

December 17, 2024

To: Kenneth G. Craw, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools

From: Paul Gouveia, Director of Technology

Cc: Carrie DePuy, Director of Business and Operations

Re: Cybersecurity Grant Award

I am pleased to report that both the New Fairfield Public Schools and the Town of New Fairfield were awarded a competitive Cybersecurity grant from the Connecticut Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS). The New Fairfield Public Schools will be awarded \$316,708 and the Town of New Fairfield will be awarded \$108,000 to improve our network's cybersecurity by adding Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) and Endpoint Detection Response (EDR).

The acquisition of this grant will have several benefits to both the Board of Education and Town, including:

- Bolstering our network and data defenses;
- Limiting our exposure to possible threats from emerging cybercrime sectors;
- Avoiding costly and time-consuming repairs to our system and recovering of information resulting from cybercrime;
- Mitigating large budget increases that would have otherwise been required to improve the network infrastructure;
- Reducing the BOE FY 26 and FY 27 technology budget requests by approximately \$150K each year.
- Requiring a fractional commitment of 10% of the award spread out over a five-year period dating back to 2022 to receive this funding.

The following is more information regarding MFA and EDR.

- Multi-Factor Authentication: MFA requires a second form of authentication (in addition to a standard password) to log in to all sensitive data systems, such as email, financial systems and employee databases.
- Endpoint Detection Response: EDR will give us next generation device and cloud protection. EDR can detect a compromised device or system and take automatic action to quarantine and contain the breach before it becomes major.