



**Empowered Learners Striving for Positive Change**

**Student/Parent Handbook  
2020-2021**

Preface	5	Health Services	36
Ashford Board of Education Goals	5	Immunizations	37
Ashford School Mission	5	Wellness Policy	40
Superintendent and School Goals	6	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>40</b>
Goals for Student Learning	7	Regulations	40
School Climate	7	Drop-Off and Parent Responsibilities	41
<b>General Information</b>	<b>8</b>	Late Bus	42
Policies, Regulations, Bylaws	8	Cameras	42
Admission/Placement	8	<b>Food Service</b>	<b>43</b>
Transfers and Withdrawals	8	My School Bucks	43
Financial Assistance	8	National School Lunch Program	43
Attendance	9	Breakfast Program	43
Absence	9	Free and Reduced Lunch Program	43
Tardiness	10	<b>Behavior</b>	<b>44</b>
Truancy	10	Conduct Guidelines	44
Entering School	10	Bullying	47
Leaving School Grounds/Release from School	11	Bus Conduct	50
Visitors	11	Cheating/Plagiarism	51
Volunteers	12	Electronic Devices	51
Volunteers/Visitor- Privacy Expectations	12	Harassment	51
Food and Drink from Home		<b>Substance Abuse</b>	<b>54</b>
Backpacks and Book Bags	12	Smoking, Tobacco	54
Dress Code	12	Alcohol, Drugs, Other Mind Altering Substances	55
Lost and Found	13	“Look Alike” Substances	58
School Property and Provisions	13	Instruction	58
<b>Academics</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Behavior Programs Policies and Procedures</b>	<b>58</b>
Academic Programs	15	Bus Suspension	59
Special Area Classes	15	Detention	60
Grades	16	Suspension	60
Homework	17	Removal	62
Gradebook Icons	18	Expulsion	62
Graduation Requirements and Awards	19	<b>PTO</b>	<b>62</b>
Honor Roll	22	<b>State and Federal Guidelines</b>	<b>62</b>
Class Placement		Asbestos	62
Promotion, Retention	22	Complaint Resolution Procedure	63
Testing	24	Child Abuse	63
<b>Extra Curricular Activities</b>	<b>25</b>	Drug Free Schools and Communities Act	63
Athletics	25	Nondiscrimination Compliance Statement	63
Clubs	26	Equal Education Opportunity	64
Dances	27	Equal Employment Opportunity	65
<b>Communication</b>	<b>27</b>	Homeless Students	65
Distribution of Materials	28	Pesticide Application	65
Parent Communication Policies	28	School Ceremonies and Observances	65
Parent Involvement	28	Release of Student Records	66
Avenues for Participation	29	Notification of Release of Records	66
Avenues for Communication	29	Teacher Qualifications	69
<b>Library / Media</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Safe School Climate Plan</b>	<b>69</b>
Computer Resources	30	Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation	70
Internet Guidelines	30	Definition of Bullying	70
<b>School-Wide Support</b>	<b>32</b>	Other Definitions	70
Special Education	32	Leadership and Administrative Responsibilities	72
Children: Birth to Twenty-One years old	32	Development and Review of Safe School Plan	72
Section 504	32	Procedures for Reports Of Bullying	73
Student Support Services	34	Responding to Verified Reports of Bullying	73
<b>Emergency Preparedness</b>	<b>34</b>	Documentation and Maintenance of Log	74
Emergency School Closing Information	34	Other Prevention and Intervention Strategies	75
Fire Drills/Lock Downs	35	Improving School Climate	78
Safety/Accident Prevention	35	Annual Notice and Training	78
<b>Health</b>	<b>36</b>	School Climate Assessments	78

## Introduction

The Student/Parent Handbook is intended to be a guide that assists you in your interactions with our school personnel, policies, practices, and rules. We have attempted to answer your questions and provide you with a comprehensive resource that will help you enjoy your time at Ashford School. If you do not find information that you are looking for in this document, feel free to call the school office for an answer. It is our intention to communicate and to serve effectively. We appreciate your input and value your opinion, so please feel free to communicate with us.

**General Information:**

School Address: 440 Westford Road

Dr. James Longo, Superintendent 860-429-1927

Mrs. Cynthia Ford, Director Special Education 860-429-1927

Mr. Troy Hopkins, Principal/Assistant Superintendent 860-429-6419

Mrs. Polly Borysevicz, Assistant Principal 860-429-6419

Main Office Phone #: 860-429-6419 x355

Bus Transportation Phone #: 860-429-1927 x370

School Colors Green & Gold

School Logo Wolf

Main Office Hours 7:45 AM - 4:45 PM

School Day Starts 8:30 AM

Afternoon Dismissal 3:10 PM

PreK Hours AM: 8:30 – 11:10

PM: 12:30 – 3:10

Scheduled Early Dismissal

(PreK-8) 8:30 AM – 12:25 PM

Last Day of School K-8 only, no PreK students

**Emergency Messages:**

No School – Late Opening – Early Closings

Emergency closings and dismissals will be announced on WTIC and WILI radio, K12 Campus Alerts, and Channels 3, 8, 30, and 61

**Sign up at <http://my.k12now.com> for e-mail and text messaging.**

**Delayed Openings:**

Inclement weather or other unavoidable reasons may mandate a delay in opening the school. When circumstances warrant, the school will delay opening 2 hours. Morning PreK is cancelled when we have a delayed opening. Afternoon PreK is cancelled when there is an emergency dismissal.

**Please note:** Our buses are also utilized to transport Ashford's Grade 9-12 students. When high school half-days or other factors significantly alter our scheduled times for half days or early closings, we will notify you.

## Preface

This booklet is written for our students and their parents. It contains required and useful information. Because it cannot be as personal a communication as we would like, we address students not directly as “you: but rather as a “the student,” “students”, or “children.” Likewise, the term “the student’s parent” may refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume responsibility for the student.

In our PreK-8 school, we are acutely aware that the needs and expectations vary with the age of the students. In different sections of this handbook your attention will be refocused on this.

## 1. Ashford Board of Education Mission and Goals

The mission of the Ashford Board of Education is to support Ashford School as it prepares and inspires a community of learners to achieve the highest possible educational and personal potential as productive and responsible citizens of our diverse, global community

Ashford Board of Education Goals:

- Curriculum - Ensure Kindergarten to 8th grade curriculum that challenges students to use methods of inquiry to solve problems, think critically, and express themselves creatively and effectively.
- Financial - Develop a budget that ensures the best possible education while being fiscally responsible to taxpayers.
- Culture - Foster an environment of physical and emotional health and wellness for all. Support a community that recognizes professional expertise and provides diverse opportunities that enhance teaching and learning.
- Community Relations and Facilities - Provide opportunities for enhanced community engagement and serve as a leader for Ashford in enhancing energy efficiency, developing a maintenance and restoration plan that extends the school’s useful life, and demonstrates environmental responsibility.

## 2. Ashford School Vision and Mission

Ashford School Vision:

Empowered learners striving for positive change.

Ashford School Mission:

Ashford School learners engage in authentic experiences to discover their passions, strive for excellence, connect with their community and the world, and contribute in positive and meaningful ways.

### 3. Superintendent Goals

#### Curriculum

- To ensure that all Ashford School curricula are updated regularly, utilize best practices; include the school's instructional commitment to the S.T.E.A.M model and Project-Based Learning model, as well as differentiation, and (individualized) data-driven instructional model.

#### Budget

- To develop, and submit an annual budget proposal that incorporates consultation with administration, staff and community members, as well as reflects both short and long-term goals of the board of education.

#### Culture

- Foster and support a culture that recognizes individual differences, encourages respect and responsibility, and embraces emotional, intellectual, and social strength and security

#### Community

- Encourage increased interaction between school personnel, students, and programs with the greater Ashford community.

#### Facility

- Provide the board of education with the data and information needed to develop a more energy efficient facility, and develop a maintenance and restoration plan that extends the school's useful life while demonstrating a commitment to environmental responsibility.

### 4. Ashford School Goals

#### **Goal #1: Engage in rigorous, data-driven, real-world, student-centered learning**

Continue to implement data-driven, student-centered learning practices, including project-based learning, Habits of Mind, workshop model of instruction, centers, stations, and self-reflection. Through interdisciplinary (STEAM) themes, students will make real-world connections and learn key knowledge, understandings, and skills from each subject area.

#### **Goal #2: Support the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of the Ashford School community**

Teach and model wellness through age-appropriate self-care, personal-regulation, healthy habits, stress management, peer- and self-advocacy, and positive community engagement.

#### **Goal #3: Cultivate respectful, responsible, and capable citizens**

Partner with families in preparing students academically, socially, and personally for life now and beyond Ashford School. Collaborate with local, state, and global communities through service-learning, community participation, and educational partnerships, in order to cultivate students' responsibility and citizenship.

#### **Goal #4: Celebrate students**

Maintain a consistent school-wide positive behavior intervention system. Ensure that all students are regularly recognized for positive choices by all staff throughout the school building and school day, in order to promote intrinsic motivation in students.

## 5. Goals for Student Learning

### Motivation to learn

Students will be provided with a supportive climate that is driven by student choice within differentiated, authentic, interdisciplinary learning opportunities.

### Mastery of the Basic Skills

Students at Ashford School will read with understanding, communicate effectively, write in a coherent and grammatically correct manner, demonstrate a mastery of fundamental mathematical functions and concepts, demonstrate a mastery of fundamental scientific concepts, exhibit effective problem solving and decision making skills, and exhibit the ability to use technological tools to gather data, solve problems, or increase personal/group productivity.

### Acquisition of Knowledge

Students will explore the curriculum in the context S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). Connections will be made among key concepts and across content areas. Ashford School accepts responsibility for leading students through a body of knowledge and its applications, investigating real problems and developing solutions.

### Understanding Society's Values

As responsible global citizens, students will develop their sense of responsibility to their family, community, school, culture, and world.

## 6. School Climate

### Our 3 values are **RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, and PRIDE**

Ashford School is committed to improving school climate and fostering positive behavior in all students. School environments that are positive, proactive, and predictable lead to a safer and more caring atmosphere and enhance learning. Ashford School has adopted a school-wide behavior system referred to as PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support). This school-wide program is focused on acknowledging students for consistent positive behavior. Routines and language with respect to appropriate school behavior are consistent throughout the school and are tailored to the varying ages and needs of all Ashford students. This involves collaborative problem solving, teaching, modeling, practicing, and acknowledging behavioral expectations to our students in all areas. There are weekly, monthly and trimester recognitions of students who have demonstrated respect, responsibility and pride. All staff are trained in the

PBIS approach and are acknowledged for recognizing appropriate and positive student behavior. Additionally, teachers work with our students on a consistent basis to develop “Habits of Mind,” the set of critical life skills that every person needs to be successful in our modern, global society.

## **7. General Information**

### **Policies, Regulations, and Bylaws**

Copies of Board of Education Policies, Regulations and Bylaws may be accessed in the Superintendent’s office.

### **Admission/Placement**

Parents of students seeking enrollment in Ashford School for the first time or following attendance in another Connecticut public school district, out-of-state attendance, private school attendance, or admission through a bona fide foreign exchange program should contact the principal. Parents of incoming students will be required to complete a registration form and sign for the release of records from the sending school. Appropriate documentation of immunization, as determined by the school nurse, is required prior to any student attending school. The principal will determine the grade placement of the child based upon: (1) assessed performance on criterion-referenced testing, (2) performance on standardized tests, (3) performance assessments, (4) report card grades, (5) teacher -parent/legal guardian input, and (6) attendance.

Connecticut state law requires parents to make sure that their children between the ages of 5 to 16 attend school regularly. Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up schoolwork missed due to a legitimate absence.

The parent or person having control of a child shall have the option of waiting to send the child to school until the child is six or seven years of age, upon signing an option form at the school district offices.

### **Transfers and Withdrawals**

Notify the principal’s office in advance when a child is transferring to another school. This is necessary in order to secure a report card and personal property before leaving. We will furnish additional information to the new school upon request from that school and appropriate release forms.

### **Financial Assistance**

Students will not be denied opportunity to participate in any class or school sponsored activity because of inability to pay for material fees, transportation costs, admission prices, or any other related expenses. Parents who need financial assistance for their child should contact the principal to request confidential help.



## Attendance

**School begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:10 p.m. Students may not be dropped off at school any earlier than 8:00 a.m.**

A student is considered to be “in attendance” if present at Ashford School or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g. field trips) for at least half of the regular school day.

## Absence

Every attempt should be made to arrange necessary appointments to after school, weekends and vacation periods. When a parent determines that an absence is necessary, parents are requested to contact the main office **before 8:30 a.m.** on the day of the absence by calling **860-429-6419, press option #4, option #2**. For students in the afternoon PreK classes, parents need to call in absences **by 12:30 p.m.**

Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards. Parents are also encouraged to contact the school to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

Per Connecticut state law, if a student serves In-School Suspension equal to or greater than one half of a school day, said suspension will be counted as an absence on their school records for that school year.

## Excused Absence

Students receive an excused absence when they are absent from school for the following reasons:

- Death in the immediate family
  - Serious illness of a member of the family, which makes the student’s absence necessary
  - Illness or injury of the student
  - Religious obligation
  - Court appearance/appointments
  - In-School suspension equal to- or greater than one half of a school day
  - Out-of-School Suspension
  - Visits to other schools to assist students/families to make educational plans, (e.g., 8th graders who visit Windham Vocational Technical School) are also excused

Students who plan to be absent for reasons other than those listed above, should seek approval by presenting a note from home to the principal.

The responsibility for makeup of work lies with the student, not the teacher. Unless a student has an extended illness, all make-up privileges will be completed within five (5) days when the student returns to school.

## **Unexcused Absence**

Unexcused absences are those that do not fall under any of the excused absences. Students who miss the bus are considered unexcused. Students who have unexcused absences may be denied makeup privileges. Such absences may also result in disciplinary consequences or be reflected in the student's final grade.

Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards. Parents are also encouraged to contact the teachers and administrators to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

## **Tardiness**

Please contact the main office by calling 860-429-6419, x355 to let us know if your student will be tardy. Students who have been assigned lockers are expected to visit their lockers and be in their homerooms no later than 8:30 a.m. Students who are not in their homeroom by 8:30 a.m. are considered tardy and must report directly to the office.

When students are tardy, they begin their day at a disadvantage. In addition, students who enter class after it begins may cause a disruption. A student who is repeatedly tardy may be considered truant. Tardiness can impact a student's attendance record and school performance. Continued tardiness on the part of any student will be viewed as a very serious matter.

## **Truancy**

The Ashford Board of Education believes that regular school attendance is essential to the academic success of students and recognizes the importance of early intervention for students exhibiting truancy behavior. Therefore, in accordance with Connecticut General Statute 10-198a, the school administration will monitor student attendance to identify those students in grades kindergarten through eight who are truant or habitually truant. Further, school personnel, wherever possible and as much as possible, will seek the cooperation of parents and assist them to remedy truancy and ensure regular student attendance. Parents

will receive a reminder letter about school attendance after a student has missed more than 10 days of school or has a pattern of tardiness or early dismissal.

A student, age five (5) to sixteen (16), who has accumulated four (4) unexcused absences in one month or 10 unexcused absences in a school year, will be considered truant and may require the school to submit a Family with Service Needs complaint. Tests and academic work missed on day(s) of unexcused absence will be recorded as a zero grade. Retention may be considered when a student has lost significant learning opportunities.

## **Entering School**

Students may not enter school prior to 8:00 a.m. Students arriving between 8:00 a.m. and 8:10 a.m. must wait in the lower lobby. Students are not allowed in other sections of the building before 8:10 a.m. Supervision of children begins at 8:00 a.m. only in the lower lobby. Prior to that time parents are responsible for their child(ren). Students will not be allowed in undesignated areas of the building without written permission from a teacher.

## **Leaving School Grounds/Release of Students From School**

Under no circumstances may a student leave the school or school grounds during school hours without permission from his/her parents or guardians and school administration. **In the event it is necessary for a student to be dismissed early, a parent or guardian should call the main office at 860-429-6419, x355 or send a written request to the office.** Early release requests should be used sparingly as time out of classrooms will affect student learning opportunities. Children of single-parent families will be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child and who is identified as such in the school records, unless prior arrangements have been made with the school. Arrangements should be made with the principal for the parent or guardian to pick up the student in the school office. If someone other than a parent/guardian is picking up a student, that person will need to have confirmation that they have permission from the parent/guardian.

## **Mandatory Screening**

Any adult who wishes to enter Ashford School as a visitor, volunteer, contractor, or otherwise, is required to submit to a one-time background screening through the school's Raptor Technologies screening system. Persons must submit their state issued photo ID to the main office, where it is scanned into the database and cross-referenced with the national sex-offender registry. Once cleared, visitors will be issued cleared for building access for the remainder of the school year.

## **Visitors**

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit Ashford School. Parking is available in the front of the school. All visitors must enter through the main **front entrance**, sign in and receive a visitor's pass (See information above regarding mandatory screening). Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the principal's approval, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

## **Volunteers**

The Board of Education recognizes that volunteers can make many valuable contributions to our school. The Board endorses a program encouraging community residents to take an active role in improving schools and to become school volunteers.

There is an annual training process required for volunteers who wish to spend time in the classroom. Teachers will make forms available to parents prior to various field trips. Names of volunteers in the classroom are registered with the office (See information above regarding mandatory screening).

## **Volunteer/Visitor- Privacy Expectations**

It is the expectation of the Board of Education as well as the administrative staff that any community members serving in any capacity as a volunteer or visitor, will maintain the confidentiality of our students and classrooms. If visitors or volunteers within the classroom are found to have shared confidential student information that is gained through their role as a volunteer or visitor, then said privilege to volunteer or visit school classrooms may be revoked.

## **Food and Drink from Home**

Our Wellness Policy encourages healthy classroom snacks. Parents are encouraged to offer healthy alternatives for classroom events or celebrations. Soda and high-energy drinks are not permitted in the school during school hours.

## **Backpacks and Book bags**

Students are encouraged to store backpacks and bookbags in their lockers. For grades that do not have lockers these items should be hung or stored in designated areas or cubbies. For oversized items, teachers have discretion as to where to place.

## **Dress Code**

Update coming soon...

## **Lost and Found**

A school lost and found rack is located in the cafeteria lobby. If a student finds something, he/she should place it in the lost and found rack or bring it to the office. Jewelry or other items of value should be brought to the office. If you have lost something, check in both locations. It is advisable to label all belongings. Lost and found items are disposed of periodically. Parents are encouraged to check the lost and found area in the lobby.

## **School Property and Provisions**

### **Lockers**

Lockers are assigned to students in grades 4-8. Lockers are school property and are loaned for student convenience. Lockers are not to be shared unless assigned by a teacher.

The locker combination is given only to the student, who is advised to keep it confidential. No other locks may be used on the lockers. It is the student's responsibility to keep the locker neat, clean, and unmarked.

Locker and Desk Search: Under Board and State regulations, desks/lockers may be inspected if the building administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interest of the school are kept on school property.

### **Planners**

Ashford School provides each 3rd - 8th grade student with a daily planner. The planner is used to help organize students and provide each student with the organizational skills needed to become successful students. The planner's use is required in grades 3-8. The daily planner plays an important role in each child's success at school. Students are expected to keep their planners current and to bring their planners to school each day. Upon agreement with the classroom teacher an alternative planner may be acceptable.

The first planner is provided free of charge. Replacement cost is the responsibility of the parent.

With many students in each class, teachers cannot completely monitor what students record in their planner. Each academic teacher will use part of each class to permit students to record homework, tests, long term, and short-term projects.

We ask that parents check the child's planner each night. Parents should monitor homework, tests, and long-term and short-term projects.

### **Textbooks, Math Tools - Care and Obligation**

All regular textbooks, including paperbacks and workbooks, math tools (i.e. calculators, templates), are supplied by and are the property of the Ashford Board of Education. Students are expected to keep books and materials in good condition. Books must be covered at all times. Failure to do so may result in

disciplinary action. Books and/or math tools lost, or damaged beyond ordinary use must be paid for in full. Reimbursement is used to replace the text and/or damaged items.

### **Laptops and Technology**

All laptops and other school technology is provided for use by the students as a modern learning tool. Students shall treat all computers and other technology equipment (including iPads, desktop computers, keyboards, etc.) with respect and care. If a student is found to have intentionally caused damage or vandalism to a school computer or other such technological device, it will be the responsibility of the student to pay the cost of repair or replacement of said item.

## **9. Academics**

### **Academic Programs**

The academic program in all grades K - 8 include:

Reading	Social Studies	Mathematics
Language Arts	Science	

Ashford School places emphasis on all subjects to ensure children have a sound education in the basic skills. Through STEAM, all grades offer multiple opportunities for interdisciplinary learning.

All academic programs follow a sequential course of study aligned with the Connecticut Core Standards for Learning.

### **8th Grade Algebra**

Algebra follows E. O. Smith's Algebra IA curriculum. The course is generally offered to students who have met the performance criteria on iReady testing, the Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test, the seventh grade math class, and parent/staff recommendation.

### **Enrichment Program**

Students identified for enrichment are scheduled to take part in the STRIVE program. This enrichment program focuses on developing an identified student's strengths as a learner, exploring their curiosity, and building their passion for learning.

### **Special Area Classes:**

<b>Art</b>	<b>Concert Band</b>
<b>World Language</b>	<b>Symphony Band</b>
<b>Music</b>	<b>Jazz Band</b>
<b>Concert Chorus</b>	<b>Health and Physical Education</b>
<b>Middle School Chorale</b>	<b>Digital Compass</b>
<b>Select Chorus</b>	<b>Digital Passport</b>
<b>Student Success Planning</b>	

### **Student Council**

The Student Council is a Middle School service organization. The Student Council operates under the direction of a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, faculty advisor, and the principal.

### **Field Trips**

Educational field trips to points of interest and aligned to curriculum are made available upon request of the teachers. Generally, each grade is allowed one field trip per year provided that adequate funding is available. When trips are planned, permission slips are sent home to parents for their signatures. Permission slips must be signed and returned on the date due in order for the student to participate in the field trip. Parents may sometimes be called upon to chaperone these excursions.

There is a screening process required for volunteers on certain field trips. Teachers will make forms available to parents prior to field trips that require screening.

Students having recurring detentions or disciplinary issues may be removed from participation on field trips at administrative discretion.

## Assemblies

There are times when classes, grades, teams, or the entire school may gather for assembly programs. These programs are arranged to extend learning in different formats to the student community. The Ashford Parent Teacher Organization, the Ashford Education Association, and the Ashford Recreation Commission often sponsor performances.

## Grades

The following point assignments will be used as guidelines to understanding letter grades (5-8):

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

## Homework

Homework is an integral part of the learning process. It is a necessary reinforcement of classroom instruction as well as a means by which independent study skills and intellectual curiosity can be continued in the home. The regular practice of homework requires self-discipline and enables students to develop independence. Homework is fundamental to the individual's continued learning and development, yet it is recognized that time is needed for students to pursue social, physical, and recreational activities outside of the school structure.

Homework is a reinforcement of classroom instruction. It includes, but is not limited to, completing work not finished in class, studying work and spelling lists, reading assignments, studying for tests, book reports, research projects, and other areas of study. There are times when students might experience difficulties with their work in a particular subject. If this should occur, students should make arrangements with their teachers for extra help. Students are strongly encouraged to see their teachers to arrange for extra help during the available times.

Many children in grades 1-3 like to complete something they started in school at home. Occasionally, parental help with reading, spelling or mathematical skills may be necessary.



Parents are encouraged to provide their child with a proper place to study. Parents should inform teachers of problems with homework or of any obligations, which may be preventing their child from performing to capacity.

Homework shall never be counted for more than 10% of a student's final trimester grade.

#### **Guidelines for Homework Time:**

Independent reading time assigned by a classroom teacher may be in addition to above time.

#### **Incomplete Homework Assignments- Grades 7&8**

Students who come to class without a completed homework assignment but have a written excuse from a parent, will be given one day to make up the assignment. Otherwise, students may be assigned a teacher detention for homework make-up.

Students will be required to stay after school for "Afternoon Opportunities" and spend their time (until late bus) doing work if they are missing 5 or more assignments in 2 or more classes.

## **GRADEBOOK ICONS for Power School in Grades-8**

Icon use will be as follows for grades 5-8:

No Icon but a "0" is entered – assignment cannot be made up and the score is "0"

	<p>"0" is entered but the assignment can still be made up – Comments will provide due by date information and penalty information if applicable.</p> <p>Note: Most important icon to enter as soon as possible after assignment is collected to communicate to Support Staff, Parents, and other Interventionists in supporting work completion.</p>
	<p>Item is collected but not graded yet – Used for Summative assessments that will not be graded within 3 days</p>

	<p>Used after missing is removed; Late indicates the assignment was turned in after the due date. Should be used and left in place to indicate the assignment was completed after the due date. Should not be used if the assignment was never completed.</p> <p>The <b>Late Icon</b> should be used and left in place to indicate work that was turned in after the deadline. This will help demonstrate patterns regarding work completion (HOW).</p>
	<p>Assignment is incomplete, but must be completed to be graded—no grade given or partial grade given; comment specifies what still needs to be done</p>
	<p>Absent; assignment can be made up; used in conjunction with Missing – score is “0”</p> <p>Note: The <b>Absent Icon</b> is used to indicate the student was absent and the work may still be completed without penalty. The “0” grade is a placeholder.</p>
	<p>Student is exempt and will not impact grade; medical, absences for assignments that have already been covered in class or could not be completed</p>

## Graduation Requirements and Awards

### Requirements

Successful academic performance is required for a student to be awarded a grade 8 diploma and to participate in graduation related activities.

When an academic problem has manifested itself the following timeline will be in effect (Note: An academic problem can be identified at any time during the school year at which time interventions will be put in place.):

**Close of first trimester:**

- Meeting of teachers(s) who shall confer with the principal and other staff members involved with the student.
- Parents/legal guardians will be notified of specific areas of concern.

**Midterm of second trimester:**

- Parents/legal guardians shall be invited to a meeting for an updated discussion of concerns.
- Goals shall be set through the second trimester.
- Goals and student progress toward goals will be reviewed near the end of the trimester.
- Parents/legal guardians will be notified.\*

**Midterm of third trimester:**

- Goals and student progress toward goals will be reviewed.
- Parents/legal guardians will be notified.

**In June, the final decision will be made for awarding diplomas based on individual student goals being met.**

Participation in Class Night, end-of-year activities, and receiving a diploma rests on students in the eighth grade mastering the assigned skills and concepts in language arts, social studies, math, and science and having demonstrated satisfactory effort in all other subjects. Students who have failing grades (59 or below) in two or more of the major academic subjects listed above will be considered in jeopardy of receiving a diploma and participating in Class Night and end-of-year activities.

\*See Promotion, Retention Policy for additional information on page 14.

## Awards

Several awards are presented to members of the graduating class. The list that follows presents a brief description of the criteria.

### Subject Area Awards

**Art:** greatest ability and interest

**Language Arts:** consistency of scholarship and effort

**World Language:** for demonstrating skill and enthusiasm in conversational Spanish

**Health:** for greatest effort displayed in assignments, which show imagination and relevance and class participation

**Mathematics:** greatest effort and growth since entering junior high school

**Music:** greatest ability and interest

**Physical Education:** consistent high level of sportsmanship, effort, and ability

**Reading:** consistent effort and high quality work, which reflects great interest and personal growth

**Science:** academic achievement and greatest interest

**Social Studies:** academic achievement and greatest interest

**Physical Fitness Award:** outstanding achievement in the area of physical fitness

**Algebra:** academic achievement and interest

**Academic Effort Award:** demonstration of consistent effort resulting in improvement and academic achievement in two or more academic areas

**Community Service Award:** to a student who is consistently willing and committed to serving the Ashford School community, whenever and wherever the need arises

**WINGS Award:** is awarded to a student who showed consistent cooperating and a positive attitude while building life skills

**Computer Technology Award:** is awarded to a student who demonstrated not only outstanding ability in the use of computers, but also has willingly shared this knowledge with others

### **Graduation Awards**

**Awards may include, but are not limited to:**

**Danny Kuhn Memorial Award:** good sportsmanship, member of the soccer team, high academic standards, and good citizenship

**Dayton E. Wrubel Memorial Award:** good academic standards and citizenship and the intention to pursue a secondary vocational education program

**Democratic Town Committee Award:** excellence in student government in U.S. History

**Republican Town Committee Award:** excellence and superior involvement in School community

**Friends of the Babcock Library:** show most improvement and/or interest in the areas of reading

**George E. Lovell II Memorial Award:** good academic standards and citizenship, enthusiasm towards school and a demonstrated interest in reading

**Francis L. Busse Jr. Memorial Award:** excellence in American History, good academics and citizenship

**Deborah Sullivan Award:** a demonstrated desire to promote the love of reading and learning in younger students

**Edwin A. and Mabel O. Buck Award:** service to the school, spirit of cooperation, leadership, sportsmanship, and self-discipline

**Charles Apinis Award:** character, integrity, honesty, and respect of self and others

**Richard Butler Award:** demonstration of great ability and interest in technology

**Barbara Lincoln Lake Award:** highest scholastic average in grade eight

**Gilbert Armitage Award:** excellence in band and exemplifies character, discipline and growth

**Deborah Tatro Award:** hard working, dedicated, loving, respectful, gentle, enjoys sports, and someone who always steps up to help others

**Arthur Breault Award:** demonstrated character traits exemplified by former Superintendent, Arthur R. Breault; patience, kindness, fairness, loyalty, and a sense of humor

**Donna Hartigan Award:** demonstrates perseverance and a strong will to overcome challenges

**WAM United Soccer Club Award:** demonstrates hard work, persistence, teamwork, peer support, and commitment to WAM United's program

**Core Values Award:** exemplifies Ashford School's core values of Respect, Responsibility and Pride

**Michael Hastillo Award:** a friend to all, respectful, caring and well-rounded

**Vashington/Cox Memorial Award:** a student who is a role model to their peers with enthusiasm and volunteers to benefit the Ashford community.

**Superintendent's Award:** displays overall excellence as part of the school community

**Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) Leadership Award:** exhibits exemplary leadership skills

### **Honor Roll Criteria: Calculated for grades 7 and 8 only**

High Honors: student has maintained an overall average of 93% or greater with no grade lower than 80%.

Honors: student has maintained an overall average of 80% or greater with no grade lower than 80%.

### **Class Placement**

Placement decisions are made by a team of educators with consideration for students' individuality. Factors such as academic needs, learning styles, and social-emotional development, all contribute to the final decision for placement. Our goal is to create groups, which will be balanced, based upon the following: heterogeneous grouping, social interaction, academic performance, special needs, and gender.

### **Promotion and Retention**

The District shall utilize multiple measures of academic performance indicators as determinants in promotion/retention decisions. Student assessment of performance shall be based upon and aligned with the adopted standards. Student evaluation shall be fair,

consistent and appropriate to program goals. The assessment program shall include, but not be limited to, the use of standardized and teacher made tests, projects, portfolios, and teacher observation.

Academic achievement, effort, work habits, behavior, attendance, and other significant learning related factors shall be regularly evaluated and communicated to students and their parents/guardians.

When high academic achievement is evident, the Superintendent or his/her designee may approve a student for acceleration. The student's social and emotional growth shall be taken into consideration in making a determination to accelerate a student.

The determination of a student grade placement is made following a careful evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of a placement. The following factors are considered in relation to the group with which a student might be placed: chronological age; ability; as determined by tests, and/or teacher's observation; academic achievement in all subject areas, especially basic skill mastery; work and study habits; physical development; social and emotional maturity; attendance; availability of educational resources; classroom situation; placement of siblings; and, future educational objectives.

The Board expects students to progress through each grade usually within one school year. Providing access to education includes instruction to accommodate the varying interests and growth patterns of individual students and strategies for addressing academic deficiencies when needed.

Schools shall identify students in danger of failing and being at risk for retention. This identification shall also include those students who fail to meet the remedial standards of the statewide assessment programs and district standardized testing. Prior to deciding to retain a student not mastering the appropriate skills, the district shall provide and may require the student to attend one or more alternatives for remedial assistance.

Opportunities provided for supplemental and remedial instruction to assist the student in overcoming his/her academic deficiencies may include but are not limited to remedial help during the school day, after school tutoring programs, cross-age tutoring or student mentoring.

When retention is considered, the following procedures are followed:

- Generally, after the midterm of the second trimester (assuming the problem has manifested itself), the teacher shall confer with the principal and other staff members involved with the student, such as the student's special teachers and school psychologist, and the parents/legal guardians will be notified of specific areas of concern.
- Parents/legal guardians shall then be invited to a meeting with the teacher, principal, and other staff members no later than March 15 for an updated discussion of

the concerns. This discussion shall consist of an explanation to the parents/legal guardians of their child's current academic standing in relationship to program objectives and individual ability. Goals shall be set for the third trimester. If goals are not met, another meeting will be called if concerns remain.

- By midterm of the third trimester, another meeting will be held to review the goals and the student's progress toward goals. In June, the final decision of retention shall be made.

## **Regulations**

The following guidelines are to be used in conjunction with state law as a reference by staff in considering students for promotion/retention.

### **Kindergarten**

Ordinarily, a student who shows sufficient physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development to have a successful experience in grade one should be promoted.

### **Grade 1**

Ordinarily, a student who reads fluently and with comprehension on a primer level and has mastered the beginning numeracy concepts clustered under grade one should be promoted to grade 2.

### **Grade 2**

Ordinarily, a student who demonstrates reading and skill acquisition which enables the student to obtain an understanding of vocabulary and experiences that are met in the first grade reader and the first part of the second grade reader and has mastered the basic math objectives clustered under grade two should be promoted to grade three.

### **Grades 3-5**

Ordinarily, a student who has mastered the basic skills assigned to the appropriate grade level in mathematics and integrated language arts will be promoted.

### **Grades 6-8**

Ordinarily, it is expected that students in these grades will master the assigned skills and concepts in language arts, social studies, math, science, and world language and have demonstrated satisfactory effort in all other subjects. Students who fail to achieve the basic objectives of two or more of the major academic subjects listed above will be considered for retention. The student should pass language arts and mathematics to be promoted.



The major references available to staff in determining the degree to which students possess the listed characteristics for promotion are: (1) assessed performance on criterion-referenced testing, (2) performance on standardized tests, (3) performance assessments, (4) report card grades, (5) teacher -parent/legal guardian input, and (6) attendance.

## **Testing**

### **Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment**

The NGSS assessment is administered to students in grades 5 and 8 during the third trimester, for the purpose of measuring achievement of the skills outlined in the CT Next Generation Science Standards.

### **iReady Testing**

The iReady testing system is used to measure skills in reading and mathematics. We use the results, together with other data, to monitor progress and determine the need for academic interventions.

### **Writing Pathways**

The Writing Pathways program is used to measure skills in writing. We use the results, together with other data, to monitor progress and determine that need for academic interventions.

### **Smarter Balanced Assessments**

Smarter Balanced Assessments are administered during the third trimester in grades 3-8, for the purpose of measuring achievement of the skills outlined in the CT Core Standards.

## **10. Extra Curricular Activities**

### **Athletics**

#### **Interscholastic Athletics**

The following sports and activities are offered annually, for boys and girls, depending upon funding and the availability of coaches; soccer, cross-country, basketball, boys' baseball, girls' softball, and track.

Participation:

- Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to try out for all sports teams. For cross-country and track, students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to try out.
- Team selection will be made by coaches based on their judgment of skills and abilities, *however extraordinary efforts should be made to ensure that all motivated students are provided the opportunity to participate. Priority may be given to students in upper grades when necessary to maintain a reasonable number of participants*
- All students are required to have a physical examination in order to participate. Only one physical examination is required if a student participates in more than one sport per school year.
- Students are required to have parental permission.
- Games/practice will generally occur four times per week during the playing season. Practice ends at 4:30 p.m., allowing students to take the late bus. On occasion, circumstances such as inclement weather and events using the gymnasium may preempt scheduled sports activity. i.e. concerts, Science Night.
- Students may not participate in a practice or a game on the day they are absent from school or arrive after 11:00 a.m. Exception: An office excused absence, i.e. doctor's appointment.
- All team members are expected to respect opponents, officials, coaches, and spectators as well as behave in an appropriate manner in locker rooms, gymnasium, and playing fields. Abuse may result in complete or partial suspension from a team.
- Coaches determine the amount of playing time that each team member receives, based upon such factors as individual skill level, one's ability to contribute to the team effort, the prevailing game conditions, effort during practices, as well as other considerations. At times, both coaches may informally agree to an extra period of play, in order to give game experience to less skilled sports participants.
- Players are to remain in their rooms until called down by the office for practice and games. This will include managers, timers, and scorekeepers on game day.
- Players will wait in the lobby for their parents. Unless a staff member is present, no one is allowed to go outside until his or her parents have arrived.
- Parents are expected to pick up students at the arranged times for games and practices. Failure to do so may result in exclusion from participation.

### **Academic Eligibility**

Students are expected to maintain appropriate academic standings comparable to their academic abilities. Students who fail to satisfy this standard may be ineligible to participate.

### **Behavioral Eligibility**

Students are expected to maintain appropriate standards for behavior. Students who fail to satisfy this standard may be ineligible to participate in the school sports program.

Any student who misses three practices and/or games due to behavioral detention or other unexcused absences may be subject to loss of membership on that team.

Students receiving an in-school suspension may not participate in a game or practice the day the consequence is served, at administrator discretion.

A student receiving an out of school suspension during a given marking period may be ineligible to continue to play/participate on the team for the remainder of the marking period. This decision will be made in conjunction with the team coach, the student's teachers, and the administrative team.

### **Student Spectators**

- Student spectators **must have a signed permission slip to stay after school** to watch a game. **Permission slips must be turned in to the office on arrival at school.**
- Student spectators are not allowed to enter locker rooms.
- Student spectators are not allowed to enter the gymnasium unsupervised.
- Players will wait in the lobby for their parents. Unless a staff member is present, no one is allowed to go outside until his or her parents have arrived.
- Parents are expected to pick up students at the arranged time for games. Tardiness may result in loss of privilege to attend games.

### **Clubs**

The following club options may be available to middle school students.

- Math Counts
- Writing Club

- Yearbook
- Science Quiz Bowl
- Video Yearbook

## **Dances**

All school rules are also applicable at dances. Any offense that would result in suspension during normal school hours will be treated in like manner during dances.

In addition to regular school rules, students are expected to conduct themselves according to general guidelines established for dances. If a student is disobeying the established guidelines, any chaperone has the obligation and authority to act upon the violation.

- Students may not leave the building during the dance.
- Students may not leave a school dance early without the written permission of a parent or legal guardian.
- Students exhibiting poor behavior may be prohibited from attending future dances or events.
- Parents of a misbehaving student may be called to take the student home.
- Signed permission slips are required for admission. Slips must contain the phone number where a parent can be reached during the time of the event. A student absent from school on the day of the dance may not attend.
- Students having behavioral issues may be prohibited from attending dances.
- Students who receive a detention may not attend a dance until the detention is served.

Transportation: Parents are responsible for arranging transportation to and from school.

## **11. Communication**

## Distribution of Materials

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by students as a means of communications. All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to the community, with the exception of school-connected organizations, will be referred to the office of the superintendent to determine whether the materials can be distributed.

## Power School

Power school is a great tool for parents of 5-8 students to stay up to date on their student's grades. All parents have the ability to unlock the "Parent Portal" which will enable a single parent log-in which will provide access to grades for every student that parent has enrolled. In addition, parents are able to sign up for automated "blasts" from Power School, which are emails that provide updated grade information for their students. Additional questions regarding Power School can be directed to the school Technology Coordinator, Scott Waddell or to the administrative team.

## Parent Communication Policies

Parents are encouraged to become partners in their child's educational successes.

Communication with teachers: Parents may contact through e-mail or voice mail teachers at school. Teachers will return calls at their earliest convenience. A parent calling or e-mailing in regard to a teacher's policies, classroom procedures, or disciplinary actions, should contact the teacher involved prior to any discussion of the matter with the principal.

Picking up children for early dismissal: **Please call the office at 860-429-6419 x355 or send a written request stating the date and time of the early dismissal.** The student will be paged to the office when the parent/guardian has arrived.

Parents bringing in school items: The office will deliver students' lunches, instruments, clothes, books and assignments.

Parents Requesting Conferences: To avoid unnecessary disruption of the normal in-classroom learning process, conferences may be held before school or at the close of the school day at a mutually convenient time during the school day. Please schedule conferences at least twenty-four hours in advance. When requesting a conference, please state the purpose.

If the results of the meeting are not satisfactory, the parent may then request the involvement of the principal. If still no satisfaction occurs, the superintendent will become involved in like manner.

Parent Conferences: Two parent conference days for Grade 1-8 students are scheduled for November 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Grades close on December 6<sup>th</sup>, March 17<sup>th</sup>, and June 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **Parent Involvement**

Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school based on communications and interactions. Parents/guardians are urged to encourage their children to put a high priority on education and to make the most of their educational opportunities. Parents/guardians should become familiar with all of Ashford School's activities and academic programs. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences, attendance at appropriate meetings and being a school volunteer are strongly encouraged. Ashford School fosters participation and effective two-way communication among the parents, school, and community in the following ways:

Ashford School prospers from the contributions of everyone in our educational community.

**Parents** – Take an active role in their child's education by supporting the learning process at home and at school.

**Teachers** – Provide high quality instruction to Ashford's children and support a strong link between home and school.

**Administrators** – Lead the school community, supporting the success of all students, fostering collaboration, and improving program quality.

**School Board Members** – Represent the community for purposes of making decisions regarding policy, budget, and due process.

Additionally, the Board of Education negotiates contracts and typically serves as the last step in the process of problem solving or conflict resolution.

**Community Organizations** – Link together with other school community members to participate in the education of Ashford children.

## **Avenues for Participation**

**Attend Open House:** Grades 5 - 8 on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Grades 1 - 4 on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

**Volunteer** – Contact your child's teacher or call the principal for details: 860-429-6419

**Contribute** to the support offered to our school by the Ashford PTO – contact Chonte Fields or Michelle Nemeth ([ashfordschoolpto@gmail.com](mailto:ashfordschoolpto@gmail.com)).

**Learn** about Ashford School at the Board of Education Meetings: Generally the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month in the conference room at 7:30.

## **Avenues for Communication**

**Read** information (e.g. summer mailing that is sent out in August) and other communications sent to parents.

**Visit** the Ashford School website: [www.ashfordct.org](http://www.ashfordct.org)

**Follow** Ashford School on Facebook and on Twitter at @ashfordschoolct

**Sign** and return progress reports and report cards promptly to homeroom teachers as requested.

**Dialogue** with your child’s teacher during Parent-Teacher Conferences.

**Share** e-mail addresses with your child’s teacher.

**Telephone** your child’s teacher by calling 860-429-6419.

**Utilize** Power School to stay up to date on your child’s grades.

**Explore** new ideas and develop resources for parenting. Call our school psychologists: Mrs. Emily Deliberto (grades PK-4) or Alicia Marceau (grades 5-8) at 860-429-6419.

**Attend** PTO Meetings.

**Contact** the appropriate administrator when you have questions or concerns:

Dr. James Longo, Superintendent at 860-429-1927

Mrs. Cynthia Ford, Director of Pupil Personnel at 860-429-1927

Mr. Troy Hopkins, Principal at 860-429-6419

Mrs. Polly Borysevicz, Assistant Principal at 860-429-6419

**Communicate** with the Ashford School Board of Education

John Lippert, Chairperson, Marian Mathews, Vice-Chair, John Calarese, Lisa McAdams Donegan, Shannon Gamache, Jane Urban, Kay Warren

## **Library / Media**

## **Computer Resources**

District resources have been invested in computer technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for an increasingly computerized society. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding appropriate use of these resources.

## **Internet Guidelines**

Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to utilize online technology available in the Ashford School. In order to ensure appropriate use by the entire school community, the following guidelines are to be followed.

A responsible user:

- May use online technology, including e-mail, for academic related research.
- Must record online time usage on the form provided at the site.
- Assumes the responsibility for proper use of technology.
- Must report to school staff any inappropriate use of technology.
- May not use impolite, abusive, or vulgar language.
- May not violate the network etiquette rules.
- May not change computer files of others.
- May not send or receive copyrighted material.
- May not use the Internet for any illegal purpose, or transmit any harassing, threatening, or intimidating message.
- May not use the network for financial gain, for commercial activity, or for any illegal activity.

Any breaches of guidelines regarding computers and associated technology will result in disciplinary action up to and including possible suspension or expulsion.

## **Library / Media Center**

Students have access to the library as determined by grade. This is to help foster skill development, literature appreciation, and research work.



Students may access the library either at an assigned class time or using a library pass. Passes may be obtained by teachers for use during class. The library staff will not issue passes except for lavatory use or a pass to the office, nurse, or back to class. Passes will not be issued five minutes before the period ends. Students must come prepared with proper materials and equipment to do their work.

### **General Library Policies**

Normal library hours are from 8:40am until 3:00pm, except by special appointment.

Students may only access the library if a faculty/staff member is present.

Food and drink are not allowed in the library.

Students must follow library guidelines and demonstrate appropriate behavior while using the library.

No library items (books, magazines, videotapes, DVDs, audiotapes, etc.) may leave the library without being checked out.

The library closes and is locked when the school day ends.

### **Circulation Policies**

Students are invited to borrow library materials for a period of two weeks with the exception of the following: overnight reference material which can be checked out for one day and reference and material and technology equipment which cannot leave the library.

Photocopies of articles from reference materials are available.

- Students in Pre-K - Grade 1 may borrow 1 item at one time.
- Students in Grade 2 may borrow 2 items at one time.
- Students in Grade 3 to Grade 8 may borrow three items at one time.

The Library collection is divided into primary, intermediate, and YA sections. Students in grades 6-8 may borrow YA titles. Students in grades 5 and below need a signed note from a parent/guardian to ask these titles.

All items may be renewed once for another 2-week period. The items must be brought to the library to be renewed.

All borrowed items must be returned to the library before additional items may be borrowed.

The library must be reimbursed for lost or damaged items before other items may be borrowed.

There are no fines for overdue books.

Overdue notices will be sent two weeks after an item is due. Library privileges may be suspended until the items are returned.

## **School-wide Support**

### **Special Education**

Under state and federal law, school districts are required to seek out and identify any child, from birth through 21 years of age, with a disability who may need special education services.

The parent of a child who requires or may require special education and related services is guaranteed procedural safeguards in accordance with the federal law entitled “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)” and with the state laws and regulations concerning children requiring special education. Under these laws and regulations the parent must be given written notice before the school district proposes to, or refuses to, initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the child. Such written notice must include a full explanation of procedural safeguards available to parents under IDEA. A copy of procedural safeguards is available from the school office or by contacting Cynthia Ford, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel.

### **Children: Birth to Three Years Old**

We are interested in locating any child in this age group about whom you may have concerns or questions. Referrals should be initiated if there appears to be a language, developmental, and/or social delay.

### **Children: Three to Five Years Old**

Parents of all three-year-olds are invited to participate in the Ashford preschool screening program. Screenings can be scheduled throughout the year for residents who have concerns about their child’s development by making a referral to the Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel.

### **Children: Five to Twenty-One Years Old**

For children enrolled in school, routine and ongoing procedures are used to identify children with disabilities. Classroom observation, records of daily classroom performance, standardized tests, and vision and hearing screenings are just a few of the procedures used to locate students who may need special education services.

## **Section 504**

### **Information Regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights statute, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of an individual's disability. Section 504 reads:

*“No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely by the reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance or activity conducted by any Executive Agency or by the United States Postal Service.”*

Program or activity includes all programs and activities of a State Education Agency or Local Education Agency receiving federal funds regardless of whether the specific program or activity is a direct recipient of federal funds.

### **Qualified Handicapped Individual**

Any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (2) has a record of such an impairment or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Our school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and, if a child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services and/or reasonable accommodations.

The members of a 504 Team, including the parent or guardian, will determine eligibility. Evaluation and periodic re-evaluation will be provided in accordance with Section 504 regulations.

If the student is determined to be disabled under Section 504 and requires accommodations, modifications, or services to be provided with an equal educational opportunity, the 504 Team will develop a written Section 504 Education Plan which documents the regular education accommodations and/or services that will be provided. The Section 504 Education Plan will be reevaluated at least once per year. The Director of Pupil Services is designated as the compliance officer for Section 504.

### **ESL Support**

Any student for whom 'English is a Secondary Language' is eligible for ESL support classes that will provide for and support their development of English as a spoken and written language. Contact the administration with questions or if you feel your student is in need of ESL support.

### **Extra Reading Help**

Extra reading help is available for all students who display a need for support in reading comprehension, fluency, decoding, etc.

### **Math Assistance**

Math assistance is available for any student who displays a need for support in developing the math skills they need to be successful.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Complaints about facilities or services may be filed with the Principal. A form is available for this purpose and can be obtained by calling the school office.

#### **Processing the Complaint:**

##### **Level 1:**

The complaint shall be presented in writing, with a suggested solution, to the Principal. The Principal will have TEN (10) school days to mail a reply to the Complainant.

##### **Level 2:**

If the Complaint is not satisfied with the response received from the Principal, or if no response is mailed by the Principal within TEN (10) school days, the Complainant may request an impartial due process hearing to review the Complaint. A request for a Section 504 due-process hearing shall be made by the parent or guardian within twenty (20) calendar days of the parents' receipt of notice of the 504 Team's decision and their right to file for an impartial hearing.

### **Nondiscrimination Statement**

The Ashford Board of Education prohibits harassment and discrimination in educational programs, services or employment on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, military or veteran status, national origin, sex, ancestry, sexual orientation, or past or present physical or mental disability in accordance with Titles VI, VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1973, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, and appropriate State laws.

The Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education address:

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

33 Arch Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02110-1491

### **Student Support Services**

Our school psychologists have much to offer students who need support. Mrs. Marceau supports students in grades 4-8. Mrs. Deliberto supports students in grades PreK-3.

Parents can speak with counselors by calling 860-429-6419 and asking for the counselor serving their child's grade level.

Ashford Youth Services Bureau is a grant-funded agency that provides supports for families residing in Ashford. The director of the Ashford Youth Services Bureau has an office in Ashford School. You can reach Melissa McDonough by calling 860-429-6419.

The Salvation Army provides free summer camp for students who qualify. Please contact the principal's office for more information.

## **12. Emergency Preparedness**

### **Emergency School Closing Information**

Emergency Closings and Dismissals will be announced on WTIC and WILI radio, K12 Campus Alerts and Channels 3, 8, 30, and 61.

Delayed Openings/Early Dismissals: Inclement weather or other unavoidable reasons may mandate a delay in opening the school or an early closing.

When circumstances warrant, the school will delay openings for 2 hours. When there is a delayed opening, AM Pre-K is canceled. PM Pre-K will be picked up as usual.

If school must be released early, it will generally be dismissed at 12:25 p.m. Morning Pre-K students will be transported home at the same time as students in grades 1-8. PM Pre-K will be canceled.

Please note: Our buses are also utilized to transport Ashford's grade 9-12 students. When high school half-days or other factors significantly alter our scheduled times for half days or early closings, you will be notified.

### **Safety Drills**

Fire drills are conducted at regular intervals and are required by state law. Lock Down drills are also conducted during the school year. It is important that your child understands the seriousness of a fire drill and a lockdown drill and that we can expect 100% cooperation.

No talking is allowed during a drill. This permits the adults in charge to issue directions and ensure your child's safety.

In addition to Fire drills and Lock Down drills, Ashford School also practices severe weather drills, in order to be prepared in the case of severe weather such as significant electrical storms, hurricanes, or tornados.

At least once per school year, Ashford School will practice a whole-school evacuation drill, in order to be prepared to evacuate the school quickly and safely in the case of an emergency where the school building becomes unusable or unsafe.

## **Safety / Accident Prevention**

Student safety on campus and at school related events is a high priority of the District. Although the District has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the school's code of discipline
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of staff who are overseeing the welfare of students.

## **13. Health**

### **Health Services**

The goal of the school health office is to provide emergency care, assist with routine medical conditions and promote good health practices. Mrs. Sibley-Jett, our school nurse, is available to answer your questions about any of the following health related information.

All students entering the Health Office must have a pass issued by the teacher from whose class the student has been excused.

#### **Emergency Cards**

**Emergency Cards** must be filed in the Health Office. In case of illness, accident, or other urgent situation the nurse must have a parent's phone number on file and phone numbers of 3 available contact people. **It is the parent's responsibility to keep information updated.**

### **Physical Education Excuses**

Physical education excuses, written by a doctor, should be obtained at the time of treatment of an illness or injury and brought to the Health Office. Students can only be excused from physical education class by parents for 1-2 classes for acute reasons. Any further time needed requires doctor's written notification. Physical education excuses, written by a parent, should be brought directly to the school nurse first to copy, then to the physical education teacher.

### **Medications**

The school will provide a Medicinal Authorization form that must be filled out completely by the child's prescribing physician and parent before any medication can be administered. This is state law. This includes all over-the-counter and prescription medications. All medication must be properly labeled and brought to school by an adult. The pharmaceutical label must include the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the time to be given, and the name of the prescribing physician. This form is available in the Nurse's office.

Students in possession of over-the-counter or prescription medications are subject to consequences/discipline actions.

### **Physical Examinations**

Connecticut State Law requires a comprehensive physical examination during the calendar year of requirement for all children prior to school entrance and grade six. Evidence of the required physical examination and proper immunization and a T.B. assessment must be received before the first day of school of all entering students. Otherwise, the child will be excluded from school until the doctor's report is received. Medical forms are available in the school office.

### **Immunizations**

## **Immunizations (Continued)**

### **Vision, Hearing, and Scoliosis Screening**

- Every child, Pre-K through grade 5, is given a vision test to detect any problem that may exist.
- Hearing tests are administered to students in grades Pre-K-1 and in grades 3-5.
- Scoliosis examinations are administered to female students in grades 5 and 7 and to male students in grade 8.

With all three examinations, the nurse will immediately notify parents if a problem is detected.

### **Contagious Diseases**

Children who are ill will be excluded from school for the following time periods:

- Scarlet Fever, Strep Infection: Return when free of fever and symptoms for one day and at least 24 hours of appropriate antibiotic, or upon doctor's written approval.
- Impetigo: If area is larger than a nickel or if multiple areas are involved, the child will need oral antibiotics. Return after taking antibiotics for 24 hours. All areas must be covered with gauze.
- Ringworm: Exclusion until control measures are instituted and with a doctor's written approval.
- Infectious Hepatitis: Return one week after onset of jaundice, when free of fever and symptoms and with a doctor's written approval.
- Infectious Mononucleosis: Return when free of fever and symptoms and with a doctor's written approval.
- Chicken Pox: Exclude for one week after onset of appearance of first eruption and until all scabs are dry and brown.
- German Measles: Return after fever has gone and seven days from the onset of the rash has elapsed.
- Measles: Return five days after the appearance of rash and three days after free from fever.
- Mumps: Return nine days after onset of swelling and free of fever.
- Pink Eye/Conjunctivitis: Return when discharge and inflammation of eyes is cleared or with doctor's written approval.
- Poison Ivy/Oak: This is not contagious if child and clothing were washed after contact. If weeping is very obvious and extensive, the child should be under treatment by a doctor.
- Children with bad colds, sore throat, pneumonia, and other illnesses may be excluded from school until they are evaluated and treated accordingly.

### **Wellness Policy**



Ashford promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness including social and mental wellbeing, regular physical activity, and good nutrition as part of the environment in which students learn. The Ashford School supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive practices related to wellness, dietary practices, and physical activity.

We encourage parents to practice a healthy lifestyle at home in support of Ashford School's effort. Improved health will help to optimize student performance.

## **12. Transportation**

### **Regulations**

Bus regulations and codes, routes, and rules are established with due regard for safety, health, economy, the rights of all concerned, and consistent with state and federal law. A bus safety program that addresses appropriate bus behavior, getting on and off the bus, waiting for the bus, emergencies and bus evacuation is presented annually.

Safety during school transportation is a primary consideration for parents, school authorities and bus operators. Fortunately, a majority of students respect and understand what is expected of them. The following guidelines have been established and will be enforced.

Students shall:

- stand in an orderly manner and out of the traffic lane at bus stops;
- be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled pickup;
- move to enter or exit a bus only when the bus has come to a full stop and doors are opened;
- be respectful of the driver and of each other;
- remain seated at all times on the bus unless directed by the driver to move;
- not fight at any time on the bus. Students are to keep hands, feet and objects to themselves and within the bus;
- not throw items in the bus or out of the bus;
- not eat, drink or smoke on the bus;
- keep the aisle of the bus free of all objects;
- have conversations, but shouting or using profanity is not permitted;
- respect the property of others;
- not distract or argue with the bus driver;

- when necessary, cross in front of the school bus, within the driver's view and await the driver's signal to cross;
- present passes signed in the main office to the bus driver in order to get off a bus at a stop other than that assigned or to ride a bus other than the one assigned (in emergencies only);
- have respect for property.

The student or parent must pay for damage done to any portion of the school bus by a student.

*Vandalism represents grounds for immediate suspension without the usual warning. Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. (Refer to discipline policies and procedures pg. 44.)*

## **Student Drop-offs**

A parent or approved guardian **must be present at the bus stop** in order for a PreK-Grade 1 student to be dismissed from the bus.

Grades 2-3 students will require a parent, approved guardian, or sibling in Grade 4 or above.

The bus driver is in full charge of the bus and of the students being transported.

All bus drivers will create and maintain an assigned seating chart for their entire bus. Students will enter the bus and proceed directly to their assigned seat.

In the interest of the safety of all, the driver will take responsibility for controlling those students who seem unable to control their own behavior. If there should be undesirable behavior, the following steps will be taken:

The bus driver will stop the bus and warn the offenders.

If misconduct is repeated, the driver will submit a detailed written report to the assistant principal who will inform the parents.

Consequences for recurring misconduct may include removal of the student's privilege of riding on the school bus. The student and his/her parents will still be responsible for the student's regular attendance at school.

Continued misconduct will be referred to the superintendent's office for a possible bus expulsion hearing before the Board of Education.

## **Parent Responsibilities**

Parents are responsible for:

- The actions and safety of their child walking to and from bus stops and to and from school.
- The actions and safety of their child at the bus stop.
- Their child, when their child is being transported in any vehicle other than a school vehicle going to or returning from school.
- Any physical damage to a school bus or vehicle caused by their child.
- Having their child at his/her appropriate bus stop at least five (5) minutes prior to the noted pickup time.

Please note that Board policy prohibits the transportation of students in private vehicles to and from school-related activities.

### **Complaint Process**

A complaint or concern regarding school transportation safety must be made in writing and signed by the complainant. Include the date and time of incident; the vehicle number and/or driver's name; a description of the incident; your specific concerns; your name, date and a phone number where you can be contacted. Upon receipt of the complaint, the Superintendent shall conduct an investigation and provide the complainant with a written description of the action taken, provided a complaint has been received in writing.

Bus regulations and codes, routes, and rules are established with due regard for safety, health, economy, and the rights of all concerned, and consistent with state and federal law. A bus safety program that addresses appropriate bus behavior, getting on and off the bus, waiting for the bus, emergencies, and bus evacuation is presented annually.

### **Late Bus**

During most of the school year, there is a late bus available on Monday thru Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. for **students in grades 3 - 8**.

Only students who participate in after-school sports, school sponsored activities, and/or extra help sessions may use the late bus. Detention students may use the late bus unless said detention is related to a bus issue. Please be aware that the routine "door-to-door" bus service may not be provided and that students may need to walk to their homes from designated drop-off points.

Students will only stay after school for extra help when arrangements have been made between the parent and teacher. Parents should plan to pick up their child from the teacher's classroom by the arranged time, typically by 4:15 p.m. Students who have not been picked up by their parents/guardians by 4:25 p.m. will be placed on the late bus, as no supervision is available at the school after 4:30 p.m. The teacher will attempt to make contact with the parent when placing the child on the late bus.

At the discretion of administration, younger grades may ride the bus.

## **Video Cameras on School Buses**

The Board of Education recognizes the need to maintain appropriate conduct on school buses. Accordingly, the Board of Education authorizes the installation of video cameras on school buses as an aid in monitoring student behavior. These cameras produce both video and audio coverage. The tapes from these cameras will be used to assist school administrators in deciding upon appropriate disciplinary action. Video from bus cameras can only be made available to parents if no other students are visible or identifiable; if other students are visible and identifiable on bus footage, permission from applicable parents must be granted before a parent can gain access to said footage.

## **13. Food Service**

Eating is generally restricted to the cafeteria. Soda and high-energy drinks are not sold or permitted in the school during school hours. Food and beverages are not allowed to leave the cafeteria after lunch. Rules of cleanliness are to be observed at all times. Misconduct in the cafeteria may be cause for receiving an assigned seat or forfeiting the right to eat in that location or other such disciplinary action deemed appropriate for the misconduct.

### **My School Bucks Lunch Payment System**

We encourage you to make use of the online My School Bucks Prepayment System for funding your child's lunch account. This system allows you to conveniently pay online using your credit card or PayPal account. Visit the school web site at [www.ashfordct.org](http://www.ashfordct.org) for more information.

### **National School Lunch Program**

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers to students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Hot meals are served each day in the school cafeteria **except on the last day of school**. The cost of hot lunch is \$2.85. Advanced lunch purchases may be made through the cafeteria manager each morning before the start of school in the cafeteria. Milk is available to all students at a cost of \$0.50. Snacks are available for \$0.25 and up. The menu for each month is posted on Ashford School's web site, [www.ashfordct.org](http://www.ashfordct.org).

### **Breakfast Program**

Free and reduced priced breakfast is available based on financial need. Guidelines and applications for the free and reduced price breakfast program are sent home in the Summer Packets to families and are available in the principal's office. Breakfast is served from 8:10-8:30 a.m.

### **Free and Reduced Lunch Program**

Free and reduced priced lunches are available based on financial need. Guidelines and applications for the free and reduced price lunch program are sent home in the Summer Packets to families and are available in the principal's office.

## **Behavior**

### **Conduct Guidelines**

Conduct which may lead to disciplinary action (including, but not limited to, restorative discipline, removal from class, detention, suspension and/or expulsion) includes conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity (including on a school bus), 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. 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 (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 15, 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, as described in subparagraph (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, walkman, CD player, blackberry, personal data assistant, walkie talkie, Smartphone, mobile or handheld device, 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 the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal 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 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, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

- 33. Cyberbullying, defined as 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.
- 34. 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.
- 35. Engaging in a plan to stage or create a violent situation for the purposes of recording it by electronic means; or recording by electronic means acts of violence for purposes of later publication.
- 36. Engaging in a plan to stage sexual activity for the purposes of recording it by electronic means; or recording by electronic means sexual acts for purposes of later publication.
- 37. Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.
- 38. Any action prohibited by any Federal or State law.
- 39. Any other violation of school rules or regulations or a series of violations which makes the presence of the student in school seriously disruptive of the educational process and/or a danger to persons or property.
- 40. Use of the Internet to transmit any harassing, threatening or intimidating messages that may substantially disrupt the school program or encourage bullying or violence (including Sexting).

**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 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.

### **Bullying**

The Ashford Board of Education promotes a secure and amicable school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Board that any form of bullying behavior within the classroom, on school property, on a school bus, or at school-sponsored events is expressly forbidden.

Anonymous Forms are available on the district website, for students, parents, and staff to report an incident of bullying.

*For further details, please see the Safe School Climate Plan on page 68*

“**Bullying**” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student attending school in the same district that:

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

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- physical violence and attacks,
- verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs,
- threats and intimidation,
- extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions, exclusion from peer groups within the school, and
- repeated harassment or intimidation including email.
- Spreading personal, private content against a peers wishes, with the intent to cause harm or embarrassment

Such conduct is disruptive of the educational process and, therefore, bullying is not acceptable behavior and is prohibited.

Persons who engage in any act of bullying, while at school, at any school function, or in connection with any district sponsored activity or event are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials, and further, in the case of an employee, up to and including termination.

A comprehensive program involving everyone in the school and the community, to address bullying at all school levels, is essential to reducing incidence of bullying. Such a program must involve interventions at any and all levels, school-wide, classroom, and individual.

The district's program:

- permits anonymous reports of bullying by anyone and written reports by parents or guardians, or employees. No disciplinary action can be taken based solely on anonymous reports. The process by which students may make formal, informal and anonymous complaints shall be publicized annually in the student handbook;
- requires teachers and other school staff to notify school administrators in writing of bullying acts they witness and students' reports they receive;
- requires school administrators to investigate parents' written reports and review students' anonymous reports; and requires an investigation of staff complaints regarding bullying by any other person. In all cases, the victim will be interviewed prior to an investigation;
- requires the school to maintain a publicly available list of the number of verified bullying acts that occurred there, whether student or adult;

- requires the school to have an intervention strategy for school staff to deal with bullying, including language about bullying in various codes of conduct;
- requires notice to parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying. The notice must describe the school's response and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying. In a similar manner, a written record will be placed in the personnel file of an offending member of the staff, in accordance with employee contracts;
- requires the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing reported incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual that may require both counseling and discipline;
- requires students to be notified annually of the process by which they may make reports of bullying; and
- requires the identification of appropriate school personnel, which may include, but shall not be limited to, pupil services personnel responsible for taking a bullying report and investigating the complaint.

The Board expects prompt and reasonable investigations of alleged acts of bullying. The principal or his/her designee is responsible for handling all complaints of alleged bullying of or by children. The administration must investigate staff complaints and should use the grievance procedure from the contracts of employees, where appropriate.

In addition, the norms that are established by adults through consistent enforcement of all policies pertaining to conduct and modeling appropriate behavior at school and at home will reduce the instances and damage of bullying. It is necessary for everyone to promote the concept that caring for others is a valued quality, one that is accepted and encouraged.

The full text of the Board of Education bullying policy is available on the school website at [www.ashfordct.org](http://www.ashfordct.org), or in the school offices. A template shall be designed for anonymous reporting through the use of a computer. Access to the report will be restricted to the administration to protect the identity of the reporter. Prevention and intervention strategies will be provided throughout the year including a school wide Positive Behavior Support (PBIS) Program, grade level team interventions, curricular focus (i.e. Health, Swings, Wings), posters, skits, etc.

The focus of discipline will be "education", as opposed to simply punishment. Any record may be cleared upon satisfactory change of behavior. The degree of severity will relate to the grade of the child or the experience of the employee.

The record will indicate the offense and the degree of severity of each individual incident, whether student or staff.

### **Reports**

All students are encouraged to report incidences of bullying to an adult. If a student wishes to make an anonymous report, a template on the school's website and sent anonymously to the principal's office. The directions for this procedure are available in your child's classroom.

### **Bus Conduct**

The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and the children being transported. The driver may make changes in seating, arrange for discipline as it is required, and may take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of his/her bus and its passengers. The driver will have responsibility to maintain orderly behavior of students on school buses and will report misconduct to the administration. Students must cooperate and maintain good conduct to ensure a safe transportation system.

Students must remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion. Students may leave their seats only when the bus is stopped and directed by the driver or stopped at their destination.

No student shall leave the bus without permission from the driver or school authorities except at the student's regular bus stop or at the school.

Conduct on the buses will be like classroom conduct except that reasonable conversation is permissible.

Students shall:

- stand in an orderly manner and out of the traffic lane at bus stops;
- be at the bus stop 5 minutes before the scheduled pickup;
- move to enter or exit a bus only when the bus has come to a full stop and doors are opened;
- be respectful of the driver and of each other;
- sit in the seat assigned to them by the bus driver;
- remain seated at all times on the bus unless directed by the driver to move;
- not fight at any time on the bus;
- students are to keep hands, feet and objects to themselves and within the bus;

- will refrain from throwing items in the bus or out of the bus;
- not eat, drink or smoke on the bus;
- keep the aisle of the bus free of all objects;
- have quiet conversations; shouting and using profanity is not permitted;
- respect the property of others;
- not distract the bus driver;
- when necessary, within the driver's view and awaiting the driver's signal to cross in front of the school bus; and
- present passes signed by the secretary, in the main office, to the bus driver in order to get off the bus at a stop other than that assigned or to ride a bus other than the one assigned.

Parents are responsible for paying for any vandalism to any portion of the school bus. Vandalism represents grounds for immediate suspension without the usual warning.

### **Cheating / Plagiarism**

All forms of cheating are not acceptable. The misrepresenting by students of homework, class work, tests, reports, or other assignments as if they were entirely their own work shall be considered forms of cheating. Students involved in an incident of cheating or plagiarism may receive a zero (0) for that work at the teacher's discretion. Additional disciplinary action may be taken.

### **Electronic Devices**

The use of Electronic Communication Devices such as cellular phones, smart phones, and iPods has become a convenient and common form of communication for students and parents. According to Ashford School policy, students have permission to carry them to school. As cell phones have the potential for adding positively to the learning environment, the use of cellphones in the classroom for educational purposes is allowed at the teacher's discretion.

While we understand the need for parents to maintain close contact with their children, during school hours, students must use the phone in the school office to communicate directly with parents and other individuals responsible for their supervision. Additionally, students need to keep electronic devices out of sight, unless given permission by their teacher to use their device as part of a lesson or learning experience.

While we do understand possessing an electronic communication device is a necessity, the use of the device during the school day has the potential to cause major disruptions. The problems associated with students using electronic communication devices include the capability of accessing the Internet as well as taking pictures that can be placed on the Internet. This raises concerns over safety and expectation of privacy. In addition, the

text-messaging feature provides an opportunity for students to send written messages to one another, creating the potential for academic dishonesty as well as peer conflicts during school. Therefore, student cell phone usage will be allowed outside of the school day, before 8:30 a.m. and after 3:10 p.m.

Please be advised, the use of cellphones or other electronic devices in an inappropriate or distracting manner may result in the following consequences:

- 1st offense – verbal warning.
- 2nd offense – restorative conversation with teacher, phone call to parent/guardian by teacher.
- 3rd offense – referral to the office, parent/guardian will be called to pick up device. Permission to have device on school grounds may be suspended

Further defiance will result in additional disciplinary action.

## **Harassment**

Every child has the right to feel safe, valued, and comfortable in school. No one else's behavior should ever make children feel afraid or embarrassed because of their color, their religion, the country in which they or their parents were born, their sex, gender identity, or any disability they may have.

Parents are urged to reinforce with their child(ren) that if he/she is harassed or sees harassment happening to someone else that he/she should report the behavior to a teacher or the administration.

## **Hazing**

Hazing, harassment, intimidation or any act that injures, degrades, or disgraces a student or staff member will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in such behavior is subject to disciplinary action including suspension, expulsion or referral to law enforcement.

Playground Rules:

- There is no playground supervision provided for non-school hours or activities.
- Clothing appropriate for the season should be worn on the playground. If a child does not have boots, he/she must stay on the blacktop while snow is determined to be too deep or wet on the ground. Children should not slide, sit, or lay in the snow in a manner as to become soaked.

- No student is allowed to throw snow, rocks, or any object that could injure another person.
- There will be no fighting on the playground or in any other part of the school. Students must refrain from having hands on each other.
- Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated on the playground. Students will be assigned time-out periods at the time of the incident or may be given a detention. More serious incidents will be reported to the assistant principal.
- Organized ball games must be held on an appropriate ball field or area.
- Students are to stay on school property at all times.
- All children go out to recess unless they have a physician's note.
- Students are to respect all adult supervisors and follow instructions at all times.
- Care must be taken with playground equipment in order to avoid injury. Students should not play near swings, slides, or climbing equipment when they are not using this equipment.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment has been established as a form of sexual discrimination and is defined as follows:

“Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or participation in an educational function (2) submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting the individual or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.”

Examples of specific behaviors (that are unwanted and sexual in nature) that could constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- |                                    |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Verbal comments                  | • Touching                        |
| • Sexual name calling<br>affection | • Inappropriate public display of |
| • Sexual rumors                    | • Corner/blocking                 |
| • Jokes/cartoons/pictures          | • Gestures                        |
| • Leers                            | • Harassing telephone calls       |

- Pulling at clothes
- Attempted rape/rape
- Sexting

If you wish to discuss these regulations or your rights under this policy, or wish to discuss or file a grievance, please contact, Mrs. Ford, our Title IX Coordinator, or the administration.

If you believe that you have been discriminated against in regard to either of the preceding policies, you may file a grievance that your rights have been denied or violated.

Forms are available from the Superintendent of Schools, our Civil Rights Coordinator. Contact with the Civil Rights Coordinator should take place within forty (40) calendar days of the alleged occurrence.

### **Grievance Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to problems that may arise concerning claims of discrimination. Evidence of reprisal against a complainant or witness shall be viewed as a violation of this policy.

Any person who wishes to inquire or to register a complaint concerning alleged discrimination in the Ashford Public Schools shall have an opportunity to bring such concerns to the attention of the Civil Rights Officer, who has the authority to resolve such complaints. Any student, parent, or employee in making a complaint or inquiry shall utilize the following grievance procedure. Officials shall be governed by this procedure.

#### **Level I:**

The complainant shall discuss the alleged discriminatory act or practice with the Civil Rights Officer or the individual closest to the daily decision-making level. This will normally be a principal, teacher, counselor, department chairperson, head custodian, or cafeteria manager. If satisfaction cannot be achieved through informal discussion, the following procedure must be initiated.

#### **Level II:**

The complainant shall, within forty (40) calendar days of the alleged incident, on forms provided, put the complaint in writing and file it with the Civil Rights Officer. Within five (5) working days a conference must be held. Within five (5) working days following the conference, the complaint must be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties or referred to the Superintendent of Schools. Within five (5) working days, the Civil Rights Officer shall notify the Superintendent and must



notify the complainant of this notification. The Board will be apprised by the Superintendent of any grievance reaching Level II.

**Level III:**

Within ten (10) working days after receipt of such complaint, the Superintendent must hold a hearing; and within five (5) working days of the hearing, resolve the complaint, negotiate a long-term solution or refer the matter to the Board of Education for consideration.

**Level IV:**

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-153 Discrimination on account of marital status.

46a-60 Discriminatory employment practices prohibited.

Federal Law

The Board of Education, Superintendent and the Civil Rights Officer shall proceed in accordance with the appropriate laws or regulations.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Section 504 and the Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 20

U.S.C. 706(7)(b).

American Disability Act of 1989.

*Chalk v. The United States District Court of Central California.*

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Civil Rights Act of 1987.

*Policy adopted: August 13, 1998*

## **14. Substance Abuse**

### **Smoking / Tobacco**

All smoking on school property is prohibited. In addition, students shall not smoke or use tobacco at any school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property as provided by law.

#### **Use and/or Possession – First Violation**

Any student determined to be in possession of tobacco products, or demonstrating evidence of recent use for the first time during his/her tenure at the Ashford School is subject to the following actions by a school administrator:

- The administrator will immediately contact the student's parent/guardian, describe the situation, and arrange for the student to be picked up.
- Arrange a meeting with the student, parent/guardian and school psychologist.
- Refer the student to school nurse or school psychologist.
- The student will be suspended out of school for one to three days in accordance with due process procedures.

#### **Use and/or Possession – Second Violation**

Any student determined to be in possession of tobacco products, or demonstrating evidence of recent use for the second time during his/her tenure at the Ashford School is subject to the following actions by a school administrator:

- The administrator will contact the student's parents/guardian and arrange for the student to be picked up.
- Refer the student to the school nurse or school psychologist.
- The student will be suspended out of school for three to five days in accordance with due process procedures.

#### **Use and/or Possession – Subsequent Violations**

The administrator will contact the student's parents/guardian and arrange for the student to be picked up.

- Refer the student to his/her physician.
- The student will be suspended out of school for five to ten days in accordance with due process procedures.

#### **Sale and/or Distribution**

The following procedures/actions will be followed in dealing with a student who is attempting to sell and/or distribute tobacco products (or substances purported to be tobacco):

- The student will be escorted to the appropriate administrators office or the administrator called to confiscate any tobacco products.
- The administrator will request that the student volunteer any tobacco products.
- The administrator may also find it necessary to conduct a search in accordance with Board policy.
- The student will be suspended for the maximum number of days for each violation.

## **Alcohol, Drugs, and Other Mind-Altering Substances**

### **Use and/or Possession – First Violation**

Any student determined to be in possession of drugs, alcohol, or other mind altering substances, or demonstrating symptoms of being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol for the first time during his/her tenure at the Ashford School is subject to the following actions by a school administrator:

- The administrator will immediately contact the student's parent/guardian, describe the situation, and arrange for the student to be picked up.
- Arrange a meeting with the student, parent/guardian, and school psychologist.
- Refer the student to a certified agency for an evaluation and/or counseling.
- The student will be suspended out of school for three to five (3-5) days in accordance with due process procedures and the parents and/or guardians notified in writing that any future involvement with drugs and/or alcohol could result in expulsion.

### **Use and/or Possession – Second Violation**

Any student determined to be in possession of drugs, alcohol, or other mind altering substances, or demonstrating symptoms of being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol for the second time during his/her tenure at the Ashford School is subject to the following actions by a school administrator.

- The administrator will contact the student's parents/guardian and arrange for the student to be picked up.
- Refer the student to a certified agency for an evaluation and/or counseling.
- The student will be suspended out of school for five to ten days in accordance with due process procedures and the parents and/or guardians notified in writing that any future involvement with drugs and/or alcohol could result in expulsion.

### **Use and/or Possession – Third Violation**

Any student determined to be in possession of drugs, alcohol or other mind altering substances, or demonstrating symptoms of being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol for the third time during his/her tenure at the Ashford School is subject to the following actions by a school administrator:

- The administrator will contact the student's parents/guardian and arrange for the student to be picked up.

- The student will be suspended and recommended to the Board of Education for expulsion pursuant to Section 10-233d of the C.G.S.

### **Sale and/or Distribution**

The following procedures/actions will be followed in dealing with a student who is attempting to sell and/or distribute drugs, alcohol or other mind-altering substances:

- The student will be escorted to the appropriate administrator's office or the administrator called to confiscate any drugs or drug paraphernalia or drug-like substances.
- The administrator will request that the student volunteer any drugs, drug paraphernalia, or drug-like substances. The administrator may also find it necessary to conduct a search in accordance with Board policy.
- The administrator shall contact the State Police, and submit to the police for analysis and possible use in further proceedings all materials confiscated.
- The administrator will contact the student's parents/guardian and arrange for the student to be picked up.
- The student will be suspended and recommended to the Board of Education for expulsion pursuant to Section 10-233d of the C.G.S.
- Refer the student to a certified agency for an evaluation and/or counseling.

### **Notification of Police**

It is required that any drug, drug-like substance, or drug paraphernalia found at school be turned over to the State Police within seventy-two (72) hours (excluding weekends & holidays) from the time it is found. Until such time that the substance or paraphernalia is surrendered to the State Police, it shall be kept in a sealed bag and maintained in a locked, secure place. The contacting of the State Police and the surrendering of material shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools, the Principal, or the Assistant Principal.

### **Emergencies**

Any staff person perceiving a student to be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other substances shall immediately notify an administrator providing all pertinent information. If a student's condition or behavior creates an emergency situation that may be due to drug or alcohol activity, the situation will be discussed with the school nurse.

- If it is determined that a student under the influence of drugs or alcohol is in need of immediate medical attention, the student will be sent to an area hospital and the parents notified.

- If immediate medical attention is not required, the parent or guardian will be contacted to take the student home.

## **Employee Responsibilities**

### **17.2.7.1. Certified Employees and School Nurse**

A certified employee or school nurse who is contacted by a student regarding his/her drug or alcohol problem may elect to keep that information confidential and not disclose it to any other person. The certified employee must make every effort to guide the student to the kind of help he/she needs or requests.

A certified employee who obtains physical evidence voluntarily or involuntarily surrendered by a student indicating that a crime has been or is being committed by a student must turn such evidence over to an administrator within 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays). The certified employee shall not be required to disclose the name of the student as long as the student initiated communication concerning his/her use of illegal materials.

Any certified employee who, in good faith, discloses or does not disclose, such professional communication, shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise be incurred or imposed, and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding which results from such disclosure.

### **17.2.7.2. Non-Certified Employees**

Non-certified employees may not maintain the confidence of a student who disclosed a drug or alcohol problem.

A non-certified employee who obtains information or physical evidence in the form of alcohol, drugs, drug-like substances, or drug paraphernalia must immediately inform an administrator, turn over any evidence, and disclose the name of the student.

## **“Look Alike” Alcohol, Drugs, or Other Mind-Altering Substances**

For any student determined to be in possession of “look alike” substances or any substances purported by the student to be a mind-altering substance, the consequences will follow the steps outlined above (see 17.2.1).

For any student selling or distributing look alike substances the consequences will follow the steps above except that the first violation will be a ten day suspension. In the case of a second violation, the student will be suspended and recommended for expulsion.

## Instruction

Teachers at all grade levels shall emphasize the effect of alcohol, nicotine, tobacco, and drugs on health, character, and personality development whenever appropriate in the health and safety program and such other contexts as appropriate.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-16b Prescribed courses of study.

10-19 Effect of alcohol, nicotine or tobacco and drugs to be taught.

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

10-220b Policy statement on drugs.

10-221(d) Boards of Education to prescribe rules.

10-233d Expulsion of pupils.

219-240 Definitions “controlled drugs”.

219-277 Penalty for illegal manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing.

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

*Adopted 1/20/00*

## 15. Behavioral Programs, Policies, and Procedures

Student discipline is authorized whenever a student’s conduct violates school rules, endangers persons or property, or is seriously disruptive of the educational process. The administration and staff are fair, firm, and consistent when dealing with discipline situations but fully realize that Ashford School is a Pre-K-Grade 8 school and every case requires individual attention and judgment. We respect and support the teacher’s responsibility to teach and the student’s right to learn. Our school community believes that school environments that are positive, proactive, and predictable lead to a safer and more caring atmosphere and enhance learning.

To assist the staff with creating a positive school that directly addresses student discipline, we have implemented a school-wide, state-mandated program called **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**. PBS is a nationally recognized, research-validated approach that is supported by the US Department of Education. Designing the program for Ashford School has been a multi-year process involving a partnership with UCONN, committees, and staff training (teachers, paraprofessional, and drivers). E.O. Smith also currently uses PBIS.

With PBIS, we have chosen three positive school-wide values to target: **RESPECT**, **RESPONSIBILITY**, and **PRIDE**. The PBIS program involves teaching, modeling, practicing, and acknowledging expected behaviors related to those values.

## Collaborative Problem Solving

Ashford School utilizes a collaborative problem solving approach (also known as “Plan B”) to discipline. Based on *Lost at School*, by Ross Greene, Ph.D., this process involves staff members working directly with a student to understand the root causes of behavior issues. Additionally, Plan B empowers Ashford students to work with their teachers to develop their own plans to learn necessary behavioral skills and work towards reducing behavioral problems.

## Restorative Discipline

In an attempt to teach students empathy and the ability to take ownership for their mistakes, Ashford School utilizes restorative discipline. This process focuses on students building an understanding of how their actions impacted others in their community, so that they may have the opportunity to restore the relationship and avoid further behavioral issues. Consequences may be assigned with administrative approval and notification to parents. Examples may include, but not limited to:

- Restorative conversations between a student offender and the victim
- Writing assignments
- Assisting a staff member
- Community service
- Afternoon Opportunities- support for students to work on academic, social, or behavioral skills

Students may be required to stay after school for “Afternoon Opportunities” and spend their time (until late bus) restoratively processing what will need to happen moving forward so that behavior is appropriate for the following reasons:

- receive an office referral
- are sent down to the office from class for behavior issues
- other, as determined by administration

## Advisory Homeroom (PK-8)

Ashford School staff will work with students within an advisory homeroom to:

- Ensure that each student develops a supportive relationship with at least one trusted adult within the school
- Develop Habits of Mind through character and community building activities, Second Step, classroom meetings, etc.
- Practice and develop proficiency in following school-wide rules and routines

## **Bus Suspension**

Riding the bus is a privilege that is extended to Ashford students as a means for convenient transportation to and from school. Repeat incidents resulting in bus conduct reports can result in suspension of bus privilege for up to 10 days.

## **Detention**

A disciplinary detention may be given for any infraction of unacceptable student behavior or for violation of Board policies. Any member of the faculty in the Middle School may give these detentions.\* Disciplinary detentions are cumulative on a yearly basis. They are served on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Transportation via the late bus is allowed.

Academic detentions may be issued at the teacher's discretion, for failure to do assigned academic work requiring a student to remain after school. Such detentions may result in conferences between parents and teachers to resolve the problems.

Notice of detentions will be in writing on the Referral Form with the issuing teacher's name, and will be sent home for parent or guardian signature. Parents are given 24-hour notice. They are expected to arrange transportation from school at the end of the detention and to pick the child up at the appointed time in the main office. Failure of student, parents, or guardians to comply with the detention procedure may result in a one-day suspension of the student. The late bus is available to students serving a disciplinary detention that is not related to behavior on the bus.

- Detentions not signed by a parent and returned the next day will result in a two-day detention.
- Missed detentions due to absences must be made up.
- Recurring detentions may result in removal from participation in extracurricular activities.
- Students who receive a detention may not participate in extracurricular activities until it is served.

\*Detentions may be issued to students in earlier grades when and if the need arises.



## Suspension

Ashford School uses suspension as a last resort consequence for students. When suspension is necessary, Ashford School recognizes two forms of suspension: In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out of School Suspension (OSS). Ashford School recognizes the importance of having students in school and will generally provide a preferential use of ISS rather than OSS. However, OSS is reserved for significant/severe transgressions, such as physical assault, bringing a weapon to school, drug-use or sale, etc.

The following may result in a multiple day suspension:

- Use of foul language.
- Throwing snowballs, rocks, or other objects that may cause injury or damage to property.
- Possession, use of, transmission, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
- Possession, use, or transmission of any firearms, weapon, knives, explosives or other dangerous instrument, to a student in school. Also, refer to paragraph two under “Expulsion.”
- Smoking or possession of tobacco in school or on school grounds.
- Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to school property or private property’
- Stealing or attempts to steal school property or private property.
- Bullying/Hazing.
- Inappropriate use of technology that impacts the school day, including but not limited to sexting.

The administration shall observe the following procedures regarding suspensions:

- Unless an emergency situation requires the student’s immediate removal, no student shall be suspended prior to having an informal hearing with the principal, assistant principal, superintendent, or other designee, at which time the student is informed of the charges and given an opportunity to respond.
- The principal or assistant principal shall make all possible attempts to notify the parent or guardian of the student about the suspension and the causes leading to the suspension.

- The principal or his designee shall forward a letter to the parents or guardian denoting the suspension action.
- Notice shall be provided to the superintendent by the close of school day of the suspension action.
- Following a conference with the principal, the student or his/her parents or guardian may request a review of the suspension by the superintendent.
- The superintendent shall complete a review or provide a written report to the student, parent or guardian, and to the Board of Education within three days of the request for review.
- Textbooks and homework may be provided for the duration of the suspension, and the student shall be allowed to complete any class work, including exams, missed while under suspension.
- A school suspension will prevent a student's participation or attendance at extracurricular events, such as school dances during the period of suspension. A one-day suspension may result in a student losing the privilege to participate in extracurricular events. A two-day or more suspension will result in losing the privilege to participate in extracurricular events. Attendance privileges may be granted with written permission of the principal after a review of the student's behavior over a period of time.

## Removal

Removal is the exclusion of a student for all or part of a class period. A student may be removed from class if he/she deliberately causes a serious disruption of the educational process. When a student is removed, the teacher will send him/her to a designated area and may give him/her a detention. Teachers must contact the parent/guardian on the day the removal occurs.

## Expulsion

Expulsion is exclusion from school for more than ten days, but it shall not extend beyond the school year. A student whose conduct warrants expulsion may be expelled after a formal hearing with the Board of Education.

Connecticut State Law requires local educational agencies to expel from school for a period of not less than one year any student who is determined to have brought a weapon to school. The state laws may also permit the local education agency's chief executive officer, its superintendent, to modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

## **16. Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)**

The PTO is a group of parents and teachers who work together to make the school a nicer place for the children of Ashford to learn and grow. The PTO has provided some wonderful experiences and needed materials for our students and welcomes your support to continue their worthwhile efforts. The PTO is a vital link between the school, community and the parents it serves. Parents are urged to join and take an active part in the PTO.

The PTO will typically meet the third Monday of every month in the school's library/media center at 7:00 p.m.

If school is cancelled due to weather, the meeting is also cancelled.

Free childcare and refreshments will be provided.

The officers for the 2018-2019 school year are:

Co-Presidents Michelle Nemeth and Chonte Fields

A link to the Ashford PTO website can be found on the Ashford School home page.

## **17. State and Federal Guidelines**

### **Asbestos**

Legislation requires all school buildings to be reevaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building's occupants. The District has on file plans showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to comply with regulations to maintain a safe school environment. Request to review these plans may be made in the school office.

### **Complaint Resolution Procedure**

Federal regulations require state education agencies adopt written procedures for the receipt and resolution of any complaint that alleges that the state education agency has violated a federal statute or regulation. A copy of the complete Complaint Resolution Procedure can be found on the school website and is available in the superintendent's office.

### **Child Abuse**

Teachers, principals, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Failure to do so is a felony in the state of Connecticut. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receives yearly training in their use.

Reporting of child abuse and neglect is a responsibility that is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse or neglect a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases. Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries that are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment, or neglect are also considered child abuse.

### **Drug Free Schools and Communities Act**

Both federal and state laws prohibit discriminatory practice in hiring and employment. It is the policy of the Ashford Board of Education to prohibit acts of discrimination in all matters dealing with employees and applicants for positions within the school district and to further the principle of equal employment opportunity in all actions affecting employees and applicants. As an equal opportunity employer, the Ashford Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, past or present history of mental disorder, mental retardation, learning disability regarding any individual who can perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodations, physical disability (including blindness), or other disability (except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification or need). Pursuant to the IDEA, Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, no otherwise qualified individual with handicaps shall, solely by reason of such handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Ashford Board of Education.

### **Nondiscrimination Compliance Statement**

In compliance with regulations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Civil Rights Act of 1987, and the American With Disabilities Act, the Ashford Board of Education adopts the following Equal Employment Opportunity and Equal Education Opportunity Policies.

### **Equal Education Opportunity**

Pursuant to the IDEA, Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, no other wise qualified individual with handicaps shall, solely by reason of such handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program of the Ashford Board of Education.

Every student has the right to participate fully in classroom instruction and extracurricular activities and shall not be abridged or impaired because of age, sex, race, religion, national

origin, pregnancy, parenthood, marriage, or for any reason not related to his/her individual capabilities.

The Civil Rights Coordinator for the Ashford Board of Education has the responsibility to monitor the compliance of this policy. The Principal serves as the Civil Rights Coordinator. Further compliance with policy is a responsibility of all district administrators in accordance with the procedures set forth in the attached regulations.

Students shall not be discriminated against, including but not limited to, in the areas of:

- Admission
- Use of School Facilities
- Vocational Education
- Competitive Athletics
- Student Rules, Regulations and Benefits
- Financial Assistance
- School-sponsored Extracurricular Activities
- Enrollment in Courses
- Counseling and Guidance
- Physical Education
- Graduation Requirements
- Treatment as a Married and/or Pregnant Student
- Health Services
- Most Other Aid, Benefits, or Services

Employee and/or applicants shall not be discriminated against, including but not limited to, the areas of:

- Hiring and Promotion
- Compensation
- Job Assignments
- Leaves of Absence
- Fringe Benefits
- Labor Organization
- Contracts of Professional Agreements

## **Equal Employment Opportunity**

Both federal and state laws prohibit discriminatory practices in hiring and employment. It is the policy of the Ashford Board of Education to prohibit acts of discrimination in all matters dealing with employees and applicants for positions with the school district and to further the principle of equal employment opportunity in all actions affecting employees and applicants. As an equal opportunity employer, the Ashford Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, past or present history of mental disorder, mental retardation, learning disability, regarding any individual who can perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodations physical disability (including blindness) or other disability (except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification or need).

## **Homeless Students**

Connecticut's residency definitions contained in C.G.S. 10-235(d) defines non-residency as children residing with relatives or non-relatives, when it is the intention of such relatives or non-relatives and of the children or their parents or guardians that such residence is to be (1) permanent, (2) provided without pay, and (3) not for the sole purpose of obtaining school accommodations. In addition, C.G.S. 10-253(e) indicates that children in temporary shelters are entitled to free school privileges from either the school district in which the shelter is located or from the school district in which the child would otherwise reside, if not for the need for temporary shelter. The district has an obligation to identify homeless and migratory children.

## **Pesticide Application**

The Ashford Board of Education has adopted an Integrated Pest Management Plan Policy (Policy #3524.1). In brief, this states that the school will only have a certified pesticide applicator apply pesticides when all other pest control techniques have been tried. Pesticides will not be applied to the building or school grounds during regular school hours or during planned activities.

Parents or guardians of students and any school staff may register to receive prior notice of any pesticide application. Please call the Superintendent's Office at 860-429-1927 if you wish to receive notice of pesticide application.

Please note that emergency applications of pesticides may be used during school hours or scheduled activities if necessary to eliminate an immediate public health threat. (No

restricted pesticides would be used, and children would be removed from the area and not allowed to reenter the area until it was safe.) A notice of this emergency application will be given subsequently to those who have registered a request for notification.

*Adopted: August 2000*

## **School Ceremonies and Observances**

The school district recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, and President's Day are encouraged. Students, faculty and administration should be sensitive to the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others.

Activities related to a religious holiday or theme will be planned to ensure that the activity is not devotional, and that students of all faiths can join and be comfortable with their own beliefs. Therefore:

- school events and other activities related to various religious faiths without proselytizing on behalf of any will be appropriate under the First Amendment;
- religious music shall not entirely dominate the selection of music; and
- program notes and illustrations shall not be religious or sectarian.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork, and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the principal should be contacted.

## **Student Records**

The principal is the responsible custodian for school-based student records.

The cumulative folder and, for special education students, a confidential folder are available on a needs basis to school personnel immediately involved in the education of the pupil having responsibility for some specific aspect of the school system's programs directly affecting the student.

All student records are available for review by parents or legal guardians, or by students attaining age eighteen, with an appropriate school system employee present to interpret testing data or other information in the records. Parents, guardians, or eligible students may have a third party of their choosing participate with them in such a review. Requests for such review should be directed to the school principal and will be honored within three school days of the receipt of same. After such a review, parents, guardians, or eligible students (eighteen or older) may request copies of documents.

## **Release of Information in Student Records**

Upon enrollment in any other educational institution or school, the cumulative records are transferred to this institution or school upon written request for records from the receiving school. The transfer of any confidential folder data to other public institutions or schools requires the written informed consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student.

## **Notification of Rights Under FERPA To Student Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s educational records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the District receiving the request for access.

Parents or an eligible student should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s educational records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask the Ashford School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal, clearly identifying the part of the record that they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s record, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff, pupil personnel staff, specific instructional aides, and others employed by the district with a (“need to know”); a person serving on the Board of Education; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a



special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

The District discloses education records to certain State and local officials who are part of the juvenile justice system without consent from the parent or eligible student and without prior notice in certain circumstances (re: system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records are being disclosed).

The District discloses education records when a court order or subpoena is received. No prior notification or consent from the parent or eligible student is required.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirement of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Dept. of Ed.

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202-4605

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

### **Notice for Directory Information**

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Ashford School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Ashford School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Ashford School to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student’s role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent. <sup>[1]</sup>

If you do not want Ashford School to disclose directory information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, **you must notify the District in writing by September 13, 2020**. Any objection to the disclosure of directory information shall be good for only one school year.

Directory information includes, but is not limited to, the parent’s name, address and/or e-mail address, the student’s name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, photographic, computer and/or video images, date and place of birth, major field(s) of study, grade level, enrollment status (full-time; part-time), participation in school-sponsored activities or athletics, weight and height (if the student is a member of an athletic team), dates of attendance, degrees, honors and awards received, and the most recent previous school(s) attended. Directory information does not include a student’s social security number, student identification number or other unique personal identifier used by the student for purposes of accessing or communicating in electronic systems unless the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user’s identity, such as a PIN or password.

These laws are: Section 9528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).

## Teacher Qualifications

Section 11219(a) (1) of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) requires that all teachers of core academic subjects hired after the first day of the 2002-2003 school year and teaching in a program supported with Title I Part A funds be “highly qualified,” (that is, fully certified). In addition, all teachers (not just Title I teachers) teaching in core academic subjects must be highly qualified not later than the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

Under section 1111(6) (A), parents of each student receiving Title I funds (i.e. Ashford School) may request, and the district will provide in a timely manner, information regarding the professional qualifications of the student’s classroom teachers if requested. This information will indicate whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade level and subject areas taught; whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status; the baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certifications. If the child is also provided services by paraprofessionals, their qualifications will be provided as well.

Section 1111(6) (B) requires parents of each school receiving Title I funds to be notified, in a “timely manner”, if their child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

*Series 5000 Students*

## **18. Safe School Climate Plan**

The Board is committed to creating and maintaining a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe educational environment free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. In order to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, the Board has developed the following Safe School Climate Plan, consistent with state law and Board Policy. This Plan represents a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying and sets forth the Board’s expectations for creating a positive school climate and thus preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying.

Bullying behavior is strictly prohibited, and students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. The district’s commitment to addressing bullying behavior, however, involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a positive school climate in which bullying will not be tolerated by students or school staff.

### **Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation**

The Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by Board of Education.

The Board also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school;

In addition to prohibiting student acts that constitute bullying, the Board also prohibits discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying.

Students who engage in bullying behavior in violation of Board Policy and the Safe School Climate Plan shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with the Board's policies on student discipline, suspension and expulsion, and consistent with state and federal law.

## **Definition of Bullying**

“Bullying” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student attending school in the same district that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;
- places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for such student;
- infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
- 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 characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, 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.

## **Other Definitions**

“Cyber-Bullying” means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

“Electronic communication” means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo-optical system;

“Hostile environment” means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate;

“Mobile electronic device” means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted;

“Outside of the school setting” means at 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;

“Prevention and intervention strategy” may include, but is not limited to (1) implementation of positive behavioral interventions and supports process, or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate, or for the prevention of bullying identified by the Department of Education, (2) school rules prohibiting bullying, harassment, and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts, (3) adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom, and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur, (4) inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school, (5) individual interventions with the bully, parents, and school employees, and interventions with the bullied child, parents, and school employees, (6) school-wide training related to safe school climate, (7) student peer training, education, and support, and (8) promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings, and individual interventions.

“School climate” means 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.

“School employee” means (1) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, 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 (2) 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.

“School-Sponsored Activity” shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board of Education.

## **Leadership and Administrative Responsibilities**

### **Safe School Climate Coordinator**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2013, and each school year thereafter, the Superintendent shall appoint, from existing school district staff, a District Safe School Climate Coordinator (“Coordinator”). The Coordinator shall:

- be responsible for implementing the district’s Safe School Climate Plan (“Plan”);
- collaborate with Safe School Climate Specialists, the Board, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify and respond to bullying in district schools;
- provide data and information, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education regarding bullying;
- meet with Safe School Climate Specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss issues relating to bullying in the school district and to make recommendations concerning amendments to the district’s Plan.

### **Safe School Climate Specialist**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2013, and each school year thereafter, the principal of each school (or principal’s designee) shall serve as the Safe School Climate Specialist. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying and act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and responding to reports of bullying in the school.

## **Development and Review of Safe School Climate Plan**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2013 and each school year thereafter, the Principal of each school shall establish a committee or designate at least one existing committee (“Committee”) in the school to be responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues relating to bullying in the school. Such committee shall include at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, as appointed by the school principal.

The Committee shall: 1) receive copies of completed reports following bullying investigations; 2) identify and address patterns of bullying among students in the school;

3) review and amend school policies relating to bullying; 4) review and make recommendations to the Coordinator regarding the Safe School Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school; 5) educate students, school employees and parents/guardians on issues relating to bullying; 6) collaborate with the Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying; and 7) perform any other duties as determined by the Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying.

Any parent/guardian serving as a member of the Committee shall not participate in any activities which may compromise the confidentiality of any student, including, but not limited to receiving copies of investigation reports, or identifying or addressing patterns of bullying among students in the school.

### **Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Complaints of Bullying**

Students and parents (or guardians of students) may file written reports of bullying. Written reports of bullying shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the alleged conduct, the number of incidents, the target of the suspected bullying, and the names of potential witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any building administrator and/or the Safe School Climate Specialist (i.e. building principal), and all reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for review and actions consistent with this Plan.

Students may make anonymous reports of bullying to any school employee. Students may also request anonymity when making a report, even if the student's identity is known to the school employee. In cases where a student requests anonymity, the Safe School Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall meet with the student (if the student's identity is known) to review the request for anonymity and discuss the impact that maintaining the anonymity of the complainant may have on the investigation and on any possible remedial action. All anonymous reports shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that does not disclose the source of the report, and is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

School employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying shall orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable, not later than one (1) school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying. The school employee shall then file a written report not later than two (2) school days after making such oral report.

The Safe School Specialist shall be responsible for reviewing any anonymous reports of bullying and shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports. In order to allow the district to adequately investigate complaints filed by a student or parent/guardian, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied should be asked to provide consent to permit the release of that student's name in connection with the investigation process, unless the student and/or parent has requested anonymity.

In investigating reports of bullying, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegations and the ages of the students involved. The Safe School Climate Specialist will interview witnesses, as necessary, reminding the alleged perpetrator and other parties that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

### **Responding to Verified Acts of Bullying**

Following investigation, if acts of bullying are verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall notify the parents or guardians of the students against whom such acts were directed as well as the parents or guardians of the students who commit such acts of bullying of the finding not later than forty-eight hours after the investigation is completed. This notification shall include a description of the school's response to the acts of bullying. In providing such notification, however, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of other students, including the perpetrator of such bullying. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the perpetrator, or personally identifiable information about a student other than the parent/guardian's own child, may not be disclosed except as provided by law.

In any instance in which bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also invite the parents or guardians of the student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardian of the student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student/victim and to prevent further acts of bullying. The invitation may be made simultaneous with the notification described above in Section VII.A., as it must include a description of the school's response to such acts, along with consequences, as appropriate. Normally, separate meetings shall be held with the respective parents; however, at the discretion of the Safe School Climate Specialist and with written consent of the parents/guardians involved, the meeting(s) may be held jointly.

If bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall develop a student safety support plan for any student against whom an act of bullying was directed. Such support plan will include safety measures to protect against further acts of bullying.

A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the



same individual. The written intervention plan may include counseling, discipline and other appropriate remedial actions as determined by the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee, and may also incorporate a student safety support plan, as appropriate.

### **Notice to Law Enforcement**

If the Principal of a school (or his/her designee) reasonably believes that any act of bullying constitutes a criminal offense, he/she shall notify appropriate law enforcement. Notice shall be consistent with the Board's obligations under state and federal law and Board policy regarding the disclosure of personally identifiable student information. In making this determination, the Principal or his/her designee, may consult with the school resource office, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

If a bullying complaint raises concern about discrimination or harassment on the basis of a legally protected classifications (such as race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also coordinate any investigation with other appropriate personnel within the district as appropriate s etc.)

### **Documentation and Maintenance of Log**

Each school shall maintain written reports of bullying, along with supporting documentation received and/or created as a result of bullying investigations, consistent with the Board's obligations under state and federal law. Any educational record containing personally identifiable student information pertaining to an individual student shall be maintained in a confidential manner, and shall not be disclosed to third parties without written prior written consent of a parent, guardian or eligible student, except as permitted under Board policy and state and federal law.

The Principal of each school shall 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. Consistent with district obligations under state and federal law regarding student privacy, the log shall not contain any personally identifiable student information, or any information that alone or in combination would allow a reasonable person in the school community to identify the students involved. Accordingly, the log should be limited to basic information such as the number of verified acts, name of school and/or grade level and relevant date. Given that any determination of bullying involves repeated acts, each investigation that results in a verified act of bullying for that school year shall be tallied as one verified act of bullying unless the specific actions that are the subject of each report involve separate and distinct acts of bullying. The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of bullying in each school and 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.

The Principal of each school shall report the number of verified acts of bullying in the school annually to the Department of Education in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.

### **Other Prevention and Intervention Strategies**

Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in the nature of the offense and the impact the behavior may have 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 traditional disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (e.g., 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). No disciplinary action may be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint. As discussed below, schools may also consider appropriate alternative to traditional disciplinary sanctions, including age-appropriate consequences and other restorative or remedial interventions.

A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. This plan may include safety provisions, as described above, for students against whom acts of bullying have been verified and may include other interventions such as counseling, discipline, and other appropriate remedial or restorative actions as determined by the responsible administrator.

The following sets forth possible interventions which may also be utilized to enforce the Board’s prohibition against bullying:

#### **1. 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. Students may also be subject to other forms of restorative discipline or remedial actions, appropriate to the age of the students and nature of the behavior.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer or other forms of 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.

#### **2. 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, 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 the Board's Student Discipline policy. This consequence shall normally be reserved for serious incidents of bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating bullying behavior.

### 3. Interventions for Bullied Students

The building principal (or other responsible program administrator) or his/her designee shall intervene in order to address multiple incidents of bullying against a single individual. Intervention strategies for a bullied student may include the following:

- Counseling;
- Increased supervision and monitoring of student to observe and intervene in bullying situations;
- Encouragement of student to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization;
- Peer mediation or other forms of mediation, where appropriate;
- Student Safety Support plan; and
- Restitution and/or restorative interventions.

### 4. General Prevention and Intervention Strategies

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying and direct intervention when acts of bullying are verified, other district actions may ameliorate potential problems with bullying in school or at school-sponsored activities. While no specific action is required, and school needs for specific prevention and intervention strategies may vary from time to time, the following list of potential prevention and intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators, teachers and other professional employees in

each school. Such prevention and intervention strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- School rules prohibiting bullying, harassment and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts;
- Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur;
- Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school, which may include instruction regarding building safe and positive school communities including developing healthy relationships and preventing dating violence as deemed appropriate for older students;
- Individual interventions with the perpetrator, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied student, parents and school employees;
- School-wide training related to safe school climate, which training may include Title IX/Sexual harassment training, Section 504/ADA Training, cultural diversity/multicultural education or other training in federal and state civil rights legislation or other topics relevant to safe school climate;
- Student peer training, education and support; and
- Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
- Implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying, including any such program identified by the Department of Education;
- Respectful responses to bullying concerns raised by students, parents, or staff;
- Planned professional development programs addressing prevention and intervention strategies, which training may include school violence prevention, conflict resolution and prevention of bullying, with a focus in evidence based practices concerning same;
- Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
- Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping;

- Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of school employees and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies;
- Modeling by teachers of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;
- Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;
- Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere

## **Improving School Climate**

As a school community we provide guidance through educational programs to assist in creating a positive school climate. We participate in PBIS to ensure that students are showing pride, respect and responsibility towards one another. Classrooms will be implementing aspects of Responsive Classroom and Restorative Discipline in PreK-8. This will teach about creating a culture of caring and building strong connections with our students.

There are a series of assemblies that address the concepts of creating a positive climate in our community. The primary grades, PreK-3, participate in primary pride. This is where a class works together to put together a performance for their peers. Additionally, at these assemblies students from each grade are highlighted for exhibiting pride, respect and responsibility behaviors. In grades 4-8 there are multiple ways the school highlights students exhibiting the same behaviors within their grade levels.

A school improvement plan is developed yearly and the goals are posted and shared with the entire school community. This improvement plan is created through compiling and analyzing data from the parent survey, staff survey and student survey. A committee exists made up of teachers and school psychologists to assess the school climate and progress towards our school climate goals. There is also a School Climate Committee that includes a parent along with administration and teachers to address bullying and appropriate behavior within the school community. These committees meet monthly. Additionally, yearly surveys will be given to staff and students as a means for measuring climate in order to make improvements.

## **Annual Notice and Training**

Students, and parents or guardians of students shall be notified annually of the process by which students may make reports of bullying.

The Board shall provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying.

At the beginning of each school year, each school shall provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school district's safe school climate plan and require that all school employees annually complete training on the identification, prevention and response to bullying as required by law.

### **School Climate Assessments**

On and after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, the Board shall require each school in the district to complete an assessment using the school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the Department of Education. The Board shall collect the school climate assessments for each school in the district and submit such assessments to the Department.

Legal References:

Public Act 11-232, *An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws*

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222d

Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 10-233a through 10-233f

Connecticut State Department of Education Circular Letter C-8, Series 2008-2009 (March 16, 2009)

*Approved by the Ashford Board of Education: December 15, 2011*

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