

Board of Education Regular Meeting 2024

Thursday, May 1, 2025 7:00 PM

New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT. In the event of inclement weather, this meeting will change to remote and a virtual link will be provided on our website and distributed. , 3 Brush Hill Road, New Fairfield, CT 06812

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

III.A. April 3, 2025 - Regular

IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

V. RECOGNITION ~ CABE STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARDS

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - *The Board welcomes public participation. Pursuant to our Board Policy, public participation is limited to no more than three (3) minutes per speaker and a total of no more than thirty (30) minutes total for the entire meeting. Individuals who wish to speak longer are encouraged to attend any and all related subcommittee meetings where most of the board's groundwork is done. We value your input, but due to these time limitations, we ask you to be concise and to observe the rules of common courtesy. [9320(a) of Board Bylaws]*

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

VII.A. Chairman's Report

VII.B. Superintendent's Report

VII.C. Student Representatives' Report

VII.D. Committee Reports

VII.D.1. Business Operations/Resource Management (Greg Flanagan)

VII.D.2. Curriculum (Tim Blair)

VII.D.3. Policy (Samantha Mannion)

VII.E. Liaison Reports

VII.E.1. Board of Finance (Ed Sbordone)

VII.E.2. Parks and Recreation Committee (K. LaTourette, G. Flanagan)

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

VIII.A. Strategic Plan Update

VIII.B. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated
School Building Project Update

VIII.C. Board of Education Policy (*Second
Reading*)

VIII.C.1. Policy 5131.911 - Connecticut School
Climate Policy

VIII.D. Board of Education Policy (First Reading)

VIII.D.1. Policy 6172 - Alternative Education
Programs

IX. ACTION ITEMS

IX.A. Personnel Report

X. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - *The Board welcomes public participation. Pursuant to our Board Policy, public participation is limited to no more than three (3) minutes per speaker and a total of no more than thirty (30) minutes total for the entire meeting. Individuals who wish to speak longer are encouraged to attend any and all related subcommittee meetings where most of the board's groundwork is done. We value your input, but due to these time limitations, we ask you to be concise and to observe the rules of common courtesy. [9320(a) of Board Bylaws]*

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

XII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, April 3, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – April 3, 2025

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Tim Blair, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

ABSENT: Kathy Baker

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck, High School Principal James D’Amico, Middle School Assistant Principal Steve Groccia, Elementary School Principal Allyson Story, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul, Selectman Tom Perkins and BOF Chairman Thora Perkins.

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 20, 2025 - Regular meeting - Approved by consensus.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Approved by consensus.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

John McCartney asked about the plans for the bus lot. He further spoke in support of the budget increases and noted that if the budget doesn’t pass, there could be cuts to the BOE.

BOF Chairman Thora Perkins spoke in support of the budget increases and clarified that no one on the BOF said that future cuts will be taken from the BOE budget.

VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chairman’s Report - Dominic Cipollone spoke of the following:

- Acknowledged paraprofessionals during Paraprofessional Week. He further thanked the school librarians in honor of “Library Week.”

B. Superintendent’s Report - Dr. Kenneth Craw

- Spoke briefly of the proposed budget for 2025/2026 and will give up update later in the meeting.

C. Student Representatives’ Reports

Senior Representative Emilia Sedlak spoke of the following:

- Spring Break will be from April 14th to 18th.
- Yard signs for Seniors are for sale with orders due by April 15th.
- The PTO is selling decals for each class. The orders are due by April 22nd.
- The Fine Arts Booster Club is holding a clothing drive on May 5th.
- Senior Prom will be held on May 17th.
- DECA is selling customized lawn signs for student athletes and extracurricular participants.

Junior Representative Ella Skogstrom spoke of the following:

- Junior Prom will be held on April 26th.
- The Chamber Singers concert will be held on April 29th.
- The Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble concert will be held on April 30th.
- AP Exams will be held from May 5th to the 16th.
- There will be a Middle School Chorus concert on April 8th.
- The Middle School will host the Gifted Student Reach program on May 1st.

D. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum - Tim Blair noted that this subcommittee met on March 24th and discussed:

- The Vision of the Learner.
- How to measure objective criteria.
- The Elementary school master schedule and possible future schedules.
- The Honors program at the Elementary School.

2. Policy – Samantha Mannion noted that the subcommittee met on March 20th. They discussed Policy 5131.911- Connecticut School Climate Policy which is on tonight’s agenda for a first reading. They also discussed a policy for Alternative Education and it was decided that this policy needs to be rewritten.

3. Special Education Ad Hoc - Kimberly LaTourette noted that this subcommittee met on April 3rd. They discussed professional development, quality of IEPs, and modernizing assessment tools. The subcommittee discussed the transition process for moving up to new schools. She further noted that all schools are fully staffed with nurses. Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul spoke to the subcommittee about the increase in the special education referrals.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone spoke of the following meetings of the BOF:

At the March 26th BOF meeting, it was noted that the audit has been completed for 2023/2024. They discussed proposed changes to the 2025/2026 budget including the medical reserve funding, reduction of the debt payment but the amount of the remaining bond premium, the adjustment to property taxes, and changes to elected officials’ salaries. The proposed increase as of March 26th is 7.56% for the 2025/2026 fiscal year.

At the April 2nd BOF meeting, the Board did not make any changes to the March 26th numbers and voted to recommend to the BOS an increase of 7.56%. They further voted to put an article in the Town Tribune written by BOF Alternate member John Arizzi. The BOF encouraged taxpayers to support this budget.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget

Dr. Craw gave a review of the budget process. He noted that it is driven by the strategic plan. The main points of the budget are maintaining class size, investing in the Arts, supporting a range of student needs, improving curriculum and instruction outcomes and investing in capital needs. He encouraged taxpayers to support this budget.

B. New Fairfield High School /Consolidated School Building Project Update

No updates at this time.

C. Board of Education Policy (First Reading)

1. Policy 5131.911 - Connecticut School Climate Policy

Samantha Mannion spoke of changes to the Connecticut School Climate policy. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck noted that the changes were developed by CABE and focus on challenging behavior and bullying.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report

There was a brief discussion about hiring BCBAs (Board Certified Behavior Analyst).

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for April 1, 2025, as recommended by the administration. Kim LaTourette seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

B. Non-Renewal of Long-Term Certified Substitute Educators

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of the non-renewal of long-term certified substitute educators as presented. Tim Blair seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

C. Acceptance of Donation

1. New Fairfield Elementary School PTO

MOTION: Greg Flanagan made a motion to recommend to the full Board to accept with gratitude the New Fairfield Elementary School PTO donation of \$2,472.18 to purchase tack strips for the Art Department to display student artwork. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Selectman Tom Perkins spoke of the importance of the Arts in education and thanked Dr. Craw, Dr. Woleck, the BOE and the administration for recognizing this and putting resources into the Arts.

John McCartney spoke in support of the budget and thanked the BOE for their hard work.

Jennifer Pappas asked about potential federal cuts to New Fairfield.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Sue Huwer asked if the BOE could discuss types of remediations for students not at grade level for Math and Reading.

XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Kim LaTourette thanked everyone who worked on the budget and encouraged taxpayers to support the budget at referendum.

Ed Sbordone spoke in support of the budget.

Greg Flanagan spoke in support of the budget.

Sue Huwer asked if there is a policy for parents that want to “opt out” of having their students participate in an assembly with outside speakers and if they can be given alternate work instead. Dr. Woleck and Allyson Story spoke of a recent assembly about empathy and conflict resolution.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

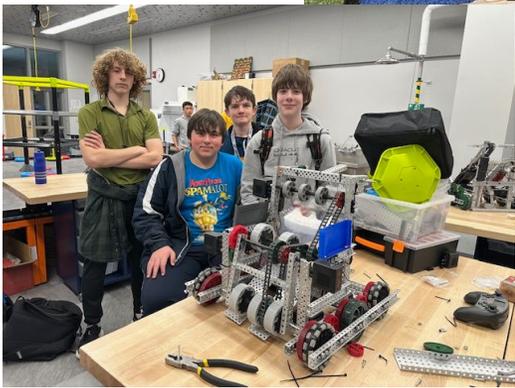
MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos

New Fairfield Public Schools Strategic Plan Update

NFPS Board of Education
May 1, 2025



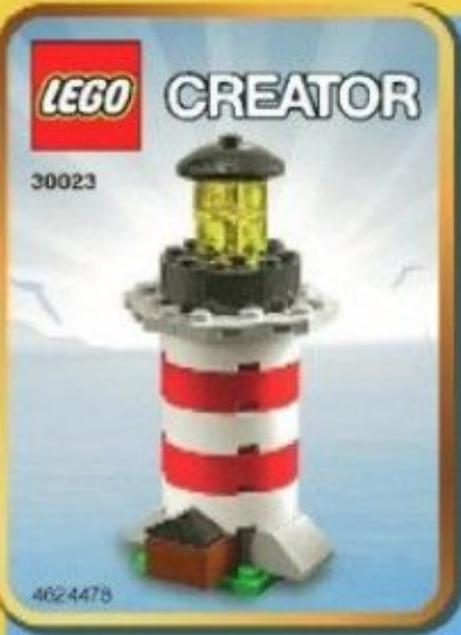


Our Vision

The five pillars of our **Vision of the Learner** articulate the desired attributes and outcomes for all learners in their journey through New Fairfield Public Schools.

<p>Knowledgeable Scholars</p> 	<p>Talented Communicators</p> 	<p>Critical & Creative Thinkers</p> 	<p>Engaged Global Citizens</p> 	<p>Self-determined & Self-reliant Individuals</p> 
<p>Pursue their interests and make meaning while developing a depth of background knowledge in all of the core academic domains as well as in life skills such as financial literacy, that they can use to solve problems and succeed in life.</p>	<p>Read, write, listen, speak, create and view skillfully, critically and confidently. They can adapt their style and message for a variety of purposes, situations and audiences. As a result, they have strong relationship skills and can collaborate well. They can manage conflict confidently and respectfully.</p>	<p>Access, evaluate and apply information to solve problems, pursue their curiosities and make decisions. They will grow their creativity through experiences within the fine and performing arts which will further support their ability to think critically and creatively.</p>	<p>Learn about the history of their local community, our country and other countries around the world to understand the value and unique principles of our American democracy. They learn what other cultures are like so that they can understand, respect and embrace diversity, be socially aware, be kind, compassionate, empathetic and respectful. They obtain information from multiple, reliable sources and use it to be active, civic-minded participants within and beyond their community.</p>	<p>Set goals, persevere, and reflect as they learn to understand and regulate their emotions and reactions, which will foster their overall health, wellness and mindfulness. Through this they will become intentional, resilient, independent and most importantly, self-reliant.</p>

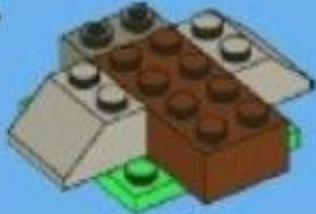
Predictable World



1



2



3



4



5



6



7





Unpredictable World

Curriculum



HOW STUDENTS LEARN

- Professional Learning Sessions
- Student Voice / Focus Groups



SYSTEMS & STRUCTURES

- Curriculum Framework / Criteria / Guidebook
- Curriculum Design Cycle (5-Year Map)
- Electronic Curriculum Platform



IMPLEMENTATION

- Stage 1 / Transfer Goals - All Disciplines
- Full Curriculum Model - PreK-12 Science
- Standards Review / Research - Social Studies

**Knowledgeable
Scholars**



**Talented
Communicators**



**Critical & Creative
Thinkers**



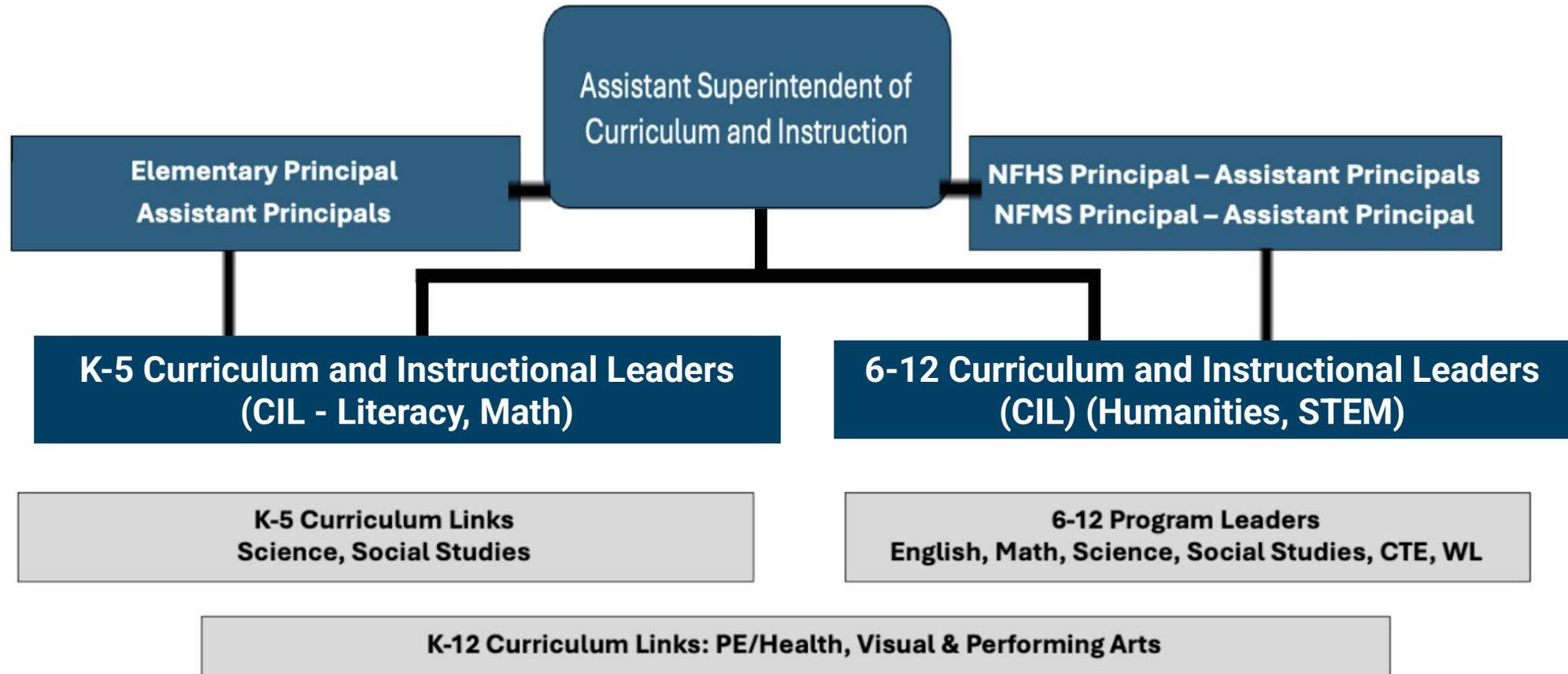
**Engaged Global
Citizens**

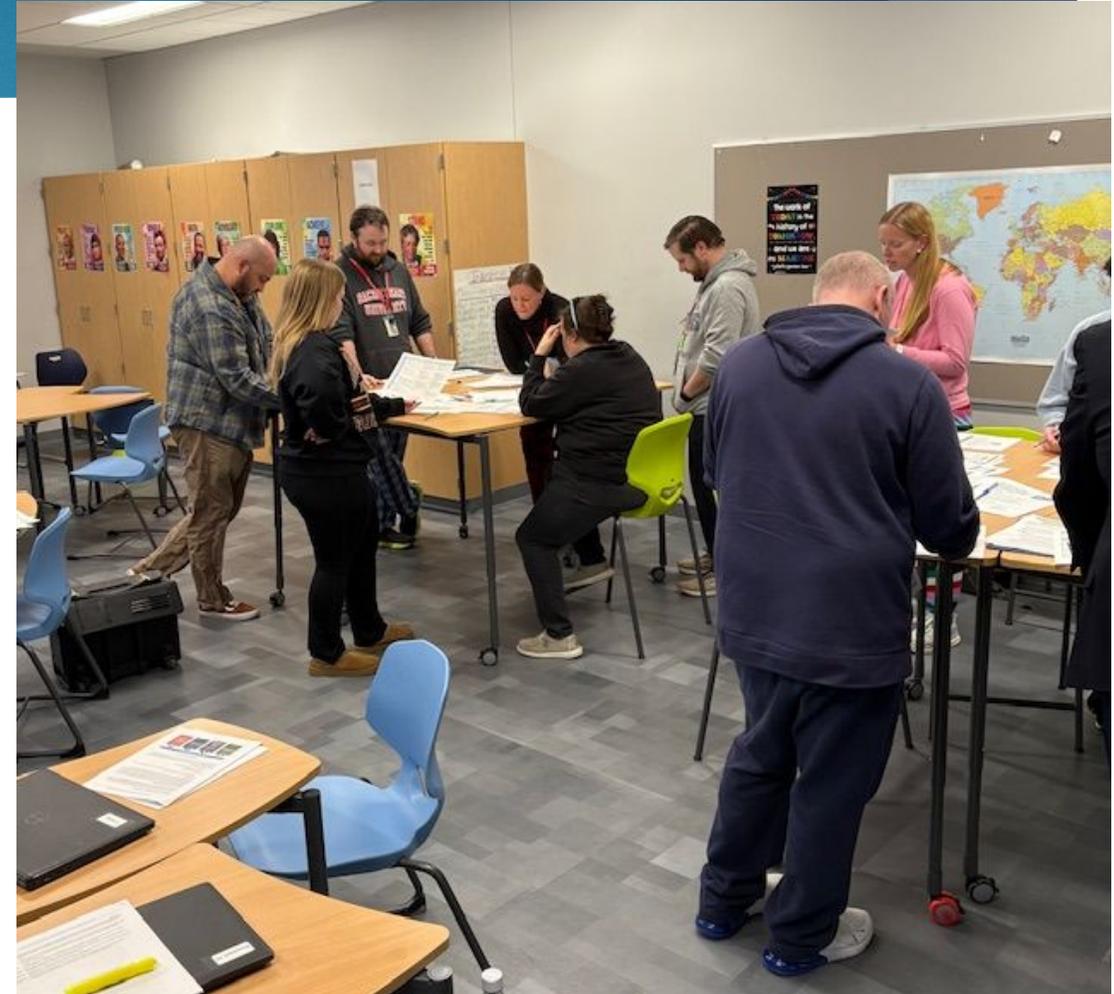
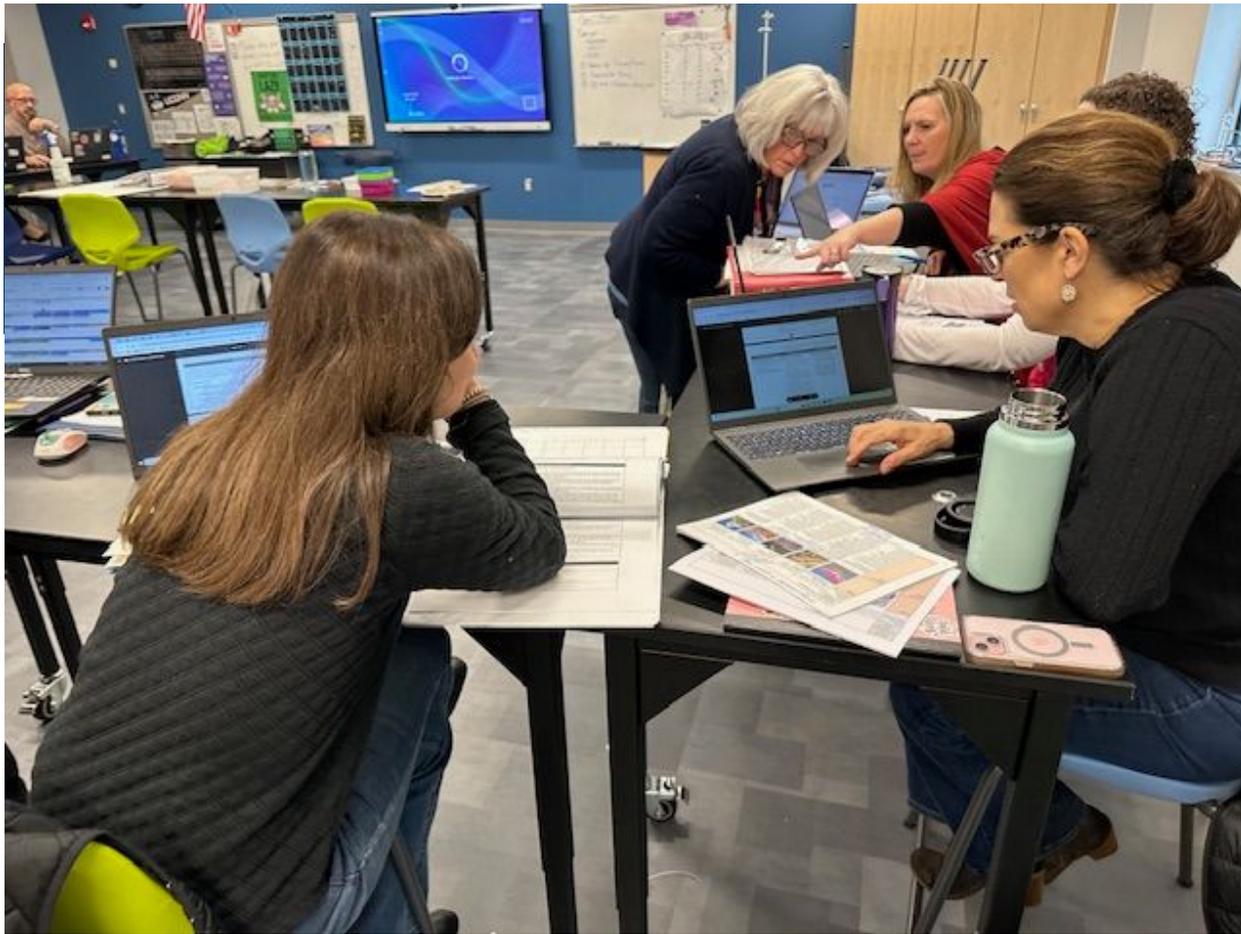


**Self-determined &
Self-reliant
Individuals**



NFPS PK-12 Curriculum Leadership





Curriculum Design

Stage 1 Unit Design Example

Science - Grade 7 | Units



Unit 1: Uncovering the Role of Cells in Life



Draft Date	Course	Grades	Subjects	Team
11-15-2024 @ 02:15	Science - Grade 7	7	Science & Engineering	Jean Gephart
Focus of the Story				
<p>Is a corn kernel alive? How do you know?</p> <p>We begin our year exploring these questions to understand the characteristics of life. By planting corn kernels, using microscopes, and conducting experiments, we gather evidence to answer whether corn kernels are alive to understand the hidden processes inside their cells.</p>				
About the Learner				
<p>In 6th grade, students built foundational knowledge of matter, energy flow, and system interactions, exploring food webs and molecular behaviors. These experiences prepared them to understand living things as systems, connect cellular processes like photosynthesis to energy transfer, and investigate cell structures and functions. In 7th grade, they deepen this understanding, laying the groundwork for genetics and heredity studies.</p> <p><i>Possible Misconceptions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cells are not alive because they are too small to see or act independently.• All cells are identical and perform the same functions.• Plants and animals do not share similar cellular structures or processes.• Energy production in cells (like photosynthesis) occurs in all cell types, not just specific organelles like chloroplasts.				

Curriculum Storyboards

Units

UNIT 1

Unit 1: Uncovering the Role of Cells in Life



FOCUS OF THE STORY

Is a corn kernel alive? How do you know?

We begin our year exploring these questions to understand the characteristics of life. By planting corn kernels, using microscopes, and conducting experiments, we gather evidence to answer whether corn kernels are alive to understand the hidden processes inside their cells.

UNIT 2

Unit 2: Understanding Genetic Inheritance



FOCUS OF THE STORY

Why do siblings, even twins, look a little different?

We examine cells more closely to learn about DNA and how traits are passed down and shaped by the environment. Through activities like using Punnett squares to predict traits and growing different plants, we uncover how genetics applies to real-world challenges in farming, medicine, and beyond.

UNIT 3

Unit 3: How Adaptations Drive



FOCUS OF THE STORY

How does what you do impact if a species thrives or becomes extinct?

Building on what we learned about genetics, we investigate how traits, the environment, and human actions determine whether animals survive or go extinct. Peppered moths and woolly mammoths help us examine how species change over time and what we can do to protect them.

UNIT 4

Unit 4: Human Choices and Their Impact on



FOCUS OF THE STORY

How might our snack choices affect the rainforest and animals that live there?

Continuing our study of adaptation and ecosystems, we connect how the ingredients in everyday snacks, like candy bars, are sourced and how those choices impact plants, animals, and their habitats. We investigate the effects of farming practices on ecosystems to uncover how humans shape life on Earth. This can help us make informed, sustainable decisions for the future.

UNIT 5

Unit 5: Earth's History Through Fossils and



FOCUS OF THE STORY

How could fossils from the same animal be found on continents separated by oceans?

Combining what we have learned about ecosystems, extinction, and adaptation, we see how Earth's shifting surface affects the survival of plants, animals, and their habitats. Using fossils, rocks, and maps, we investigate how Earth's changes connect to a species' evolution and extinction and predict how Earth's puzzle pieces continue to shift and reshape the world.

DRAFT March, 2025

New Fairfield Public Schools Curriculum Design Handbook



This handbook shares the guiding principles, organizational structures, and processes for curriculum design in the New Fairfield Public Schools. It is intended to be a resource and reference for all staff both in understanding elements of our curriculum and when undertaking curriculum design in the district.



New Fairfield Public Schools Curriculum Unit Design Criteria - REVIEW Tool

Curriculum Area / Course Title:

Grade Level:

Unit Title:

Date of Review:

Unit Overview	Feedback	Y
The <i>unit overview / storyline</i> concisely tells the “story” of the unit in terms of content and concepts.		
“ <i>About the student</i> ” provides unit-relevant insights re: how students learn, prior knowledge, and/or misconceptions.		
The unit makes connections to competencies of the NFPS <i>Vision of the Learner</i> .		
Stage I - Desired Results	Feedback	Y
Standards <i>Standards</i> from current national or state curriculum standards are prioritized and aligned to the core concepts and learning (e.g., the essence) of the unit. <i>Standards</i> balance “content” and “practice” standards (if applicable).		
Transfer <i>Transfer goals</i> are stated as long-term outcomes that are generalizable and require application of learning with flexibility and fluency.		
Meaning <i>Enduring understandings</i> (stated as full sentences) articulate deep conceptual understanding and can be measured by performance or product. <i>Essential questions</i> are open-ended and prompt inquiry and discussion about the unit’s ideas and the discipline. They can be used by learners for reflection & self-assessment throughout the unit. (Some will be revisited in future units/ grades.)		
Acquisition <i>Knowledge</i> is relevant, valid, and stated as key factual information and vocabulary. (“Student will know ...”) <i>Skills</i> are relevant and able to be demonstrated. (“Students will be able to ...”)		

NFPS Curriculum Blueprint www.newfairfieldschools.org

Curriculum Blueprint

Courses by Subject



English Language Arts

Published

Science & Engineering

Published

Mathematics

Published

Social Studies

Published

World Language

Published

Fine Arts

Published

Health & Physical Education

Published

Digital Literacy

Published

Evidence of Impact: Student Voice

I have noticed changes in my science class as the year has gone on. We have done more interactive assignments that require more critical thinking.

I really like how each unit that we work on smoothly transitions into the next one. Like proteins into enzymes, enzymes into cells, cells into the cell membrane, and so on and so forth.

I think that the way recent units have been designed incorporate a healthy connection between real world experiences and events and the science behind it.

Evidence of Impact: Student Voice

I would like to have more units with driving phenomena. Whenever there is a clear question we are trying to answer during a unit, I tend to remember more of the information I learned.

If I could redesign a part of a unit ... I would be sure to include a project that puts everything we learned in a unit together for an overall conclusion of what the unit was about.

Instruction



INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

- Professional Learning Sessions
- Professional Resource E-Warehouse
- AI Work Group



VISION OF THE LEARNER

- VoL Competency Continuum
- Assured Experiences w/Student Work
- Student Self-Assessment & Feedback

**Knowledgeable
Scholars**



**Talented
Communicators**



**Critical & Creative
Thinkers**



**Engaged Global
Citizens**



**Self-determined &
Self-reliant
Individuals**





Using Data with Data Protocols



Effective Instructional Practices & Professional Learning Opportunities

A space to share and explore resources for enhancing teaching and learning

How Students Learn



Principles from Psych for T L 1

+ Add comment



Putting Students at the Center NMEF

Instructional Practices



Anticipation Guide

+ Add comment

Concept Attainment Strategy (example)

Curriculum Storyboarding



How to Streamline and Storyboard Your Curriculum

+ Add comment

Curriculum Storyboards

Learning That Transfers



NFPS Curriculum Design Resources

+ Add comment

How to help older students who struggle to read

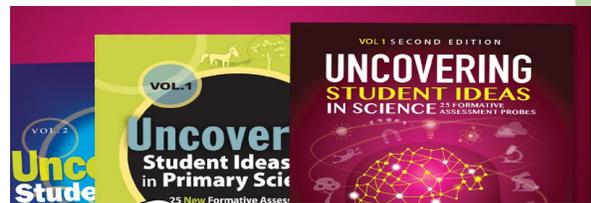
Feedback to Students



tips-providing-students-meaningful-feedback-marianne-stenger

+ Add comment

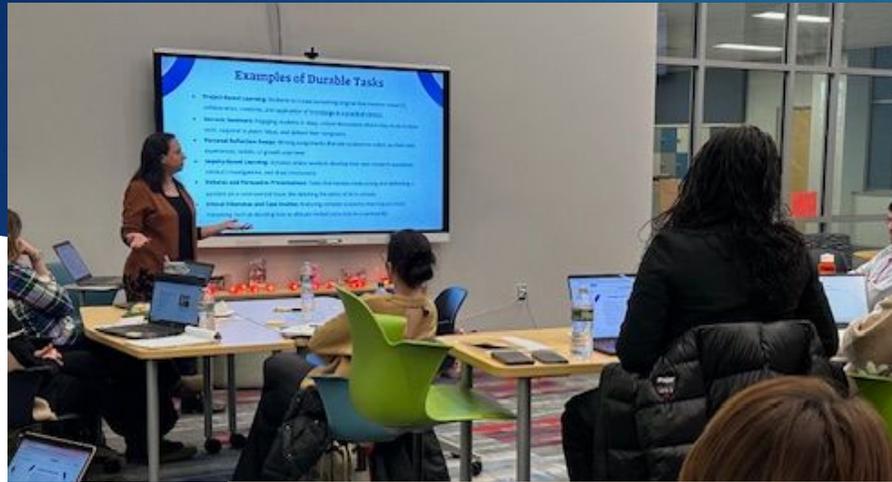
Professional Learning Resources



Science Misconceptions What's Next?

- Include more activities in which students reflect on their learning including
 - identifying their own misconceptions
 - tracking their progress in overcoming misconceptions
 - Warm up polls for student thinking
- Use anticipation guides as a pre and post assessment in a unit
 - Students can compare changes
 - Students find evidence from class activities to support new claims
- Create a class consensus summary table at the end of a unit including evidence from class activities [Summary Table](#)

Statement	Before	After
1. Plants and animals have different ways of getting their energy.		
2. All living things have cells.		
3. All living things have DNA.		
4. All living things have a life cycle.		
5. All living things have a brain.		
6. All living things have a heart.		
7. All living things have a stomach.		
8. All living things have a nose.		
9. All living things have a mouth.		
10. All living things have a tail.		
11. All living things have a head.		
12. All living things have a neck.		
13. All living things have a back.		
14. All living things have a front.		
15. All living things have a bottom.		
16. All living things have a top.		
17. All living things have a middle.		
18. All living things have a side.		
19. All living things have a backside.		
20. All living things have a frontside.		
21. All living things have a topside.		
22. All living things have a bottomside.		
23. All living things have a leftside.		
24. All living things have a rightside.		
25. All living things have a inside.		
26. All living things have a outside.		



NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE USE OF AI (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

The goal of digital literacy in New Fairfield Public Schools is to ensure students' digital safety and wellness, deepen their ability to evaluate and use digital tools and sources, and foster social responsibility in the digital world. Guided by the principles below, AI is one component of this broader digital literacy landscape.

About the Role of AI

We believe that ...

- AI can augment and enhance learning when utilized with human connection, intentionality, judgment, and interaction.

About Accessibility

We believe that ...

- All learners should have the opportunity to develop meaningful, age-appropriate skills with AI and understand its capabilities and limitations.

About the Learner

We believe that ...

- Critical thinking skills, including analysis, questioning, and reflection, support the appropriate use of AI and are to be balanced with strong foundational skills.

About Ethics & Safety

We believe that ...

- Academic integrity, acceptable use of AI, and social responsibility must be upheld, with ongoing dialogue among all stakeholders.

About Continuous Improvement

We believe that ...

- It is necessary to continually learn, reflect, and refine skills given the ongoing research and rapidly-changing development of AI technologies.

These principles guide our ongoing commitment to the integration of AI in alignment with the NFPS Vision of the Learner to prepare students for an increasingly global and digital world.



AI Work Group

New Fairfield Public Schools





NFPS Vision of the Learner

KNOWLEDGEABLE SCHOLARS	
Performance Dimension	Indicators
Curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reads closely, widely, and deeply • Seeks new knowledge and skills • Interested in the way others behave, think, and feel • Asks original and thought-provoking questions
Resourcefulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages time efficiently • Strategically finds and leverages information and necessary resources to support learning • Looks for alternatives when faced with a problem rather than giving up or waiting for answers
Application and Transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses prior knowledge to assist in current learning • Applies knowledge and skills to solve problems, including problems that may be unfamiliar or ill-defined • Transfers learning to new contexts or new situations

Wellness



MOVEMENT

- Professional Learning Sessions
- Flexible Use of Space
- Outdoor Learning Spaces
- School-Based Movement programs



THE WHOLE STUDENT

- Developmental Guidance Program (Grades 9-12)
- PreK-12 Social Emotional Resource Selection
- Multi-Tiered Supports (SEL / Behav) Framework



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Family Education / Outreach Series
- Student Leadership Groups / Unified Programs
- District Staff Wellness Committee

**Knowledgeable
Scholars**



**Talented
Communicators**



**Critical & Creative
Thinkers**



**Engaged Global
Citizens**



**Self-determined &
Self-reliant
Individuals**



Unified Programs



Developmental Guidance Sessions



NFHS Alumni Panel

Max Stossel
Monday, April 21, 2025

SAVE THE DATE!

Mr. Max Stossel, Youth and Education Advisor for the Center for Humane Technology and former media strategist, will join us at New Fairfield High School on Monday, April 21, 2025, at 6PM.

The evening will feature a screening of Mr. Stossel's presentation, "Social Media and Your Kids", followed by an in-person Q&A with Mr. Stossel. Mr. Stossel will share insights regarding student use of social media and the role of technology in our lives. Mark your calendars to join us!

New Fairfield Public Schools
Family Wellness Series

This presentation is intended for an audience of NFPS parents, guardians, and community members; Mr. Stossel will present to middle school and high school students during the school day.

	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029
ELA / English	Monitor / Revise <small>(K-5 Implementation)</small>	Research <small>(6-12)</small>	Design	Implement	Monitor / Revise
Mathematics	Monitor / Revise	Monitor / Revise	Research <small>(K-5 Implementation)</small>	Design <small>(K-5 Implementation)</small>	Implement <small>(K-5 Implementation)</small>
Social Studies	Research	Design	Implement	Monitor / Revise	Monitor / Revise
Science	Design	Implement	Monitor / Revise	Monitor / Revise	Research
World Language	Research	Design	Implement	Monitor / Revise	Monitor / Revise
PE / Health	Monitor / Revise	Research	Design	Implement	Monitor / Revise
Fine & Performing Arts	Monitor / Revise	Monitor / Revise	Research	Design	Implement
CTE (Career and Technical Education)	Design	Implement	Monitor / Revise	Monitor / Revise	Research
Digital Literacy	Research <small>(Spring 2025)</small>	Design	Implement	Monitor / Revise	Monitor / Revise

Looking Ahead: 2025-26

PK-12 Science Stage 2 & 3; Prepare for Implementation

PK-12 Social Studies Curriculum Design

6-12 World Language Curriculum Design

PK-12 Digital Literacy Curriculum Research and Mapping

**9-12 Mathematics Course Updates and Enhancement
*(Geometry, Precalculus, Statistics)***

6-12 ELA / English Research; K-12 PE / Health Research

Curriculum Goal

AI Professional Learning Institute

Instruction Goal

K-5 Literacy Resource Feedback, Integration, and Enhancement

Wellness Goal

School Climate Training *(in alignment with new School Climate legislation)*



Linking Curriculum to Instruction ...



And Beyond ...

**Ambitious, Aspirational, and
with Appreciation**



A mandated policy.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Policy Statement

All schools must support and promote teaching and learning environments where all students thrive academically and socially, have a strong and meaningful voice, and are prepared for lifelong success.

Implementation of the following set of guiding principles and systemic strategies will promote a positive school climate, which is essential to achieving these goals.

This policy sets forth the framework for an effective and informed school climate improvement process, which includes a continuous cycle of (i) planning and preparation, (ii) evaluation, (iii) action planning, and (iv) implementation, and serves to actualize the Connecticut School Climate Standards, as detailed herein.

The Board recognizes that improving school climate is contextual. Each school needs to consider its history, strengths, needs, and goals. Furthermore, this policy will support and promote the development of restorative action plans that will create and sustain safe and equitable learning environments.

The New Fairfield District Board of Education adopts this policy.

Definitions

1. **“School climate”** means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and that reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.
2. **“Positive Sustained School Climate”** is the foundation for learning and positive youth development and includes:
 - a. Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, culturally, racially, intellectually, and physically safe.
 - b. People who treat one another with dignity and are engaged, respected and solve problems restoratively.
 - c. A school community that works collaboratively together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision.
 - d. Adults who model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning; and
 - e. A school community that contributes to the operations of the school and the care of the physical environment.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Definitions (continued)

3. **“Social and emotional learning”** means the process through which children and adults achieve emotional intelligence through the competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.
4. **“Emotional intelligence”** means the ability to (A) perceive, recognize, and understand emotions in oneself or others, (B) use emotions to facilitate cognitive activities, including, but not limited to, reasoning, problem solving and interpersonal communication, (C) understand and identify emotions, and (D) manage emotions in oneself and others.
5. **“Bullying”** means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
6. **“School environment”** means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs that occur outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program if bullying at or during such other activities, functions or programs negatively impacts the school environment.
7. **“Cyberbullying”** 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 other electronic communication.
8. **“Teen dating violence”** means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening, that occurs between two students who are currently in or who have recently been in a dating relationship.
9. **“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.
10. **“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, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Definitions (continued)

11. **“School climate improvement plan”** means a building-specific plan developed by the school climate committee, in collaboration with the school climate specialist, using school climate survey data and any other relevant information, through a process that engages all members of the school community and involves such members in a series of overlapping systemic improvements, school-wide instructional practices and relational practices that prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment.
12. **“Restorative practices”** means evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior, and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.
13. **“School climate survey”** means a research-based, validated and developmentally appropriate survey administered to students, school employees and families of students, in the predominant languages of the members of the school community, that measures and identifies school climate needs and tracks progress through a school climate improvement plan.
14. **“Connecticut school climate policy”** means the school climate policy developed, updated and approved by an association in the state that represents boards of education and adopted by the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative, established pursuant to section 10-222q of the general statutes, as amended by this act, that provides a framework for an effective and democratically informed school climate improvement process that serves to implement Connecticut school climate standards, and includes a continuous cycle of (A) planning and preparation, (B) evaluation, (C) action planning, and (D) implementation.
15. **“School employee”** means (A) a teacher, substitute teacher, administrator, school superintendent, school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, school nurse, physician, paraeducator or coach employed by a local or regional board of education, or (B) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public school, pursuant to a contract with a local or regional board of education.
16. **“School community”** means any individuals, groups, businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations that are invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Definitions (continued)

17. **“Challenging behavior”** means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.
18. **“Evidence Based Practices”** in education refers to instructional and school-wide improvement practices that systematic empirical research has provided evidence of statistically significant effectiveness.
19. **“Effective School Climate Improvement”** is a restorative process that engages all stakeholders in the following six essential practices:
 - A. Promoting decision-making that is collaborative and actively involves all stakeholders (e.g., school personnel, students, families, community members) with varied and meaningful roles and perspectives where all voices are heard;
 - B. Utilizing psychometrically sound quantitative (e.g., school climate survey, discipline data) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, focus groups) data to drive action planning, preventive and intervention practices and implementation strategies that continuously improve all dimensions of school climate, including regularly collecting data to evaluate progress and inform the improvement process;
 - C. Tailoring improvement goals to the unique needs of the students, educators, and broader school community. These goals shall be integrated into overall school improvement efforts thereby leveraging school strengths to address evidence-based areas of need, while sustaining the improvement process over time;
 - D. Fostering adult learning in teams and/or professional learning communities to build capacity building among school personnel and develop common staff skills to educate the whole child;
 - E. Basing curriculum, instruction, student supports, and interventions on scientific research and grounding in cognitive, social-emotional, and psychological theories of youth development. Interventions include strength-based programs and practices that together represent a comprehensive continuum of approaches to promote healthy student development and positive learning environments as well as address individual student barriers to learning and adult barriers to teaching; and
 - F. Strengthening policies and procedures related to:
 - a. climate and restorative informed teaching and learning environments;
 - b. infrastructure to facilitate data collection, analysis, and effective planning;
 - c. implementation of school climate improvement plans with the goal of becoming restorative;
 - d. evaluation of the school climate improvement process; and
 - e. sustainability of school climate and restorative improvement efforts.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy (continued)

School Climate Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the superintendent of schools for each school district, or an administrator appointed by the superintendent, shall serve as the school climate coordinator for the school district.

The school climate coordinator shall be responsible for:

1. providing district-level leadership and support for the implementation of the school climate improvement plan for each school;
2. collaborating with the school climate specialist, for each school to (A) develop a continuum of strategies to prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment, and (B) communicate such strategies to the school community, including, but not limited to, through publication in the district student handbook;
3. collecting and maintaining data regarding school climate improvement, including, but not limited to, school discipline records, school climate assessments, attendance rates, social and emotional learning assessments, academic growth data, types and numbers of alleged and verified bullying complaints submitted by members of the school community, types and numbers of challenging behaviors addressed using the restorative practices response policy, and data concerning the implementation and outcome of restorative practices; and
4. meeting with the school climate specialist for each school at least twice during the school year to (A) identify strategies to improve school climate, including, but not limited to, by responding to challenging behavior and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, such as restorative practices, (B) propose recommendations for revisions to the school climate improvement plan, and (C) assist with the completion of the school climate survey.

School Climate Specialist

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the principal of each school, or a school employee who holds professional certification pursuant to section 10-145 of the general statutes, is trained in school climate improvement or restorative practices and is designated as the school climate specialist by the school principal, shall serve as the school climate specialist for the school.

The school climate specialist shall be responsible for:

1. leading in the prevention, identification, and response to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, reports of alleged bullying and harassment;

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

School Climate Specialist (continued)

2. implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices;
3. scheduling meetings for and leading the school climate committee; and
4. leading the implementation of the school climate improvement plan.

School Climate Committee

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, each school climate specialist shall appoint members to the school climate committee who are diverse, including members who are racially, culturally, and linguistically representative of various roles in the school community.

The school climate committee shall consist of:

1. the school climate specialist;
2. a teacher selected by the exclusive bargaining representative for certified employees chosen pursuant to section 10-153b of the general statutes;
3. a demographically representative group of students enrolled at the school, as developmentally appropriate;
4. families of students enrolled at the school; and
5. at least two members of the school community, as determined by the school climate specialist.

Membership of the school climate committee shall be annually reviewed and approved by the school climate specialist, in coordination with the school climate coordinator.

The school climate committee shall be responsible for:

1. assisting in the development, annual scheduling, and administration of the school climate survey, and reviewing of the school climate survey data.
2. using the school climate survey data to identify strengths and challenges to improve school climate, and to create or propose revisions to the school climate improvement plan.

Connecticut School Climate Policy

School Climate Committee (continued)

3. assisting in the implementation of the school climate improvement plan and recommending any improvements or revisions to the plan.
4. advising on strategies to improve school climate and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including, but not limited to, restorative practices, in the school community.
5. annually providing notice of the uniform challenging behavior and/or bullying complaint form, or similar complaint form used by the school, to the school community.

School Climate Survey

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and biennially thereafter, the school climate committee, for each school, shall administer a school climate survey to students, school employees and families of students, provided the parent or guardian of each student shall receive prior written notice of the content and administration of such school climate survey and shall have a reasonable opportunity to opt such student out of such school climate survey.

School Climate Improvement Plan

For the school year commencing July 1, 2025, and each school year thereafter, the school climate specialist, for each school, in collaboration with the school climate coordinator, shall develop, and update as necessary, a school climate improvement plan. Such plan shall be based on the results of the school climate survey, any recommendations from the school climate committee, including the protocols, supports, and any other data the school climate specialist and school climate coordinator deem relevant. Such plan shall be submitted to the school climate coordinator for review and approval on or before December thirty-first of each school year. Upon approval of such plan, a written or electronic copy of such plan shall be made available to members of the school community and such plan shall be used in the prevention of, identification of and response to all challenging behavior.

Additionally, districts may place the school climate improvement plans into their district and school improvement plans.

Training

For the school year commencing July 1, 2024, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional Board of Education shall provide resources and training to school employees regarding:

1. social and emotional learning;
2. school climate and culture and evidence and research-based interventions; and
3. restorative practices.

Students

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Training (continued)

Such resources and training may be made available at each school under the jurisdiction of such board and include technical assistance in the implementation of a school climate improvement plan. Any school employee may participate in any such training offered by the board under this section. The school climate coordinator, shall select, and approve, the individuals or organizations that will provide such training.

Funding

The school district shall in its discretion allocate sufficient funding to satisfy the requirements of this policy for all schools in the district. Such funding shall be distributed accordingly, with Superintendent approval, for assessments and professional development, as well as for school community outreach, training, and technical assistance.

Accountability

The Board shall adopt and allocate adequate resources to support the Connecticut School Climate Policy and adhere to state regulations set forth in Public Act 23-167.

Connecticut School Climate Standards

1. The school district community¹ has a shared vision and plan for promoting and sustaining a positive school climate² that focuses on prevention, identification, and response to all challenging behavior³.
2. The school district community adopts policies that promote:
 - a. a sound school environment that develops and sustains academic, social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills; and
 - b. a restorative school environment focused on overcoming barriers to teaching and learning by building and supporting meaningful school-wide relationships, and intentionally re-engaging any disengaged students, educators, and families of students in the school community.

¹ School Community means any individuals, groups or businesses, public institutions and nonprofit organizations invested in the welfare and vitality of a public school system and the community in which it is located, including, but not limited to, students and their families, members of the local or regional board of education, volunteers at a school and school employees.

² School climate means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life, and that reflects the norms, goals, values and interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.

³ Challenging behavior means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.

Connecticut School Climate Policy

Connecticut School Climate Standards (continued)

3. The school community’s practices are identified, prioritized, and supported to:
 - a. promote learning and the positive academic, social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students;
 - b. enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities;
 - c. address barriers to teaching and learning; and
 - d. develop and sustain a restorative infrastructure that builds capacity, accountability, and sustainability.
4. The school community creates a school environment⁴ where *everyone* is safe, welcomed, supported, and included in all school-based activities.
5. The school community creates a restorative system that cultivates a sense of belonging through norms and activities that promote social and civic responsibility, and a dedication to cultural responsiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 10-222d Policy on bullying behavior as amended by PA 08-160, P.A. 11-232, P.A. 14-172 and PA 18-15 and PA 19-166.
 10-222g Prevention and intervention strategy re bullying and teen dating violence
 10-222h Analysis of school districts’ efforts re prevention of and response to bullying in schools. School climate assessment instruments
 10-222i State-wide safe school climate resource network. *[Repealed, Effective 7/1/2025 State-wide safe school climate resource network]*
 10-222k District safe school climate coordinator. Safe school climate specialist. Safe school climate committee (as amended by PA 21-95, Section 14)
 10-222p Review of safe school climate plans by Department of Education. Approval or rejection.
 PA 23-167 An Act Concerning Transparency in Education

Policy approved:	November 17, 2011	NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Policy revised:		

⁴ School environment means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, and may include other activities, functions or programs if bullying at or during such other activities, functions, or programs negatively impacts the school environment.



A new policy to consider. Boards of education that have approved an alternative program are mandated to have a policy on this topic.

Instruction

Alternative Education Programs

The purpose of this policy is to recognize the need for alternative education programs for some District students.

The Board of Education (Board) is dedicated to providing educational options for all students within available financial constraints. It is recognized that there will be students in the District whose needs and interests are best served by participation in an alternative education program. The Board believes alternative education is a student-focused perspective based on respect for students, the belief that all students can learn given the right environment, and participation in an alternative setting is an informed choice made by students and their families.

“Alternative education” means a school or program maintained and operated by the Board that is offered to students in a nontraditional educational setting and addresses the social, emotional, behavioral and academic needs of such students. Alternative education does not, for purposes of this policy, and Connecticut State Board of Education (CSDE) guidelines, include private schools, homeschooling, *“School Choice,”* adult education, approved private special education programs, gifted and talented programs, and schools or programs within the Connecticut Technical High School System.

The Board shall provide alternative education to students in accordance and compliance with the *“Guidelines for Alternative Education Settings,”* established by the State Board of Education. Such guidelines shall include, but not be limited to, a description of the purpose and expectation of alternative education, criteria for student eligibility, and criteria for how and when a student may enter or exit alternative education. The philosophy of alternative education utilizes a whole-student approach. This approach promotes individualized programming to address students' personal, emotional, social, intellectual, work skills, safety and security needs and academic achievement. The Board views enrollment in an alternative setting not as punishment but as a learning opportunity.

In providing alternative education to students, the Board may use space in an existing school, establish a new school, or establish a program affiliated with one or more schools or districts. Programs must be affiliated with at least one district with a code previously assigned by CSDE. Such programs must comply with state laws pertaining to the number and length of school days in an academic year and shall be subject to all other federal and state laws governing public schools.

The Board may form a cooperative arrangement with other boards of education to provide alternative education pursuant to C.G.S. 10-158a.

Instruction

Alternative Education Programs (continued)

The Board, as required, will post information about any alternative education offered on its website, including purpose, location, contact information, staff directory, and enrollment criteria. Clear and objective admission criteria, consistent with stated program guidelines, must be evident. Also, to be a part of the alternative education program, clear and explicit criteria and procedural exit criteria frameworks must be used to address a student's return to the traditional school setting. There shall be an annual evaluation of alternative education programs.

Determination of enrollment shall be made by the student support team, which includes, but is not limited to, parent or family representative, student (if in secondary school), appropriate representative of the alternative environment, student's teachers, school administrator and if the student is identified as disabled, a special education teacher or PPT/504 Team representative. In addition, the Board recognizes its responsibility to give all children in the District who receive alternative education as nearly equal advantages as may be practicable compared to other children in the District. In addition, the Board shall annually submit to the Commissioner of Education a strategic school profile report for each alternative school or program under its jurisdiction.

All students in an alternative education program shall receive instruction based on a curriculum aligned to the Connecticut Core State Standards, unless modified in particular curricular areas as indicated by the goals and objectives of an IEP.

Alternative education programs implemented by the District are meant to maintain flexible learning options regarding environment, structure, and pedagogy. Such programs include but are not limited to, a separate school, tutorial instruction, small group instruction, large group instruction, counseling and guidance, computer-assisted instruction, cooperative work experience, supervised community service activities, and supervised independent study. Before considering an alternative placement, a review of the student's academic, health, and behavioral records, including any PPT and Section 504 records, Student Success Plans, and other history of interventions, must occur.

Students may be placed in an alternative education program within available financial resources upon parent request if the District determines that the placement serves the student's educational needs and interests and assists the student in achieving district and state academic content standards. Families shall have a right of appeal if they disagree with the District's placement decisions.

(cf. 6172.11 – Relations with Charter Schools)

(cf. 6172.12 – Magnet Schools)

(cf. 6172.41 – Title I Program)

(cf. 6172.6 – Virtual/Online Courses)

Instruction

Alternative Education Programs (continued)

Legal Reference	Connecticut General Statutes 10-4p(b) Implementation plan to achieve resource equity and equality of opportunity. Assessment. Reports. (as amended by PA 15-133) 10-15 Towns to maintain schools. 10-16 Length of school year. 10-158a Cooperative arrangements among towns. School building projects. Student transportation. 10-220 Duties of boards of education (as amended by PA 15-133) 10-223h(c) Commissioner's network of schools. Turnaround committees. Operations and instructional audit. Turnaround plans. Report. (as amended by PA 15-133) PA 15-133 An Act Concerning Alternative Education Guidelines for Alternative Education Settings, State Department of Education, approved by CT State Board of Education, Oct. 5, 2016.
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NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut