions)**

**Repeat offenders will require parents to come in for a meeting with administration.**

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION DRESS CODE:** Students are required to change into appropriate clothing for PE class. Your PE teacher will establish guidelines pertaining to clothing. A medical excuse is required if a student is unable to participate in class due to an illness or injury. This medical excuse must be submitted to the nurse who will inform your teacher.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Articles found should be deposited in an appropriate "Lost and Found" container. If a student does lose any items, he or she is encouraged to check first in the Main Office, and in the lost and found containers located in the Commons. Unclaimed items turned in to the office, with the exception of books, will be given to a suitable charitable organization. An announcement will be made prior to the donation. Personal property loss/theft should be reported to the administration, upon which time an investigation and record of the circumstances will be made. The school is not responsible for articles taken from unlocked lockers.

### **MEDIA CENTER** (BOE Policy # 6163.1)

The Media Center is located on the first level of the high school building. The media center is a quality educational facility with a variety of resources available to all students, staff, and faculty, including:

- Reference instruction and assistance on one-on-one and large group basis
- Interlibrary loan service for classroom and personal materials
- Print collection (fiction and nonfiction) of approximately 9,000 volumes, including a substantial periodical collection to meet research and recreational needs.
- Electronic books available in a variety of formats, including streaming, downloadable onto personal devices, and via circulating eBook devices.
- Extensive collection of audio books (cassette, CD, digital formats).
- Fiction and nonfiction videos and DVDs available for circulation and classroom use.
- Audio-video equipment including media projectors, laptop computers, webcams, iPods, digital cameras, and microphones.
- Internet-connected computers available for research and digital production
- Interactive whiteboard available for student and faculty use
- Photocopier, scanner, and laminator available
- Rotating displays of artwork created by students and community members

### **STUDENT STUDY CENTER (SSC)**

Each period, our Student Study Center is staffed by members of the Wheeler faculty. If students have a study hall and need extra help they are permitted to use this resource to help them improve in their studies. Students will be assigned to the SSC during study hall for the new quarter if they appear on our D and F list at the end of the quarter prior. Students will have an opportunity to earn their way out of the SSC at the quarter half way point when new students appearing on the D and F list may also be added. Students who are assigned to the SSC must report there, daily, during their study halls and use this time to check PowerSchool as well as to work on assignments owed or missed.

# SCHOOL SAFETY

## **Emergency Response Policy**

Disaster Instructions (BOE Policy #6114)

In the event of a disaster or emergency in our part of the state, we will be taking some additional precautions to help ensure that our children are safe. There are a variety of contingency plans that we may employ. One may include going into a lock-down situation, where the children and their teacher will stay in the locked classroom. Our main concern would be to notify the parents in the event of any occurrence. We will use our Power Announcement system to notify parents. Our first consideration is to release the children to their families. If possible, the children would be taken home on their regular buses. **It is very important that we have updated emergency contact information and phone numbers.**

## **Evacuation Procedures** (BOE Policy #6114.1)

Evacuations are serious in nature and full cooperation is mandatory at all times by everyone in the school for their protection and safety. It is imperative that all students, faculty, and staff members follow the protocol that has been established by administration.

1. All classes will move away from the building at least twenty-five (25) yards to their assigned areas; please see the procedures posted in each classroom.
2. If exits are blocked during an evacuation drill, please move in an orderly fashion to the best alternative route.
3. Follow your classmates and remain with them during the drill. Check in with your teacher when you arrive at the assigned area, where attendance will be taken.

## **ACCIDENTS / INJURIES** (BOE Policy 5143.1)

A student who suffers an accident/injury in the school, on school grounds, or on the way to or from school, should report the circumstances immediately to the teacher/adult in charge. The accident/injury must be reported to the school nurse and an accident/injury report will be completed. The student will be provided first aid by the school nurse or by other certified school personnel and additional medical attention will be arranged if circumstances appear to warrant it, but the school will not be financially responsible for the medical expenses beyond the first aid and liability insurance coverage carried by the Board of Education. Students who because of religious beliefs are not to receive medical attention in the event of an accident must have filed a statement previously to this effect with the nurse.

Pupil insurance is not compulsory, although it is recommended. Athletes are insured by the school for any injuries sustained during the playing season. To be assured of compensation, claimants must follow company regulations; the school offers the coverage as a service, but does not act as an insurance agency. Students who do not carry school insurance and who are injured on school property must first file a claim with his/her parents' insurance company.

## **BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS** (BOE Policy #5131.1)

The following rules are designed to promote good conduct on the school bus and to insure that the safety and welfare of all individuals riding the bus can be maintained:

1. For morning school bus pick up, each student shall be at his or her designated pick-up at least five minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time.
2. Students waiting at their bus stops should stand in orderly fashion at a safe distance from the traveled portion of the road.
3. Students shall not move toward the bus until it has come to a complete stop and the entrance door has been opened. **When a student must cross in front of the bus to get on or off a bus, he/she must wait for the driver's signal. The student should still check in both directions before crossing and must walk at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus so the driver can clearly keep him or her in sight.**
4. Middle school students must sit in those seats before the emergency exit. High school students can sit from the emergency exits back.
5. While on the bus, students will remain seated at all times.
6. Throwing of objects, verbal abuse of the driver or other students, swearing, or fighting will not be tolerated.
7. Smoking or lighting of matches is not permitted.
8. Consumption of food (including chewing gum and candy) and beverages of any kind is not allowed on the bus.

9. Students may only exit at their own bus stops, unless they have written permission from parent/guardian and approval of the school.
10. Students are liable for expenses arising from damages or the defacing of school bus equipment.

The decision to remove or deny transportation to a student shall be made by the administration. The following guidelines shall be observed in such cases:

1. Bus drivers shall report, in writing, all violations to their bus supervisor.
2. The supervisor shall report such violations, in writing, to the administration responsible for the student(s) concerned.

In the event of a serious problem or repeated violation of bus regulations, the administration may:

1. Immediately suspend the student(s) from riding the bus.
2. Notify the parent(s)/guardian(s), by telephone of the decision to suspend.
3. Confirm the decision to suspend in a letter to the parent(s)/guardian(s).
4. Conduct a hearing prior to allowing a student back on the school bus. Persons invited to the hearing should include the parent(s)/guardian(s), bus officials, bus driver, and the student(s) involved.

### **BICYCLE USAGE**

Students may ride bicycles to school, but they must leave them outside the building in a bicycle rack. Bicycles are not allowed in the tunnel. The school is not responsible for bicycles that are stolen or damaged while stored on school grounds. Students should have their own bicycle locks and chains.

### **LATE BUS PROCEDURES**

The North Stonington Board of Education provides a 4:00 p.m. late bus for students two days a week to use in order to provide students participating in after school activities the ability to get home. The late bus stops at the rear entrance of Wheeler High School/Middle School. Students can only use the late bus if they are staying after for an approved extra-curricular activity (such as a sport or club). Students are to sign in on the bus and are required to follow the above procedures. The late bus is a privilege for the Wheeler Community.

### **STUDENTS RIDING THE ELEMENTARY BUS**

Students with elementary bus passes will be allowed to ride the bus at the elementary school when space on the bus is available. Students using the elementary bus must follow these procedures:

1. Students must obtain a stamped elementary bus pass from the Wheeler High School/Middle School Main Office. No student will be allowed on the bus without a pass.
2. When their afternoon activity is over, students must report to the elementary school no earlier than 3:10 via the pedestrian underpass. The elementary bus will leave by 3:15.
3. Wait underneath the canopy in front of the main entrance.
4. Be polite and courteous and observe all school rules. Any disciplinary problems will be dealt with according to this Student Handbook.
5. Do not enter the North Stonington Elementary School without permission.
6. When your bus arrives, promptly board the bus, ask the bus driver where you should sit, and remain on the bus.

**Please Note:** Students may use the elementary bus when space is available. Riding the elementary school bus is a privilege and not a right. Students may be excluded from riding an elementary bus if there is no room available after all elementary students have a seat.

### **PARENT PICK UP / DROP-OFF**

**Parent Pick up and Drop off is located in the front of Wheeler High School/Middle School.** The back entrance to the building is for staff entrance and for students who ride the bus. Please do not pick up or drop off your children at the back entrance of the school as this will cause traffic congestion for our buses.

### **PEDESTRIAN UNDERPASS**

During the school day and in connection with any school activity, all students and members of the staff are prohibited from crossing Route 2 except by the underground walkway constructed between the middle/high school complex and the gymnasium/athletic field, or by other safe means established by the Superintendent of Schools. Such "safe means" shall not discriminate on the basis of physical disability and may include the use of vans or other vehicles to transport students and staff across Route 2. A student who

crosses Route 2 in any manner other than that established under this policy, without first obtaining the written permission of his or her principal, shall be subject to discipline, including suspension or expulsion, under the student disciplinary policy of the Board of Education.

Students with leg injuries requiring crutches or casts should be evaluated by the nurse. Bus transportation will be provided for students with mobility issues.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Throughout this document, the "Parent" means the parent, guardian, or other person having control of a child who is enrolled in Wheeler High/Middle School. There is more specific academic information for each school located in the others sections of the handbook.

### AGE OF MAJORITY

Any student in Connecticut who is eighteen (18) years old has reached the age of majority and, as a student, has certain responsibilities:

School regulations concerning all attendance matters (ie. early dismissal, field trips, late arrival, etc.) shall continue to be handled as they were previously. Eighteen-year-olds not living with parent(s) or guardian(s) will be dealt with directly in attendance matters.

1. The school system recognizes its moral responsibility to the parent regardless of the age of the students in its charge. All contacts and records shall continue to be maintained with the home.
2. The school recognizes the right of the eighteen-year-old to examine all personal records.
3. Any student at or above the age of majority, who is independent of parents, taking up residence in the town and enrolling in the school system, shall submit a proper certificate of residency.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (BOE Policy #5143)

The faculty and administration of Wheeler High School/Wheeler Middle School demand high standards of academic performance and academic honesty. Anything less would jeopardize quality education and allow our students to deny themselves needed skills and knowledge. For this reason, students who cheat on their assigned work, reports, research papers, quizzes, tests, or examinations risk prompt and punitive action by both their teacher and the school. Examples of violations may include, but are not limited to:

- Giving or receiving aid on tests and graded assignments
- Unauthorized talking during tests
- Copying regular homework/exercises
- Unapproved discussion of examinations/assignments contents
- Cheating on peer reviews of student work
- Misuse of technology including online translators for world language assignments

Documentation of all sources is important to avoid plagiarism, which is the stealing of another's ideas, words, writing, or academic work, and implying that it is original. Both quoting and paraphrasing information from an outside source, including using any technology, without crediting that source is a form of plagiarism. Students who are found cheating or plagiarizing will be subject to the following actions:

#### First offense:

- Academic penalty up to and including zero
- Parent contacted
- Administration notified (by teachers completing a blue behavior referral form)

#### Subsequent offenses:

- Academic penalty up to and including zero
- Parent contacted
- Disciplinary action by administration which may include office detention or suspension

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES/ECE COURSES:

Advanced Placement (AP), offered through College Board, and Early College Experience (ECE) offered through UCONN, are college level courses taught in a secondary school environment. AP/ECE courses are taught by highly qualified high school teachers whose curriculum is guided by the College Board *AP Course/UCONN Course Descriptions*. Students who take AP courses have the opportunity to receive college credit, depending on how they score on the AP exam (a 3, 4, or 5) and as determined by individual colleges and universities. Students who take an AP course are **required** to take an AP exam, usually given in May. Students who take an ECE course are also required to take an exam to receive college credit and must score a 73% or higher.

**\*PLEASE NOTE: Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, students and families will be responsible to pay the full cost of their AP exam(s). These fees will be applied at the start of each school year after the add/drop period has concluded. All AP test fees must be paid in full by October 1st.**

### EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION (BOE Policy # 6144.1)

The North Stonington Board of Education allows exemption from instruction on: AIDS, dissection of animals, family life, and sex education upon receipt of a written request from a parent/guardian for such exemption to the principal.

### HONOR ROLL

To be eligible for the Honor Roll, the following requirements must be met:

High Honors: Students achieving grades between A- and A+ or with only one grade in the B to B+ range (excluding physical education) will receive high honors.

Honors: Students achieving grades between B- and A + or with only one grade in the C to C+ range (excluding physical education) will receive honors.

Please Note: Physical Education grades must be in the A, B, or C range for a student to be included on the honor roll.

### MARKING SYSTEM

The Wheeler Community uses a traditional grading system:

A+	(97 – 100)	C	(73 – 76)
A	(93 – 96)	C-	(70 – 72)
A-	(90 – 92)	D+	(67 – 69)
B+	(87 – 89)	D	(63 – 66)
B	(83 – 86)	D-	(60 – 62)
B-	(80 – 82)	F	(0 – 59)
C+	(77 – 79)		

To receive credit in any subject, a student must achieve a passing grade (D-).

### REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS (BOE Policy #5124)

PowerSchool: Wheeler High School/ Middle School uses an on-line web portal grading system which allows parents/guardians and students the ability to log on at any time to see student progress. If you have questions concerning access, lost password, etc... please contact the Guidance Department. If a parent/guardian does not have access to a computer, or would like a paper copy of a student grade report, contact the Guidance Department.

Report Cards: Report cards are issued approximately one week after the marking period ends. Paper copies of report cards can be made upon request, but printed report cards are only printed at the end of each semester. The final report cards are mailed home at the end of the school year. At any time, parents can access student grades by using the Power School Parent Portal. Parents will also receive semester progress updates on how high school students are performing in regard to our four (4) Academic Expectations: Analysis, Communication, Collaboration and Literacy.

## **FIELD TRIPS / CLASS TRIPS** (BOE Policy #6153)

A student's privilege of going on a field trip or an overnight class trip will be determined by a number of factors, such as attitude, academic performance, and disciplinary record. A student who has compiled a disciplinary record or who is experiencing academic difficulties, or who, for other reasons deemed inappropriate by the advisors, may not be allowed to go on field trips or overnight trips. The ultimate decision to deny a student this privilege will rest completely with the school administrators, after consultation with the teacher advisors/trip coordinator and teacher chaperones responsible for the trip. **Any work previously assigned and due on the day the student misses class must be turned in prior to missing class. Assignments that have a due date after the missed class will not have the due date changed to a later date.**

### Class Field Trips Guidelines

1. All students are expected to participate in field trips planned by their classroom teachers and be responsible for the curriculum presented.
2. All school rules of behavior apply on field trips. Students should remember that they represent their school, their families, and their community.
3. Financial arrangements for students who would otherwise not be able to attend may be made on a case-by-case basis through the administration.

### Overnight Field Trips Guidelines

1. Students will abide by all regulations throughout the trip or they may be sent home at the expense of the parents or guardians.
2. Night curfews will be set by the advisor and obeyed by all students.
3. Property destruction and theft will not be tolerated at any time. Breakage will be charged to those individuals responsible.
4. The purchase or use of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs will result in the student being sent home at the expense of the parents or guardians. Further disciplinary action may be taken as per the discipline policy of the Board of Education.
5. Students will move about in groups and never be left alone at any time.
6. No person will be permitted to leave the hotel/motel once the group has returned for the night.
7. Student dress for day or evening activities will be by direction of the chaperones.
8. Behavior of all students will be positive and mature and reflect cooperation and courtesy toward each other and toward all chaperones.
9. The chaperones will make final decisions on any matter affecting the welfare of the students and the success of the trip. All laws of the United States apply.

## **STUDENT SOCIAL EVENTS**

All social events involving the students are planned by student committees and supervised by the faculty sponsors of the classes, clubs, or activities. Students are expected to follow the Wheeler Community Code of Conduct during all social activities. Reservation for space and time for such events must be approved by the building principal and/or the Central Office for school calendar availability. There are specific rules for the middle school and the high school. Please see these in the individual sections of the handbook.

- All students attending an activity shall be restricted to the area of the activity. Persons may be allowed to leave the area to call their parents, or for other permitted reasons; all others, having left the area of the activity, will not be allowed to return.
- Possession, consumption, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or drugs during a student activity is not permitted. (see disciplinary code for consequences)
- The administration may establish regulations for the conduct of a student activity on a case-by-case basis consistent with Board policies.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR ACTIVITIES** (BOE Policy #5114.2)

Participation in sports and extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right; therefore, students are expected to be positive school and community citizens. Serious violations of school rules and community laws could result in suspension of these privileges. Student activities provide an opportunity for each student to further develop individual interests and abilities, to develop personal relationships, initiative, cooperation, dependability, and organizational ability. Success is not measured by the number of activities in which a student participates, but by the amount and quality of work done in each. All students involved in club, music, or athletic activities must conform to current eligibility requirements. The requirements are as follows:

The student must have earned at least four credits in the year immediately preceding the one in which he/she is competing and must carry at least five credits in the year he/she is competing. (*high school only*)

- Eligibility for the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters is based upon the previous quarter's grades.
- Students must pass a minimum of four Carnegie units the quarter prior.
- Students who fail more than one course will automatically be considered ineligible.
- Misbehaviors may be cause for restricted participation in extra-curricular activities. (please refer to the *Wheeler Athletic Handbook*)

### **TELECOMMUNICATIONS/INTERNET: ACCEPTABLE USE** (BOE Policy #6156)

Student use of the Internet and any other electronic information retrieval services is a privilege. Students may use the Internet and any other electronic information retrieving systems owned by the Board of Education only when supervised by a teacher or a paraprofessional. Further guidelines for the use of these electronic services may be developed by the Board's Internet Administrator.

Students who wish to use such electronic services and networks that are available to them may only do so provided that they:

1. Agree to comply with the Board's Internet acceptable use policies.
2. Sign the Board's Internet user's agreement parent permission form, having obtained the signature of one parent or guardian if the student is under the age of eighteen (18). Forms are available in the main office.
3. Submit the completed agreement and consent form to the person so designated in each school building.
4. Do not make credit card or COD purchases over the Internet.

### **CELL PHONES:**

High school students are permitted to use cell phones during the school day at Wheeler. However, during class time, a teacher may request that a student put a cell phone away should they believe it is a distraction or a disruption to student learning. There are a few expectations that all students must follow if they would like to keep this privilege of carrying a cell phone during the school day:

1. Cell phones should not be on a student's desk unless directed to be used by a teacher for class purposes;
2. Students should not be talking on cell phones during class or during hallway passing time;
3. Cell phones should not be used to record or photograph students or teachers without their permission. If this occurs, students will be disciplined appropriately and will automatically lose their privilege of carrying a cell phone during the school day for the remainder of that school year;
4. Cell phones are NOT permitted in bathrooms or locker rooms under any circumstances. A student caught with a cell phone in any of these areas will receive appropriate disciplinary action;
5. Cell phones are not allowed in classrooms during mid-term or final exams and they cannot be used for their calculator during such assessments.

### **BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE (BYOD)** (BOE Policy #5131.83)

The North Stonington Board of Education is committed to aiding students and staff in creating a 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment. Therefore, students and staff will be permitted to access the District's wireless network with their personal devices during the school day. With teacher and parent/guardian approval, students may use their own devices to access the internet and collaborate with other students.

#### Definition of "Device"

For the purposes of "BYOD", a "device" is defined as a piece of privately owned portable electronic technology that includes, but is not limited to, existing and emerging mobile communication systems and smart technologies, portable internet devices, cell/smart phones, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), hand held entertainment systems, or portable internet information technology systems that can be used for word processing, wireless internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording, and information transmitting/receiving/storing.

#### Instruction and Faculty Roles

Teachers are facilitators of instruction in their classrooms. Therefore, they will not spend time on fixing technical difficulties with students' personal devices in the classroom. They will educate and provide guidance on how to use a device and troubleshoot simple issues, but they will not provide technical support. This responsibility resides at home with parents/guardians. Teachers may communicate information regarding educational applications and suggest appropriate tools that can be downloaded to personal devices at home. Parents will need to assist their children with downloads if they wish to follow teachers' suggestions. No applications are to be downloaded at school.

Teachers are to closely supervise students to ensure appropriate use of technology in the classrooms. The use of student personal devices, as with any personally owned device, is strictly up to the teacher.



### Accessibility

It is understood that not every student has his/her own electronic device. To ensure equal accessibility to technology resources, teachers will utilize available technology within the district to, as best as possible, provide access to those without. All equipment, whether district or personally owned, must adhere to the District's Acceptable Use policy.

### Internet Access

During instructional times at District facilities, the only internet gateway that should be accessed is the one provided by the District. Any device brought to the District for educational purposes should not use outside internet sources.

### Software

The District is not responsible for software on personal devices. Students will be provided links for cloud-based software and services used by the teaching staff, but locally installed software programs are the responsibility of individual students and their parents/guardians. It is expected, where applicable, that personal devices will use anti-virus/anti-malware software to minimize the risk of malicious activity and security breaches. This is the responsibility of individual students and their parents/guardians. Devices removed from the network for malicious activity, whether intentional or not, will need to show measures taken to address the issue.

### Power requirements

Devices should be fully charged before arriving at school. Due to the limited availability of power outlets and the safety concern of having power cords stretched across classrooms, charging of personal electronic devices will only be allowed at teacher or administrator discretion.

### Privacy

The use of cameras in any type of device is strictly prohibited in locker rooms, restrooms, and classrooms unless a certified District faculty member authorizes the student to do otherwise. While students are allowed to use electronic devices, they are required to obtain permission before taking a photograph or video of any individual. Students must also obtain permission from any individual appearing in a photograph or video prior to posting on any social networking or internet site. Violations to student and faculty privacy are subject both to district/school disciplinary action, but state and federal law as well.

### Discipline

Students found to be using any electronic communications device to, in any way send or receive personal messages, data, or information that would contribute to or constitute cheating on any student assessment, project, or assignment shall be subject to discipline and the device shall be confiscated and not returned until a parent conference has been held.

### Security and Damages

Responsibility to keep personal devices secure rests with the individual owner. The North Stonington Public School District is not liable for any device stolen or damaged on campus. If a device is stolen or damaged, it will be handled through the administrative office as other personal items that are stolen or damaged. It is recommended that "skins", decals, and other custom touches be used to physically identify a student's device from others. Additionally, protective cases for technology are encouraged.

The District has the right to collect and examine any device that is suspected of causing problems or is the source of an attack or virus infection. Devices providing a threat to the network, whether through hacking, virus infection, bypassing security, or any other malicious action, will be removed from the network and will not be allowed access again until the threat is shown to be sufficiently addressed.

The District may review files and communications to maintain system/network integrity and insure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files stored on district servers will always be private. The District provides no support for files stored on public servers and services.

### Bring Your Own Device Student and Parent Agreement

The use of technology to provide educational material is not a necessity but a privilege. A student does not have the right to use his/her electronic device while at school. When abused, privileges will be taken away. When respected, they will benefit the learning environment as a whole.

Students and parents/guardians participating in the Bring Your Own Device program must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct, as well as all applicable Board policies, particularly the Computer Acceptable Use policy.

The use of devices, as with any personally owned device, is strictly up to the teacher. Students are not to share their personal devices with other students, unless approved in writing by their parent/guardian.

\*\* During instructional time (in regards to not using outside networks)

\*\* List disciplinary actions for privacy violations (consequences for infractions/violations) (cf. 5114 –

Suspension/Expulsion)

(cf. 5131 – Conduct and Discipline)

(cf. 5131.81 – Electronic Devices)

(cf. 5131.911 – Bullying)

(cf. 5131.913 – Cyberbullying)

(cf. 5144 – Discipline)

(cf. 6141.321 – Network-Internet Acceptable Use) Legal

Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-221 Boards of Education to Prescribe Rules

Policy Adopted:

## STUDENT SERVICES

### COUNSELING SERVICES (BOE Policy #6164.2)

Counseling services are essential and integral parts of the total school program. Each student at Wheeler High School/Wheeler Middle School is assigned a school counselor. Counselors confer with students individually and in groups regarding their school programs and career planning. They provide academic, vocational, and personal counseling, refer students to the school psychologist and social worker, and administer the standardized testing program. The Counseling department has an extensive file of occupational and collegiate materials. This resource center is available to students during study halls, as well as before and after school.

The following programs and services are provided to help students achieve their best and prepare for life after they graduate:

- individual and group counseling
- evening programs for students and parents
- career information center
- coordination with outside agencies
- career and college planning

Students are encouraged to visit their counselors often. Parents are encouraged to become an active part of the counseling program.

### HEALTH SERVICES (BOE Policy # 5141)

Physical Exams: Connecticut State Law requires that each student receive a State Assessed Physical Exam (requirement by Connecticut School Health Law section 10-206c) prior to starting Kindergarten, Grade 7 and Grade 10. The State Physical (blue form) must be received **in the Nurse's office** no later than the first day of school. A physical less than twelve months old will be considered current.

**IF THE ABOVE STATE REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT MET, EXCLUSION WILL OCCUR.** *Please contact your school nurse or building principal prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school with any problems.*

Sports Physicals: Every student participating in interscholastic sports must have a current physical performed during the past thirteen months. At no time shall an athlete be allowed to practice or compete if the physical exceeds thirteen months. **No one can participate in practice or games until a physical has been completed and the proper forms submitted to the nurse's office.**

Immunizations: According to section 10a-204a of the General Statutes of Connecticut Immunization Requirements for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students must show proof of the following:

Tdap/Td: 1 dose for students who have completed their primary DTaP series.

Students who start the series at age 7 or older only need a total of 3 doses of tetanus- diphtheria containing vaccine, one of which must be Tdap.

Polio: At least 3 doses. The last dose must be given on or after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday.

MMR: 2 doses separated by at least 28 days, 1<sup>st</sup> dose on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday.

Meningococcal: 1 dose

Hep B: 3 doses, last dose on or after 24 weeks of age

Varicella: 2 doses separated by at least 3 months – 1<sup>st</sup> dose on or after the first birthday; or verification of disease.

### **NO BRIDGE NOTES WILL BE ACCEPTED**

Vision Screenings: Done annually in grades Kindergarten through Grade 6 and Grade 9.

Postural Screening: Done annually in Grades 5 through 9. If your child has received a physical this school year, which included scoliosis screening, or is under a physician's care for diagnosed scoliosis, an additional screening will not be necessary. All other students will be screened unless an exemption form is completed.

Hearing Screenings: Done annually in Kindergarten through Grade 3, Grade 5 and Grade 8.

Exclusion: Any student in school with coughing (uncontrollable), fever (temperature of 100 degrees or over), or vomiting more than once will be excluded. **Students exhibiting these symptoms prior to school should remain at home.** Students must be symptom-free for twenty-four hours before returning to school.

Parents will be notified if their child requires exclusion. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to make arrangements for care. Designated individuals will be contacted to assume responsibility if parent cannot be reached.

It is important to notify the nurse's office if your child has any contagious disease to help prevent it from spreading further. Please notify the nurse for strep throat, ringworm, head lice, chicken pox, and MRSA.

Annual Identification of Students without Health Insurance: The Connecticut State Department of Education and the Department of Social Services asked all schools to identify students without health insurance. In response, state physical forms will be reviewed annually in Grades 6 and 9 to update insurance information. Students who do not record health insurance on their physical form will be contacted by the school nurse and HUSKY information will be provided.

### **MEDICATION** (BOE Policy #5141.21)

The Connecticut State Law and Regulations (Public Act #723) requires a physician's written order and written authorization of the parent/guardian for each medication ordered (prescription and over-the-counter medications). Students may be administered **acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and/or cough drops** by the school nurse as prescribed by the medical advisor. Parent authorization is required.

All medications must be delivered in and dispensed from a pharmacy labeled container with the name of the child, name and strength of medicine, physician's name, the date of the original prescription, and directions. Not more than a forty-five day supply should be delivered to school.

Asthma, Respiratory Problems, Allergies (Bees/Insects, etc.): Students with any of these ailments should have the following information in their medical folders in the nurse's office:

1. Orders, provided by parents, from the physician for treatment of acute attacks.
2. Orders, from parents/physicians, in case of extreme emergencies and parents/guardians are not available, as to the preferred courses of action for student.
3. Inhaler, epipen, or other medication in the nurse's office at school at all times.

**AUTHORIZATION FOR ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL FORMS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE NURSE'S OFFICE OR MAY BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE SCHOOLS WEBSITE. ALL FORMS MUST BE UPDATED ANNUALLY.**

New Entrants: All new students must have their health records reviewed by the school nurse before entering. A State Assessed Physical (blue form) is required for all exchange students before entering. Out of state students are required to have an up to date physical or a state assessed physical. Connecticut State Physical forms are available in the nurse's office or on the school's website.

**Please Note:** Confidentiality laws do not allow schools to disseminate medical information to the bus company (non-employees). If you wish pertinent information about your child to be released to the bus company, a consent form will be provided by the nurse. All students with high-risk health conditions will be mailed a consent form. Please return this form to the school prior to the first day of school.

## DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

(BOE Policy # 5144)

The primary responsibility of Wheeler High School/Wheeler Middle School is to provide students a rewarding education. Wheeler has established behavior expectations that must be followed in order to maintain an environment that is conducive to learning. To attain this, a sequence of corrective consequences has been developed to address a broad range of student behaviors. At all levels of infractions, we are committed to implement a variety of instructional activities and actions, which are geared toward positive student behavioral development. However, more serious or repetitive negative behaviors by students will result in a system of progressive discipline in which consequences become increasingly more severe.

### SCOPE OF THE STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Conduct on School Grounds or at a School-Sponsored Activity: Students may be disciplined for conduct on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity that **endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or that violates a publicized policy of the Board.**

Conduct off School Grounds: Students may be suspended or expelled for conduct off school grounds if such conduct **is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is in violation of a publicized policy of the Board.** In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and the Board of Education may consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to, the following factors: (1) **whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school;** (2) **whether other students from the school were involved or whether there was any gang involvement;** (3) **whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon,** as defined in section Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38, and **whether any injuries occurred;** and (4) **whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.** In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and/or the Board of Education may also consider **whether such off-campus conduct involved the use of drugs.**

The Wheeler Community believes in using a progressive discipline model. The school administration may undertake any of the following disciplinary procedures for conduct off school grounds or at a school sponsored activity which is:

1. A violation of a publicized policy of the Board
2. Is seriously disruptive of the educational process
3. Endangers persons or property

Warning: A warning is a brief discussion between the student who is a first-time offender and a teacher/administrator regarding less serious infractions. During the discussion, the student is told that subsequent violation of the school rules will result in more severe school disciplinary procedures.

Teacher Detention: Each teacher is responsible for establishing classroom rules and reviewing behavioral expectations which will assure the best learning environment possible. Students will be made aware of the expectations at the beginning of the course by each teacher through the distribution of course expectations which include behavioral expectations.

Teachers may assign an after-school teacher detention for any misconduct occurring in the classroom. Teacher detentions take precedence over other commitments such as practice or other extra-curricular activities. Teacher detentions may be any length of time up to ninety minutes. If a student skips a teacher detention, the student will be referred to the office and the student's parents will be notified. Students must be given advanced notice of twenty- four-hours for any after school teacher detention, unless the teacher and the parent have discussed this consequence and have agreed to this detention. Examples of offenses that may lead to a teacher detention may include, but are not limited to:

- talking
- eating candy/food/gum in classroom
- rude, disrespectful behavior
- disturbing class

- misusing pass privilege
- violation of teacher's classroom rules
- tardiness (see attendance)

Office Detention: While the Administration is in charge of office detention, supervision of detentions will be carried out by individual teachers. Detention Hall begins promptly at 2:25 p.m. and ends at 3:55 p.m. in the room of the teacher who will be supervising; it is the responsibility of the student to check in with the Main Office to find out where the detention will be held. All students are to remain seated and quiet for the entire time. There is to be no communication of any kind between any students serving detention. Students are required to bring their own work and are required to work for the entire time. Any student who does not come with work will be given an assignment by the supervising teacher. Failure to abide by the above will result in further disciplinary action by the administration. If a student is asked to leave a detention, that detention does not count as being served. Any student reporting late for detention, without permission from the administration, will be dismissed from that detention and will be assigned a double detention.

The following behaviors may result in office detention:

- excessive tardiness
- classroom or hallway disruption
- misuse of pass/pass privilege
- skipping teacher detention
- failure to sign into school
- bus misconduct
- other infractions deemed appropriate by the administration

Student/Parent/Administration Conference: Recognizing that parents have the primary right, responsibility, and obligation for the education of their children, the Wheeler Community strives to complement, reinforce, and extend these family efforts. Wheeler is committed to enhancing mutual respect, student responsibility, and cooperation between school and home. Through an individualized problem solving process which incorporates appropriate alternative behavioral procedures, students and their families will try to set up a productive plan to prevent unwanted behaviors from occurring again. In many cases of a more serious nature, parent/student/administration conferences will be standard procedure.

In-School Suspension: The administration is authorized under Board of Education Policy #5114 to invoke in-school suspension for a period of up to five (5) days, for all suspendable offenses, except for those that pose an immediate danger to persons or property, or that are so disruptive to the educational process that the suspension must be served out of school. Students will complete class work provided by their individual teachers during the suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension: The administration is authorized under Board of Education Policy #5114 to invoke suspension for a period of up to ten (10) days, or of any student for one or more of the reasons stated below in accordance with the procedure outlined in policy #5114. Moreover, the administration is authorized to suspend from transportation services any student whose conduct while receiving transportation violates the standards set forth below.

Actions Leading to Disciplinary Action, including Removal from Class, Suspension and/or Expulsion: Conduct which may lead to disciplinary action (including, but not limited to, removal from class, suspension, and/or expulsion) includes conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, and conduct off school grounds, as set forth above. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Striking or assaulting a student, members of the school staff, or other persons.
2. Theft.
3. The use of obscene or profane language or gestures, the possession and/or display of obscenity or pornographic images, or the unauthorized or inappropriate possession and/or display of images, pictures, or photographs depicting nudity.
4. Violation of smoking, dress, transportation regulations, or other regulations and/or policies governing student conduct.
5. Refusal to obey a member of the school staff, law enforcement authorities, or school volunteers, or disruptive classroom behavior.
6. Any act of harassment based on an individual's sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, disability, national origin, or ancestry.
7. Refusal by a student to identify himself/herself to a staff member when asked, misidentification of oneself to such person(s), lying to school officials, or otherwise engaging in dishonest behavior.
8. Inappropriate displays of public affection of a sexual nature and/or sexual activity on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity.
9. A walk-out from or sit-in within a classroom or school building or school grounds.
10. Blackmailing, threatening or intimidating school staff or students (or acting in a manner that could be construed to constitute

blackmail, a threat, or intimidation, regardless of whether intended as a joke).

11. Possession of any weapon, weapon facsimile, deadly weapon, martial arts weapon, electronic defense weapon, pistol, knife, blackjack, bludgeon, box cutter, metal knuckles, pellet gun, air pistol, explosive device, firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, whether functional or not, or any other dangerous object or instrument. This includes the possession and/or use of any object or device that has been converted or modified for use as a weapon.

12. Possession of any ammunition for any weapon described above in paragraph 11.

13. Unauthorized entrance into any school facility or portion of a school facility or aiding or abetting an unauthorized entrance.

14. Possession or ignition of any fireworks or other explosive materials, or ignition of any material causing a fire.

15. Unauthorized possession, sale, distribution, use, consumption, or aiding in the procurement of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages, electronic cigarettes or vaporizers used to smoke tobacco products (or any facsimile of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages, or any item represented to be tobacco, drugs or alcoholic beverages), including being under the influence of any such substances. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term "drugs" shall include, but shall not be limited to, any medicinal preparation (prescription and non-prescription) and any controlled substance whose possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption is illegal under state and/or federal law.

16. Sale, distribution, or consumption of substances contained in household items including, but not limited to, glue, paint, accelerants/propellants for aerosol canisters, and/or items such as the aerators for whipped cream; if sold, distributed, or consumed for the purpose of inducing a stimulant, depressant, hallucinogenic, or mind-altering effect.

17. Possession of paraphernalia used or designed to be used in the consumption, sale, or distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, electronic cigarette devices or vaporizers as described in paragraph (15) above. For purposes of this policy, drug paraphernalia includes any equipment, products, and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use, or designed for use in growing, harvesting, manufacturing, producing, preparing, packaging, storing, containing or concealing, or injecting, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise introducing controlled drugs or controlled substances into the human body, including but not limited to items such as "bongs," pipes, "roach clips," vials, tobacco rolling papers, and any object or container used, intended or designed for use in storing, concealing, possessing, distributing, or selling controlled drugs or controlled substances.

18. The destruction of real, personal, or school property, such as cutting, defacing, or otherwise damaging property in any way.

19. Accumulation of offenses such as school and class tardiness, class or study hall cutting, or failure to attend detention.

20. Trespassing on school grounds while on out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

21. Making false bomb threats or other threats to the safety of students, staff members, and/or other persons.

22. Defiance of school rules and the valid authority of teachers, supervisors, administrators, other staff members, and/or law enforcement authorities.

23. Throwing snowballs, rocks, sticks, and/or similar objects, except as specifically authorized by school staff.

24. Unauthorized and/or reckless and/or improper operation of a motor vehicle on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity.

25. Leaving school grounds, school transportation, or a school-sponsored activity without authorization.

26. Use of or copying of the academic work of another individual and presenting it as the student's own work without proper attribution.

27. Possession and/or use of a cellular telephone, radio, CD player, Blackberry, personal data assistant, walkie talkie, or similar electronic device on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity in violation of Board policy and/or administrative regulations regulating the use of such devices.

28. Possession and/or use of a beeper or paging device on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity without the written permission of the principal or his/her designee.

29. Unauthorized use of any school computer, computer system, computer software, Internet connection, or similar school property or system, or the use of such property or system for inappropriate purposes.

30. Possession and/or use of a laser pointer, unless the student possesses the laser pointer temporarily for an educational purpose while under the direct supervision of a responsible adult.

31. Hazing.

32. Bullying, defined as any overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. Overt acts which occur off-campus (and not at a school sponsored activity) may also constitute bullying if it is determined that they have a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school.

33. Acting in any manner that creates a health and/or safety hazard for staff members, students, or the public, regardless of whether the conduct is intended as a joke.

34. Engaging in a plan to stage or create a violent situation for the purpose of recording it by electronic means, or recording by electronic means acts of violence for purposes of later publication to persons other than school officials.

35. Engaging in a plan to stage sexual activity for the purposes recording it by electronic means, or recording by electronic means sexual acts for purposes of later publication to persons other than school officials.

36. Any action prohibited by any Federal or State law.

37. Any other violation of school rules or regulations or a series of violations which makes the presence of the student in school seriously disruptive to the educational process and/or a danger to persons or property.

Discretionary and Mandatory Expulsions: A principal may consider recommendation of expulsion of a student in a case where he/she has reason to believe the student has engaged in conduct listed on the previous pages. A principal **must** recommend expulsion proceedings in all cases against any student whom the administration has reason to believe:

1. 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
2. **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
3. 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.

Procedures Governing In-School Suspension: The principal or designee may impose in-school suspension in cases where a student's conduct endangers persons or property, violates school policy, seriously disrupts the educational process or in other appropriate circumstances as determined by the principal or designee.

1. In-school suspension may not be imposed on a student without an informal hearing by the building principal or designee.
2. Suspensions shall be considered to be in-school suspensions unless the principal or his/her designee determines through the informal hearing process that the student poses such a danger to persons or property or is so disruptive of the educational process that he or she must serve the suspension out of school.
3. In-school suspension may be served in the school that the student regularly attends or in any other school building within the jurisdiction of the Board.
4. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or for a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.
5. The parents or guardian of any minor student placed on in-school suspension shall be given notice of such suspension within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of the period of the in-school suspension.
6. While serving the in-school suspension students will be given a contract governing the policies and procedures for serving the in-school suspension. Students will follow all school rules and policies while serving the suspension and the student's teachers will be contacted and provide all classwork and homework assigned for that day. The length of the suspension can be adjusted depending on the behavior and conduct of the student while serving the suspension.

Procedures Governing Suspension: The principal of a school, or designee on the administrative staff, shall have the right to suspend any student for an offense listed above for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days. In cases where a student's suspension will result in the student being suspended more than ten (10) times or for a total of fifty (50) days in a school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, the student shall, prior to the pending suspension, be granted a formal hearing before the Board of Education. The principal or designee shall report the student to the Superintendent or designee and request a formal Board hearing. If an emergency situation exists, such hearing shall be held as soon after the suspension as possible. In cases where suspension is contemplated, the following procedures shall be followed.

1. Unless an emergency situation exists, no student shall be suspended prior to having an informal hearing before the principal or designee at which the student is informed of the charges and given an opportunity to respond. In the event of an emergency, the informal hearing shall be held as soon after the suspension as possible.
2. If suspended, such suspension shall be an in-school suspension unless, during the informal hearing, the principal or designee determines that the student: (a) poses such a danger to persons or property; or (b) is so disruptive of the educational process that he or she must serve the suspension out of school.
3. Evidence of past disciplinary problems that have led to removal from a classroom, suspension, or expulsion of a student who is the subject of an informal hearing may be received by the principal or designee, but only considered in the determination of the length of suspensions.
4. By telephone, the principal or designee shall make reasonable attempts to immediately notify the parent or guardian of a minor student following the suspension and to state the cause(s) leading to the suspension.
5. Whether or not telephone contact is made with the parent or guardian of such minor student, the principal or designee shall forward a letter promptly to such parent or guardian to the last address reported on school records (or to a newer address if known by the principal or designee), offering the parent or guardian an opportunity for a conference to discuss same.
6. In all cases, the parent or guardian of any minor student who has been suspended shall be given notice of such suspension within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of the suspension.
7. Not later than twenty-four (24) hours after the commencement of the suspension, the principal or designee shall also notify the

Superintendent or his/her designee of the name of the student being suspended and the reason for the suspension.

8. The student shall be allowed to complete any classwork, including examinations, without penalty, which he or she missed while under suspension.

9. The school administration may, in its discretion, shorten or waive the suspension period for a student who has not previously been suspended or expelled, if the student completes an administration-specified program and meets any other conditions required by the administration. Such administration-specified program shall not require the student and/or the student's parents to pay for participation in the program.

10. Notice of the suspension shall be recorded in the student's cumulative educational record. Such notice shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school. In cases where the student's period of suspension is shortened or waived the administration may choose to expunge the suspension notice from the cumulative record at the time the student completes the administration-specified program and meets any other conditions required by the administration.

11. If the student has not previously been suspended or expelled, and the administration chooses to expunge the suspension notice from the student's cumulative record prior to graduation, the administration may refer to the existence of the expunged disciplinary notice, notwithstanding the fact that such notice may have been expunged from the student's cumulative file, for the limited purpose of determining whether any subsequent suspensions or expulsions by the student would constitute the student's first such offense.

12. The decision of the principal or designee with regard to disciplinary actions up to and including suspensions shall be final.

13. During any period of suspension served out-of-school, the student shall not be permitted to be on school property and shall not be permitted to attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities, unless the principal specifically authorizes the student to enter school property for a specified purpose or to participate in a particular school-sponsored activity.

#### Procedures Governing Expulsion Hearing

1. Emergency Exception: Except in an emergency situation, the Board of Education shall, prior to expelling any student, conduct a hearing to be governed by the procedures outlined herein and consistent with the requirements of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233d and the applicable provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 4-176e to 4-180a, and § 4-181a. Whenever an emergency exists, the hearing provided for herein shall be held as soon as possible after the expulsion.

2. Hearing Panel: The Board of Education appoints an impartial hearing officer to hear and decide the expulsion matter, provided that no member of the Board may serve as such hearing officer.

3. Hearing Notice: Written notice of the expulsion hearing must be given to the student, and, if the student is a minor, to his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) within a reasonable time prior to the time of the hearing. A copy of the Board policy on student discipline shall also be given to the student, and if the student is a minor, to his/her parent(s) or guardian(s), at the time the notice is sent that an expulsion hearing will be convened. The written notice of the expulsion hearing shall inform the student of the following:

- a. The date, time, place and nature of the hearing.
- b. The legal authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held, including a reference to the particular sections of the legal statutes involved.
- c. A short, plain description of the conduct alleged by the administration.
- d. The student may present as evidence relevant testimony and documents concerning the conduct alleged and the appropriate length and conditions of expulsion; and that the expulsion hearing may be the student's sole opportunity to present such evidence.
- e. The student may cross-examine witnesses called by the Administration.
- f. The student may be represented by any third party of his/her choice, including an attorney, at his/her expense or at the expense of his/her parents.
- g. A student is entitled to the services of a translator or interpreter, to be provided by the Board of Education, whenever the student or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) requires the services of an interpreter because he/she/they do(es) not speak the English language or is(are) disabled.
- h. The conditions under which the Board is not legally required to give the student an alternative educational opportunity (if applicable).
- i. Information about free or reduced-rate legal services and how to access such services.

#### 4. Hearing Procedures:

- a. The hearing will be conducted by the Hearing Officer, who will call the meeting to order, introduce the parties, counsel, briefly explain the hearing procedures, and swear in any witnesses called by the Administration or the student.
- b. The hearing will be conducted in executive session. A verbatim record of the hearing will be made, either by tape recording or by a stenographer. A record of the hearing will be maintained, including the verbatim record, all written notices, and documents relating to the case and all evidence received or considered at hearing.
- c. Formal rules of evidence will not be followed. The Hearing Officer has the right to accept hearsay and other evidence if it deems that evidence relevant or material to its determination. The Officer will rule on testimony or evidence as to it being immaterial or irrelevant.



- d. The hearing will be conducted in two (2) parts. In the first part of the hearing, the Hearing Officer will receive and consider evidence regarding the conduct alleged by the Administration. In the first part of the hearing, the charges will be introduced into the record by the Superintendent or his/her designee.
- e. Each witness for the Administration will be called and sworn. After a witness has finished testifying, he/she will be subject to cross-examination by the opposite party or his/her legal counsel or by the Hearing Officer.
- f. After the Administration has presented its case, the student will be asked if he/she has any witnesses or evidence to present concerning the charges. If so, the witnesses will be sworn, will testify, and will be subject to cross examination and to questioning by the Hearing Officer. The student may also choose to make a statement at this time. If the student chooses to make a statement, he or she will be sworn and subject to cross examination and questioning by the Hearing Officer. Concluding statements will be made by the Administration and then by the student and/or his or her representative.
- g. In cases where the student has denied the allegation, the Hearing Officer must determine whether the student committed the offense(s) as charged by the Superintendent.
- h. If the Hearing Officer determines that the student has committed the conduct as alleged, then the Hearing Officer shall proceed with the second portion of the hearing, during which the Hearing Officer will receive and consider relevant evidence regarding the length and conditions of expulsion.
- i. When considering the length and conditions of expulsion, the Hearing Officer may review the student's attendance, academic performance, and past disciplinary records. The Hearing Officer may not review notices of prior expulsions or suspensions which have been expunged from the student's cumulative record. The Hearing Officer may ask the Superintendent for a recommendation as to the discipline to be imposed.
- j. Evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to removal from a classroom, suspension, or expulsion of a student being considered for expulsion may be considered only during the second portion of the hearing, during which the Hearing Officer is considering length of expulsion and nature of alternative educational opportunity to be offered.
- k. The Superintendent may, after reviewing the incident with administrators and reviewing the student's records, make a recommendation to the Hearing Officer as to the appropriate discipline to be applied.
- l. The Hearing Officer shall make findings as to the truth of the charges, if the student has denied them; and, in all cases, the disciplinary action, if any, to be imposed.
- m. The Hearing Officer may, in his/her discretion, shorten or waive the expulsion period for a student who has not previously been suspended or expelled, if the student completes a specified program and meets any other conditions required. The specified program shall not require the student and/or the student's parents to pay for participation in the program.
- n. The Hearing Officer shall report its final decision in writing to the student, or if such student is a minor, also to the parent(s) or guardian(s), stating the reasons on which the decision is based, and the disciplinary action to be imposed. Said decision shall be based solely on evidence presented at the hearing. The parents or any minor student who has been expelled shall be given notice of such disciplinary action within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of the period of the expulsion.

Presence on School Grounds and Participation in School-Sponsored Activities During Expulsion: During the period of expulsion, the student shall not be permitted to be on school property and shall not be permitted to attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities, except for the student's participation in any alternative educational program provided by the district, unless the Superintendent specifically authorizes the student to enter school property for a specified purpose or to participate in a particular school-sponsored activity.

Stipulated Agreements: In lieu of the procedures used in this section, the Administration and the parents (or legal guardians) of a student facing expulsion may choose to enter into a *Joint Stipulation of the Facts* and a *Joint Recommendation* to the Hearing Officer concerning the length and conditions of expulsion. Such *Joint Stipulation and Recommendation* shall include language indicating that the parents (or legal guardians) understand their right to have an expulsion hearing held pursuant to these procedures, and language indicating that the Hearing Officer, in his/her discretion, has the right to accept or reject the *Joint Stipulation of Facts and Recommendation*. If the Hearing Officer rejects either the Joint Stipulation of Facts or the Recommendation, an expulsion hearing shall be held pursuant to the procedures outlined herein. If the Student is eighteen years of age or older, the student shall have the authority to enter into a Joint Stipulation and Recommendation on his or her own behalf. If the parties agree on the facts, but not on the disciplinary recommendation, the Administration and the parents (or legal guardians) of a student facing expulsion may also choose to enter into a Joint Stipulation of the Facts and submit only the Stipulation of the Facts to the Hearing Officer in lieu of holding the first part of the hearing, as described above. Such Joint Stipulation shall include language indicating that the parents understand their right to have a hearing to determine whether the student engaged in the alleged misconduct and that the Hearing Officer, in his/her discretion, has the right to accept or reject the Joint Stipulation of Facts. If the Hearing Officer rejects the Joint Stipulation of Facts, a full expulsion hearing shall be held pursuant to the procedures outlined herein.

#### Alternative Educational Programs for Expelled Students

1. Students under sixteen (16) years of age: Whenever the Board of Education expels a student under sixteen (16) years of age, it shall offer any such student an alternative educational program.

2. Students sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) years of age: The Board of Education shall provide an alternative education to a sixteen- (16) to eighteen- (18) year-old student expelled for the first time if he/she requests it and if he/she agrees to the conditions set by the Board of Education, except as follows. The Board of Education is not required to offer an alternative program to any student between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) who is expelled for the second time, or if it is determined at the hearing that (1) the student possessed a dangerous instrument, deadly weapon, firearm, or martial arts weapon on school property or at a school-sponsored activity, or (2) the student offered a controlled substance for sale or distribution on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.
3. Students eighteen (18) years of age or older: The Board of Education is not required to offer an alternative educational program to expelled students eighteen (18) years of age or older.
4. Students identified as eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"): If the Board of Education expels a student who has been identified as eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"), it shall offer an alternative educational program to such student in accordance with the requirements of IDEA, as it may be amended from time to time.

Notice of Student Expulsion on Cumulative Record: Notice of expulsion and the conduct for which the student was expelled shall be included on the student's cumulative educational record. Such notice, except for notice of an expulsion based upon possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record by the Board if the student graduates from high school. In cases where the student's period of expulsion is shortened or waived the Board or the Superintendent, may choose to expunge the expulsion notice from the cumulative record at the time the student completes the Board-specified program and meets any other conditions required by the Board.

If the student has not previously been suspended or expelled, and the administration chooses to expunge the expulsion notice from the student's cumulative record prior to graduation, the administration may refer to the existence of the expunged notice, notwithstanding the fact that such notice may have been expunged from the student's cumulative file, for the limited purpose of determining whether any subsequent suspension or expulsion by the student would constitute the student's first such offense.

#### Change of Residence During Expulsion Proceedings

1. Student moving into the school district: If a student enrolls in the district while an expulsion hearing is pending in another district, such student shall not be excluded from school pending completion of the expulsion hearing unless an emergency exists, as defined previously. The Board shall retain the authority to suspend the student or to conduct its own expulsion hearing. Where a student enrolls in the district during the period of expulsion from another public school district, the Board may adopt the decision of the student expulsion hearing conducted by such other school district. The student shall be excluded from school pending such hearing. The excluded student shall be offered an alternative educational opportunity in accordance with statutory requirements. The Board shall make its determination based upon a hearing, which shall be limited to a determination of whether the conduct which was the basis of the previous public school district's expulsion would also warrant expulsion by the Board.
2. Student moving out of the school district: Where a student withdraws from school after having been notified that an expulsion hearing is pending, but before a decision has been rendered, the notice of the pending expulsion hearing shall be included on the student's cumulative record and the expulsion hearing shall be completed and a decision rendered. If the Board subsequently renders a decision to expel the student, a notice of the expulsion shall be included on the student's cumulative record.

#### Procedures Governing Suspension and Expulsion of Students Identified as Eligible for Services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")

1. Suspension of IDEA students: Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Administration suspends a student identified as eligible for services under the IDEA (an "IDEA student") who has violated any rule or code of conduct of the school district that applies to all students, the following procedures shall apply:
  - a. The administration shall make reasonable attempts to immediately notify the parents of the student of the decision to suspend on the date on which the decision to suspend was made, and a copy of the special education procedural safeguards must either be hand-delivered or sent by mail to the parents on the date that the decision to suspend was made.
  - b. During the period of suspension, the school district is not required to provide any educational services to the IDEA student beyond that which is provided to all students suspended by the school district.
2. Expulsion and Suspensions that Constitute Changes in Placement for IDEA students: Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, if the administration recommends for expulsion an IDEA student who has violated any rule or code of conduct of the school district that applies to all students, the procedures described in this section shall apply. The procedures described in this section shall also apply for students whom the administration has suspended in a manner that is considered under the IDEA, as it may be amended from time to time, to be a change in placement:
  - a. The parents of the student must be notified of the decision to recommend for expulsion (or to suspend if a change in placement) on the date on which the decision to suspend was made, and a copy of the special education procedural safeguards must either be hand-delivered or sent by mail to the parents on the date that the decision to recommend for expulsion (or to suspend

if a change in placement) was made.

b. The school district shall immediately convene the student's planning and placement team ("PPT"), but in no case later than ten (10) school days after the recommendation for expulsion or the suspension that constitutes a change in placement was made. The student's PPT shall consider the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior that led to the recommendation for expulsion or the suspension which constitutes a change in placement, in order to determine whether the student's behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability.

c. If the student's PPT finds that the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the Administration shall not proceed with the recommendation for expulsion or the suspension that constitutes a change in placement.

d. If the student's PPT finds that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the Administration may proceed with the recommended expulsion or suspension that constitutes a change in placement.

e. During any period of expulsion, or suspension of greater than ten (10) days per school year, the Administration shall provide the student with an alternative education program in accordance with the provisions of the IDEA.

f. When determining whether to recommend an expulsion or a suspension that constitutes a change in placement, the building administrator (or his or her designee) should consider the nature of the misconduct and any relevant educational records of the student.

3. Transfer of IDEA students for Certain Offenses: School personnel may transfer an IDEA student to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days if the student:

a. Was in possession of a dangerous weapon, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 930(g)(2), as amended from time to time, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity; or

b. Knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs or sold or solicited the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school-sponsored activity; or

c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

#### Procedures Governing Expulsions for Students Identified as Eligible for Educational Accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504")

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, if the Administration recommends for expulsion a student identified as eligible for educational accommodations under Section 504 who has violated any rule or code of conduct of the school district that applies to all students, the following procedures shall apply:

1. The parents of the student must be notified of the decision to recommend the student for expulsion.

2. The district shall immediately convene the student's Section 504 team ("504 team") for the purpose of reviewing the relationship between the student's disability and the behavior that led to the recommendation for expulsion. The 504 team will determine whether the student's behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability.

3. If the 504 team finds that the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the Administration shall not proceed with the recommended expulsion.

4. If the 504 team finds that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the Administration may proceed with the recommended expulsion.

Home/School/Law Enforcement Relations: Law enforcement officers of the State Police routinely visit the Wheeler community to support efforts to create a healthy, safe, orderly, and cooperative school environment. With the support of parents and our resident troopers, Wheeler affords students a productive and comprehensive approach to behavior management. Student behavior that jeopardizes the safety or well-being of any member of our school community may be referred to law enforcement officials.

#### INSPECTION AND SEARCH (BOE Policy #5145.12)

Student Searches: The building principal or his or her designee is authorized to search a student's person or effects where there exist reasonable grounds for suspecting the search will produce evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or a school rule. In all cases of a proposed search of a student's person or effects, the Superintendent of Schools will be consulted where possible. The building principal or his or her designee shall be expected to use sound professional judgment in deciding whether a search should be conducted. A search of a student's person shall be conducted only by a person of the same sex as the student.

#### LOCKERS

Each student is assigned a locker for the storage of books and equipment. This locker is owned by the North Stonington Board of Education. **It is the student's responsibility to see that his or her locker is kept locked and in order at all times.** Combinations must be kept confidential. The school has an obligation to maintain a proper environment. When there is suspicion of a condition which endangers the health, welfare, or safety of any student, the school not only has the right, but the obligation, to examine locker

contents.

#### Hallway Locker Guidelines

1. All students will be assigned a locker.
2. Students are not to share their lockers with anyone.
3. The up-keep and cleanliness of the locker is the responsibility of the individual student. Damage to a locker will result in financial obligation.
4. Students should keep their lockers locked at all times as the school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Any damage to the lockers or lock must be reported to the Main Office.
5. Students may not change locker assignments without authorization from the Main Office.

#### Athletic Locker Guidelines

Members of athletic teams are permitted to use designated gym lockers to store their personal items, including athletic equipment during the season they participate. At the end of the season, students must remove all personal property from the locker. Failure to do so will require the Athletic Department to remove all items.

Locker and Desk Searches: The Board of Education provides lockers and desks as depositories for students' personal belongings and school-related materials. Students shall be responsible for maintaining desks and lockers in an orderly and sanitary condition. Therefore, the Board of Education, through the school administration, maintains ultimate control over all student desks and lockers. The school administration may open and examine any and all desks or lockers without individualized suspicion at any time when such examination is in the best interest of the school system.

### **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS: FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he/she reaches the age of eighteen (18) or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the schools. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that the school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has a right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his/her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

1. School officials with legitimate educational interest
2. Other schools to which a student is transferring
3. Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
4. Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
5. Organizations conducting certain studies on behalf of the school
6. Accrediting organizations
7. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
8. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. At the beginning of each school year, a letter is sent to the parents/guardians of the eligible students informing them of this information and providing a form to request that the names of their students not be disclosed.

Under the *Armed Forces Recruiter Access to Students and Student Recruiting Information Act*, schools are now required to provide student directory-type information - including name, address, and phone number - to military recruiters and other institutes of higher education. The parent/guardian may annually deny such access of information by completing the letter sent home at the beginning of the school year and returning it to the main office.

## USE/UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF/ SALE OF/POSSESSION OF TOBACCO (BOE Policy #5131.6)

The Board of Education is vitally interested in providing and maintaining a safe and healthy environment in the public schools of North Stonington. Therefore, effective July 1, 1995, smoking or the use of tobacco products is prohibited anywhere in the school buildings or on the school grounds. It is also prohibited during any school- sponsored activity occurring off the property of the North Stonington Public Schools.

## USE/SALE/UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF/POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL/DRUGS (BOE Policy #5131.6)

The following procedure will be followed:

1. parents notified
2. school medical personnel notified
3. suspension from school - up to 10 days and possible expulsion recommendation.
4. police may be notified (in cases of possession and/or sale, the police will be notified)
5. mandatory in-school or out-of-school counseling

In addition to the prohibitions pertaining to alcohol, drugs, and tobacco contained in Board policy #5131.6 (above), no student shall inhale, ingest, apply, use, or possess an abusable glue, aerosol paint, or substance containing a volatile chemical with intent to inhale, ingest, apply, or use any of these in a manner:

1. Contrary to directions for use, cautions or warnings appearing on a label of a container of glue, paint aerosol, or substance; and
2. Designed to affect the central nervous system, create or induce a condition of intoxication, hallucination or elation, or change, distort, or disturb the person's eyesight, thinking process, balance, or coordination.

*In cases of reasonable suspicion, students will be searched by school personnel.*

## VANDALISM (BOE Policy #5131.5)

Vandalism or destruction of school property, books, or supplies will be treated as a serious offense. Payment for destruction of property will be required from the student before he/she is restored to full status in all school activities.

# **BULLYING/SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE**

## BULLYING/SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE POLICY (BOE Policy # 5131.911)

Prohibition Against Bullying: The North Stonington Board of Education (Board) prohibits bullying (a) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board, and (b) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, (ii) infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school.

### Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation

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

1. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
2. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
3. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
4. infringes on the rights of such student at school,
5. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the NSBOE, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

- creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
- infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
- substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school,

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

#### Appropriate School Personnel

All school employees are charged with the responsibility of taking reports of bullying or if witnessing acts of bullying to notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another administrator when the Safe School Climate Specialist is not available. Reports shall be appropriately investigated by the Safe School Climate Specialist or another administrator when the Safe School Climate Specialist is not available.

##### 1. District Safe School Climate Coordinator

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

- a. Implement the District's safe school climate plan;
- b. Collaborate with safe school climate specialists, the Board, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying in District schools;
- c. Provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education; and
- d. Meet with the safe school climate specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss bullying issues in the district and make recommended changes to the District's safe school climate plan.

##### 2. Safe School Climate Specialist

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

- a. Investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying in the school in accordance with the District's Safe School Climate Plan;
- b. Collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying in the school; and
- c. Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying reports in the school.

#### Complaint Process

The process by which students may make formal, informal, and anonymous complaints as set forth below:

##### 1. Formal Written Complaints

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

##### 2. Informal/Verbal Complaints by Students

Students may make an informal complaint of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbal report to the Safe School Climate Specialist, or to any school employee, as defined, or administrator. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school employee, or administrator or the Safe School Climate Specialist who receives an informal complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the information provided. Such written report by the school employee, administrator, if not the Safe School Climate Specialist, shall be promptly forwarded to the Building Principal for review and action in accordance with Policy.

### 3. Anonymous Complaints

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school employee who receives the complaint. Should anonymity be requested, the Safe School Climate Specialist, if not the Principal or his/her designee, shall meet with the student to review the request for anonymity and the impact that maintaining anonymity of the complaint may have on the investigation of the complaint and/or possible remedial action. At such meeting, the student shall be given the choice as to whether to maintain the anonymity of the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

## Staff Responsibilities and Intervention Strategies

### 1. Teachers and Other School Staff

School employees who witness acts of bullying, as defined above, or who receive reports of bullying shall promptly notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying. A written report must be filed not later than two school days after making such an oral report concerning the events witnessed or reported.

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

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

### 2. Responsibilities of the Safe School Climate Specialist

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In any instance in which bullying is verified, the building Principal (or other responsible program administrator) shall invite the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed, and the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying, to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying. In the discretion of the building Principal or other responsible program administrator, the meeting(s) described in this section may be held jointly or separately.

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

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

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

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

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

### Reporting Obligations

#### 1. Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator

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



maintained by the School Principal/Safe School Climate Specialist of the bullying reports, subsequent investigations and parental/guardian meetings.

## 2. Reports to the Targeted Student and his/her Parent or Guardian

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

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

## 3. List of Verified Acts of Bullying

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

## Prohibition against Discrimination and Retaliation

### 1. Safety

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 2. Law Enforcement Notification

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

### Bullying Through the Use of Technology (Cyberbullying)

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

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

The District's discipline policy states that misuse, on or off campus, of electronic devices, for threatening/bullying/hazing or harassment is a violation and can be the basis for discipline on or off campus. When information is received that a student or students are involved in bullying through the use of technology either as the actor or a member of a group, or the victim, the following will be considered: (a) If it takes place on campus or at a school sponsored event, disciplinary action will be taken and/or (b) If it takes place off campus a school may take disciplinary action if the incident poses a likelihood of substantial disruption to the educational process or the orderly day to day operations of the school.

### Definitions:

1. Bullying: means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district that:
  - a. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
  - b. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
  - c. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
  - d. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
  - e. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics. (*The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.*)

2. Cyberbullying: any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.
3. Mobile electronic device: any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted.
4. Electronic communication: any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo-optical system.
5. Hostile environment: a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate.
6. Outside of the school setting: a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education.
7. School employee: means (a) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school Superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, speech/language pathologist, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional Board of Education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (b) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional Board of Education.
8. School climate: the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults.