

Somers Board of Education Meeting

Monday, July 10, 2023 7:00 PM

Somers Board of Education Chambers, 1 Vision Boulevard, Somers, CT 06071

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 1. Approval of the June 26, 2023 BOE Meeting Minutes 2
The Board to review and approve the minutes from the June 26, 2023 BOE meeting.
4. **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**
 1. Superintendent Update
 2. Update on HVAC
Brian Hamel from CES will be available remotely to discuss the HVAC report.
5. **OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS**
6. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 1. Warrant of July 10, 2023 6
The Board to review and consent to the warrant of July 10, 2023.
 2. Leave of Absence
 - Jennifer Sugarmeyer, 5th Grade Teacher, will be taking an anticipated leave of absence from mid-November through the rest of the 2023-2024 school year.
 - Jessica Wolf, MBA and SHS Band Teacher, will be taking an anticipated leave of absence from October 7, 2023 through December 2023.
 3. Resignation
Laura Bittner, Grade 6 ELA Teacher, will be resigning effective immediately.
 4. Retirement
Kathy Brewer, Administrative Assistant to the Senior Director of Curriculum and Instructional Operations, will retire effective August 21, 2023, after nine years of service in SPS.
7. **OLD BUSINESS**
8. **NEW BUSINESS**
 1. First Posting DBS Code 5141.4 - Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Assault 10
 2. First Posting DBS Code 5144.4 - Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students 14
 3. First Posting DBS Code 5145.511 - Exploitation: Sexual Harassment/Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program 16
9. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
 1. Curriculum
 2. Policy
 3. Planning/Finance
 4. Salary & Negotiations
10. **CABE/CREC/State Dept. of Ed.**
11. **AUDIENCE TO CITIZENS/STAFF/STUDENTS**
12. **ADJOURNMENT**

Somers Board of Education Regular Meeting
Somers Board of Education Chambers
Monday, June 26, 2023
7:00 PM

(The recorded livestream may be viewed on SPS' YouTube channel on the school website)

Present BOE Members: Anne Kirkpatrick, Krista Cherry, Dr. Ed DePeau, JT Galloway, Shane Manning, Jan Martin, Kim Radziewicz, Carl Stebbins

Absent BOE Members: Mike Briggs

Others: Dr. Sam Galloway, Stephanie Levin, Dina Senecal, Derek Zelek, Melissa Zelek, Jim Formica, Paul Hart

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular Board of Education meeting was called to order by Chair Kirkpatrick at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Education Chambers.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1. Approval of the June 12, 2023 BOE Draft Minutes

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the minutes from the BOE meeting on June 12, 2023.

Motion to approve the minutes of the 6/12/23 Board of Education Meeting. This motion, made by Jan Martin and seconded by Shane Manning, Carried.

Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Absent: 1(Mike Briggs)

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

4.1. Superintendent Update

Superintendent Galloway reported that the search for the SHS Principal is complete. He introduced the new principal, David Brown, and provided some information about his background. Principal Brown thanked the BOE and the public for the opportunity to be in Somers. He noted his broad experience in both public and magnet school education, primarily at the secondary level. He is grateful to join the Somers team.

Superintendent Galloway reported that a contract to remove the SHS oil tank was signed on June 19, 2023. All DEEP deadlines have been met so far.

Phase 1 of the SPS website refresh has rolled out. Work will continue to maximize the features of the platform, including improvement to the mobile experience and accessibility features.

Superintendent Galloway plans to present a draft of the Superintendent's Evaluation document to the Board at the July Board meeting.

At this time, there are 7 SPS certified vacancies to be filled.

5. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda. This motion, made by Kim Radziewicz and seconded by JT Galloway, Carried. **Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Absent: 1 (Mike Briggs)**

6.1. Warrant of June 26, 2023

Rationale: The Board to review and consent to the warrant of June 26, 2023.

Discussion: A payment to SPS for \$11,700 was discussed. The payment covered SHS Spring athletic officials. The payment was a reimbursement to the student activities account for the payment.

6.2. Resignation

Rationale: Emma Wilson, SHS Paraeducator, resigned effective June 9, 2023.

7. OLD BUSINESS

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. Approval of Teacher Evaluation Flexibility Plan

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the Teacher Evaluation Flexibility Plan. Mrs. Senecal will be in attendance to discuss any questions with the Board on the attached report.

Motion to approve the Teacher Evaluation Flexibility Plan for 2023-2024. This motion, made by Kim Radziewicz and seconded by Jan Martin, Carried. **Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Absent: 1 (Mike Briggs)**

Discussion: Dina Senecal reported on the Teacher Evaluation Flexibility Plan for the 2023-2024 school year. The PDEC Committee, comprised of teachers and administrators across the district, recommended keeping the existing plan for next school year, until the CT State Department of Education releases new guidelines and an evaluation tool for the 2024-2025 school year.

A discussion ensued regarding teachers' selection of student learning objectives that linked to categories outside of academic progress. Ms. Senecal explained that the plan applies to all certified staff, not just classroom teachers. Therefore, at times it is more appropriate for a staff member to select a student learning objective category outside of academic

progress. Superintendent Galloway also stressed the importance of administrators creating an environment where certified staff feel safe to take risks and set bold goals for academic progress. Administrators are focused on creating such an environment to foster high student achievement and accountability.

A discussion ensued regarding the observation requirements within the Teacher Evaluation Flexibility Plan for tenured and non-tenured teachers. The current plan lays out the minimum number of observations needed at various levels of experience, though evaluators always have the option to conduct more observations.

The work of the PDEC committee during the 2023-2024 year will be focused on reimagining a teacher evaluation plan for SPS based on the new CT State Department of Education guidelines. In addition to the changing guidelines, a new digital platform will also be introduced.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

9.1. Curriculum

Discussion: The next meeting will take place on August 28, 2023 at 6pm.

9.2. Policy

Discussion: The next meeting will take place on June 29, 2023 at 6pm.

9.3. Planning/Finance

Discussion: No report.

9.4. Salary & Negotiations

Discussion: The next two meetings are scheduled for July 10, 2023 at 6pm and July 17, 2023 at 9am.

10. CABE/CREC/State Dept. of Ed.

Discussion: No report.

11. AUDIENCE TO CITIZENS/STAFF/STUDENTS

Discussion: Melissa Zelek inquired about what other categories for student learning objectives may be selected in the Teacher Evaluation Flexibility Plan, other than academic progress. The other options were shared.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn meeting at 7:43 p.m. This motion, made by Jan Martin and seconded by Shane Manning, Carried. **Yea: 8, Nay: 0, Absent: 1(Mike Briggs)**

Krista Cherry, BOE Secretary Date

Jenna McDermott, BOE Recording Secretary

Somers Board of Education General Budget Treasury Warrant

Report # 81625

Check Batch: 53759
 Check Header: (N / A)
 Check Numbers: (First) - (Last)
 Check Dates: (Earliest) - (Latest)
 Cash Account Numbers: (First) - (Last)
 Bank Account Code: (N/A)
 Check Authorization Code: AP GB
 Minimum Check Amount: \$0.00
 Sorted By:
 Include Payable Information: No
 Include Payable Dist Information: No
 Include Authorization Information: Yes

Batch #	Check #	Check Date	Vendor Code	Vendor Name	Electronic Amount	Check Amount
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Approved by:  Date: 7/6/2023
 Stephanie Levin, Director of Business Services

53759	23307	07/10/2023	V62704	A&D Portable Rentals	0.00	225.00
	23308	07/10/2023	V02141	Apple Inc.	0.00	1,259.00
	23309	07/10/2023	E00450	Bergamini, Lisa	0.00	45.20
	23310	07/10/2023	V01823	CAPSS	0.00	1,000.00
	23311	07/10/2023	V02442	CASBO	0.00	1,515.00
	23312	07/10/2023	V51241	CDW Government, Inc.	0.00	4,350.00
	23313	07/10/2023	V61551	Cleaning Stuff	0.00	379.33
	23314	07/10/2023	V60057	Community Child Guidance Clinic, Inc.	0.00	5,185.00
	23315	07/10/2023	V02198	The Connecticut Water Company	0.00	4,583.76
	23316	07/10/2023	V00204	CREC	0.00	793.13
	23317	07/10/2023	V60709	DBS Financial Services LLC	0.00	2,835.06
	23318	07/10/2023	V61638	Edmentum	0.00	3,780.00
	23319	07/10/2023	V00159	Eversource Energy	0.00	5,718.69
	23320	07/10/2023	V61448	FireTech	0.00	1,392.00
	23321	07/10/2023	V02461	Fulco Ph.D., Michael N.	0.00	4,980.00
	23322	07/10/2023	V61236	Gateway Enterprise Corporation	0.00	224.00
	23323	07/10/2023	V60800	Growth Company, The	0.00	30.00
	23324	07/10/2023	V21177	Home Depot Credit Services	0.00	499.10
	23325	07/10/2023	V62816	Hussey Seating Company	0.00	650.00
	23326	07/10/2023	V00999	J.W. Pepper & Son, Inc.	0.00	425.98

Somers Board of Education General Budget Treasury Warrant

Batch #	Check #	Check Date	Vendor Code	Vendor Name	Electronic Amount	Check Amount
	23327	07/10/2023	V61604	Kelly Refrigeration & Freezer	0.00	475.00
	23328	07/10/2023	V02898	MagnaKleen Services	0.00	108.61
	23329	07/10/2023	V61302	Mystery Science Inc	0.00	10,190.15
	23330	07/10/2023	V62708	National Seating & Mobility Inc	0.00	8,504.15
	23331	07/10/2023	V61580	PSNI	0.00	3,500.00
	23332	07/10/2023	V60567	Rydin Decal	0.00	387.70
	23333	07/10/2023	V000015	Savage, Michael	0.00	1,500.00
	23334	07/10/2023	V51324	Sherwin-Williams Co., The	0.00	97.60
	23335	07/10/2023	V61373	Somers Star Hardware	0.00	182.36
	23336	07/10/2023	V01591	Town of Somers	0.00	4,016.01
	23337	07/10/2023	V62825	Studies Weekly	0.00	4,576.32
	23338	07/10/2023	V01000	Town of Somers BOE	0.00	46,857.14
	23339	07/10/2023	V54059	Verizon Wireless	0.00	397.77
	23340	07/10/2023	V61410	Elan Financial Services	0.00	2,257.20
	23341	07/10/2023	V02738	William V. MacGill & Co.	0.00	1,210.38
	23342	07/10/2023	V61445	Willie Ross School of the Deaf, The	0.00	285.75
	23343	07/10/2023	E00571	Wilson, Robert	0.00	2,035.74
Totals:					0.00	\$126,452.13

37 Checks Listed.

Somers Board of Education General Journal Register

Report # 81623
Batch: 53714
Transaction: N/A
Show Summary Only: Yes

Batch # 53714	Control Total \$126,452.13	Status Posted	Created By Lbergamini	Created On 06/27/2023	Last Updated By Lbergamini	Last Updated On 07/06/2023
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General Ledger Distribution Summary						
Period, Fiscal Year Account Number	Account Description	DTF Base	Over Budget	Debits	Credits	
June, 2023						
Generated Distributions						
10-000-0000-710-00-0-00000-000-0-00	ENCUMBRANCE CONTROL			140,442.26	0.00	
10-000-0000-720-00-0-00000-000-0-00	RESERVE FOR ENCUMBRANCE			0.00	140,442.26	
	Total Generated Distributions			\$140,442.26	\$140,442.26	
User-Entered Distributions						
10-000-0000-241-00-0-00000-000-0-00	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE			0.00	126,452.13	
10-120-1000-611-30-5-00182-242-2-01	MA - TECHNOLOGY ED SUPPLIES		Yes	381.94	0.00	
10-140-2220-611-50-5-00150-233-2-03	SW - EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE		Yes	3,780.00	0.00	
10-200-1000-112-30-5-01706-214-2-01	MA - MUSIC INST COACHES		Yes	1,500.00	0.00	
10-200-1000-611-40-5-00168-242-2-01	HS - BAND SUPPLIES		Yes	425.98	0.00	
10-280-1000-641-20-5-00104-220-2-01	K-5 - SCIENCE TEXTBOOKS		Yes	10,190.15	0.00	
10-400-2590-590-40-5-00018-123-1-04	HS - FORMS & PRINTING			387.70	0.00	
10-420-2600-430-40-5-00394-722-5-06	HS - ATHLETICS MAINTENANCE			95.00	0.00	
10-420-2790-580-40-5-00337-530-4-06	HS - ATHLETIC TRIPS			1,895.00	0.00	
10-480-2130-323-40-5-01146-421-3-02	SW HEALTH SUPPLIES			1,210.38	0.00	
10-500-2210-322-50-5-00297-251-1-05	CO - ADMINISTRATION WORKSHOP			1,700.00	0.00	
10-500-2210-322-50-5-01689-251-2-01	SW - TECH PROF DEV			2,035.74	0.00	
10-500-2320-810-50-5-00057-137-1-05	CO - INSTITUTIONAL DUES		Yes	965.00	0.00	
10-520-2220-642-20-5-00140-231-2-03	K-5 - NEWSPAPERS/MAGAZINES		Yes	4,576.32	0.00	
10-540-2400-690-40-5-00274-880-7-07	HS - GRADUATION		Yes	570.00	0.00	
10-540-3200-690-30-5-00849-880-2-07	MA - ACADEMIC AWARDS			76.26	0.00	
10-620-2600-430-50-5-00452-722-6-04	SW - MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS			1,392.00	0.00	
10-620-2600-430-60-5-00439-722-5-08	HS - BUILDING MAINTENANCE		Yes	650.00	0.00	
10-620-2600-430-60-5-00440-722-5-08	SW - EQUIPMENT REPAIR			379.33	0.00	
10-620-2600-430-60-5-00447-722-5-08	SW - GENERAL REPAIR			307.58	0.00	
10-620-2600-430-60-5-00467-722-5-08	SW - GENERAL PAINT			97.60	0.00	
10-620-2600-590-90-5-00453-722-6-08	SW - SOFTWARE MAINT CONTRACTS		Yes	7,850.00	0.00	
10-620-2600-613-60-5-00377-650-5-05	SW - CUSTODIAL SUPPLIES		Yes	444.53	0.00	
10-640-2600-530-30-5-00365-642-5-04	MA - TELEPHONE		Yes	49.68	0.00	
10-640-2600-530-40-5-00366-642-5-04	HS - TELEPHONE		Yes	149.04	0.00	
10-640-2600-530-50-5-00367-642-5-04	CO - TELEPHONE			199.05	0.00	

Somers Board of Education General Journal Register

Report # 81623

Batch #	Control Total	Status	Created By	Created On	Last Updated By	Last Updated On
53714	\$126,452.13	Posted	Lbergamini	06/27/2023	Lbergamini	07/06/2023
		K-5 - ELECTRICITY		Yes	3,349.84	0.00
		MA - ELECTRICITY		Yes	4,206.49	0.00
		HS - ELECTRICITY		Yes	997.42	0.00
		SW - WATER		Yes	4,583.76	0.00
		SW - CAPITAL OUTLAY TECHNOLOGY		Yes	1,259.00	0.00
		SW - TRAILER RENTAL		Yes	475.00	0.00
		CO - ADVERTISING			15.96	0.00
		CO - TRAVEL/IN-SERVICE		Yes	45.20	0.00
		DENTAL		Yes	46,594.95	0.00
		SW - HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT			262.19	0.00
		BUS FUEL		Yes	3,084.43	0.00
		SW - GASOLINE SCHOOL VEHICLES		Yes	521.58	0.00
		SP ED - TUITION			5,185.00	0.00
		SP ED-INDEPENDENT EVALUATIONS			5,773.13	0.00
		SPED - CONSULTANT FEES			285.75	0.00
		PHYSICAL THERAPY SUPPLIES		Yes	8,504.15	0.00
				Total User-Entered Distributions	<u>\$126,452.13</u>	<u>\$126,452.13</u>
				Total for June, 2023	<u>\$266,894.39</u>	<u>\$266,894.39</u>
				Grand Total for Batch # 53714	<u>\$266,894.39</u>	<u>\$266,894.39</u>

136 Transactions Listed.

Students *(now required to send out policy and wording on training electronically)*

Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Assault

The Board of Education recognizes that a student's mental and physical health will have an effect on the student's ability to obtain the most benefit from attending school. In order to increase the student's ability to learn while in school, the Board of Education realizes the importance of identifying students who may be suffering from abuse, neglect, or placed in imminent danger of serious harm or sexually assaulted. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 17a-101, as amended, all school employees, including the Superintendent of Schools, administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, guidance counselors, school counselors, paraprofessionals, psychologists and social workers licensed behavior analysts, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, as well as school nurses, physicians, working in the school system, or any other person 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 District schools, who suspects child abuse, neglect or sexual assault by a school employee must first report it to the Department of Children and Families or to a law enforcement agency. When a school employee suspects child abuse, neglect or that a child has been placed in imminent risk of serious harm or has been sexually assaulted, he/she shall within twelve (12) hours make an oral report by telephone or in person to the Commissioner of Children and Families, or a law enforcement agency, followed within 48 hours with a written report. The Building Principal shall be notified immediately after the oral report has been made and the Principal in turn will notify the Superintendent of Schools and the child's parents. The written report prepared and submitted by the mandated reporter shall also be submitted to the Principal.

Any school personnel who has reasonable cause to suspect that a district employee is abusing, neglecting, or sexually assaulting a student shall orally report that suspicion as soon as possible but no later than twelve (12) hours by telephone or in person to the Commissioner of Children and Families followed no later than 48 hours of making the oral report with a written report to the Department of Children and Families. The Superintendent of Schools or supervising agent may be notified immediately after the oral report has been made. The Commissioner of Children and Families or his/her designee, is required to notify the school employee and the head of a school, except when that person is the alleged perpetrator. The Superintendent or supervising agent must: 1) immediately notify parent(s) of the alleged abuse that a report has been made; and 2) immediately notify the Police Department of the alleged abuse.

In addition, the Superintendent or supervising agent must submit a written report of suspected child abuse, neglect or sexual abuse by a school employee who has been entrusted with the care of a child to the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative. The Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families has a similar obligation. The Superintendent shall suspend a District employee when the DCF investigation results in a finding of reasonable cause that the employee abused, neglected, or sexually assaulted a child and recommends the employee be placed on the DCF Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. The Department of Children and Families is required to send to the State Department of Education a copy of the report. Within seventy two (72) hours after such suspension the Superintendent shall notify the Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative of the reasons for and conditions of the suspension.

If the contract of employment of a school employee who possesses a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the State Board of Education is terminated, or if such certified school employee resigns his/her employment, as a result of an investigation which reveals that child abuse, neglect or sexual assault has occurred, the Superintendent shall notify the Commissioner of Education within 72 hours of such termination or resignation.

If the report of abuse or neglect involves an employee of the District as the perpetrator, the District may conduct its own investigation into the allegation, provided that such investigation shall not interfere with or impede any investigation conducted by the Department of Children and Families or of law enforcement agencies.

The Board recognizes that the Department of Children and Families is required to disclose records to the Superintendent of Schools in response to a mandated reporter's written or oral report of abuse or neglect or if the Commissioner of Children and Families has reasonable belief that a school employee abused or neglected a student. Not later than five (5) working days after an investigation of child abuse or neglect by a school employee has been completed, DCF is required to notify the school employee and the Superintendent and the State Department of Education of the investigation's results. If DCF has reasonable cause, and recommends the employee be placed on DCF's Child Abuse and Neglect Registry, the Superintendent shall suspend such employee.

The Superintendent shall maintain records of allegations, investigations and reports that a child has been abused or neglected by a school employee. Such records will be maintained in the District's Central Office. The records shall include any reports made to the Department of Children and Families. Such Department is to have access to all such records.

The Board, recognizing its responsibilities to protect children and in compliance with its statutory obligations shall provide in-service regarding the requirements and obligations of mandated reporters. In addition, all District employees shall complete a training program pertaining to the accurate and prompt reporting of abuse, neglect and sexual assault made available by the Commissioner of Children and Families. Also, all employees must complete a refresher program at least once every three years.

The Board, recognizing its responsibilities to protect children and in compliance with its statutory obligations, shall provide to each employee in-service training regarding the requirements and obligations of mandated reporters. District employees shall also participate in training offered by the Department of Children and Families. Each school employee is required to complete a refresher training program annually.

~~This policy will be distributed annually to all employees.~~ The Board shall annually distribute the mandated reporter policy electronically to all school employees. The Board shall annually distribute electronically, to all school employees, Board members, and parents and guardians of enrolled students, (1) guidelines on identifying and reporting child sexual abuse, starting in the 2022-23 school year, and (2) information on DCF's sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program.

Documentation shall be maintained by the Principal of each school and reported to the Superintendent that all employees have, in fact, received the written policy and completed initial training and refresher training related to mandated reporting of child abuse, neglect and sexual assault as required by law.

The Board shall not retaliate against any mandated reporter for his/her compliance with the law and Board policy pertaining to the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect.

The Board of Education will post the telephone number of the Department of Children and Families' child abuse hotline, Careline, and the Internet web address that provides information about the Careline in each District school in a conspicuous location frequented by students. Such posting shall be in various languages most appropriate for the students enrolled in the school.

Establishment of the Confidential Rapid Response Team

The Board of Education shall establish a confidential rapid response team to coordinate with DCF to (1) ensure prompt reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect; or 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th degree sexual assault; 1st degree aggravated sexual assault; or 3rd degree sexual assault with a firearm of a student not enrolled in adult education by a school employee and (2) provide immediate access to information and individuals relevant to DCF's investigation of such cases.

The confidential rapid response team shall consist of (1) a local teacher and the Superintendent, (2) a local police officer, and (3) any other person the Board of Education deems appropriate.

DCF, along with a multidisciplinary team, is required to take immediate action to investigate and address each report of child abuse, neglect or sexual abuse in any school.

(cf. 4112.6/4212.6 - Personnel Records)

(cf. 5141.511 - Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-220a In service training. Professional development committees. Institutes for educators. Cooperating teacher program, regulations (~~as amended by PA 11-93~~)

10-221d Criminal history records check of school personnel. Fingerprinting.

Termination or dismissal (~~as amended by PA 11-93~~)

10-221s Investigations of child abuse and neglect. Disciplinary action. (~~as amended by PA 16-188~~)

17a-28 Definitions. Confidentiality of and access to records; exceptions.

Procedure for aggrieved persons. Regulations (~~as amended by PA 11-93 and PA 14-186~~)

17a-101 Protection of children from abuse. Reports required of certain professional persons. When child may be removed from surroundings without court order. (~~as amended by PA 96-246, PA 00-220, PA 02-106, PA 03-168, PA 09-242, PA 11-93 and PA 15-205, PA 18-15 and PA 18-17~~)

17a-101a Report of abuse or neglect by mandated reporters. (~~as amended by PA 02-106, PA 11-93, PA 15-112 and PA 15-205, PA 18-15 and PA 18-17~~)

17a-102 Report of danger of abuse. (as amended by PA 02-106)

17a-106 Cooperation in relation to prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse/neglect

10-151 Teacher Tenure Act

PA 11-93 An Act Concerning the Response of School Districts and the Departments of Education and Children and Families to Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect and the Identification of Foster Children in a School District

PA 14-186 An Act Concerning the Department of Children and Families and the Protection of Children

PA 15-205 An Act Protecting School Children

Adopted: June 25, 1984

Revised: September 24, 1990

April 7, 1997

November 24, 2003

November 23, 2009

February 13, 2012

March 9, 2015

February 29, 2016

September 11, 2016

September 10, 2018

A mandated policy which has been updated to reflect PA 22-80 (new to Somers).

Students

Discipline

Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes that a positive approach toward exercise and physical activity is important to the health and well-being of students. The Board requires that each student in elementary school shall have not less than twenty minutes daily in total devoted to physical exercise, except that a Planning and Placement Team may alter such schedule for a child requiring special education and related services. Further, the Board permits, in its elementary schools, including an additional amount of time, beyond the required twenty minutes for physical exercise, devoted to undirected play during the regular school day, subject to the approval of the building administration.

All aspects of the school experience should encourage students to have a healthy attitude toward exercise and promote the life-long enjoyment of physical activity. Therefore, when school employees impose disciplinary consequences for student misconduct during the regular day, the following restrictions shall apply:

1. Loss of Recess as Disciplinary Consequence

Except as provided below, school employees may NOT prevent a student in elementary school from participating in the entire time devoted to physical exercise or undirected play in the regular school day as a form of discipline. Recess and other physically active learning opportunities may include movement-oriented learning activities in the academic environment, physical activity breaks, and regularly scheduled school wide routines and events that engage students in physical activity that is the time devoted each day (at least 20 minutes) to physical exercise in the District's elementary schools.

School employees may prevent or restrict recess when:

- a. a student poses a danger to the health or safety of other students or school personnel or
- b. it is limited to the shorter recess period if there are two or more recess periods in the school day, so long as the student is allowed to participate in at least 20 minutes of physical activity during the school day.

Recess prevention or restriction may be imposed only once during a school week, unless the student is a danger to the health or safety of other students or school personnel. Recess prevention or restriction is not allowed for a student's failure to complete their work on time or for the student's academic performance. Discipline may be imposed before recess begins and/or imposed during recess. Appropriate interventions shall be used to redirect a student's behavior during recess.

Students

Discipline

Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students (continued)

1. Physical Activity as Punishment

School employees may NOT require students enrolled in grades K-12, inclusive, to engage in physical activity as a form of discipline during the school day.

2. Wellness Instruction

School employees shall not prevent students from participating in physical exercise or undirected play during wellness instruction as a form of discipline.

This restriction does not apply to brief periods of respite/time-outs, referrals to the building administrator, or for safety reasons.

At no time shall an entire class be prevented from participating in wellness instruction or physical exercise activity as a disciplinary consequence.

The Superintendent of Schools is authorized to develop guidelines to implement this policy. Nothing in this policy shall prevent a school employee from acting in accordance with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed by the student's Planning and Placement Team (PPT).

For the purpose of this policy, "school employee" means a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, school counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by the Board or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or 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 Board.

Any employee who fails to comply with this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Any contracted individual who provides services to or on behalf of District students and who fails to comply with the requirements of this policy may be subject to having his/her contract for services suspended by the District.

(cf. 6142.10 – Health Education Program)

(cf. 6142.101 – Wellness)

(cf. 6142.61 – Physical Activity)

(cf. 6142.6 – Physical Education)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-221o Lunch periods. Recess

10-221u Boards to adopt policies addressing the use of physical activity as discipline.

PA 22-81 An Act Expanding Preschool and Mental and Behavioral Services for Children

STUDENTS.

Exploitation: Sexual Harassment

Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program

Program

The Somers Public Schools shall implement the Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program identified or developed, in compliance with CGS 17a-101q, by the Department of Children and Families, in collaboration with the Department of Education and other assisting entities, with the goal of informing students and staff about child sexual abuse and assault awareness and available resources. The District's implementation of the Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program, per statute, shall be not later than October 1, 2016. The program, for students in Grades K-12, inclusive, shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Providing teachers instructional modules that may include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Training regarding the prevention and identification of, and response to, child sexual abuse and assault, and
 - b. Resources to further student, teacher and parental awareness regarding child sexual abuse and the prevention of such abuse and assault.
2. Providing students age-appropriate educational materials designed for children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, regarding child sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention that may include, but not be limited to:
 - a. The skills to recognize:
 - i. Child sexual abuse and assault,
 - ii. Boundary violations and unwanted forms of touching and contact, and
 - iii. Ways offenders groom or desensitize victims.
 - b. Strategies to promote disclosure, reduce self-blame and mobilize bystanders.
 - c. Actions that child victims of sexual abuse and assault may take to obtain assistance.
 - d. Intervention and counseling options for child victims of sexual abuse and assault.
 - e. Access to educational resources to enable child victims of sexual abuse and assault to succeed in school.
 - f. Uniform procedures for reporting instances of child sexual abuse and assault to school staff members.

The lessons should be evidence-informed, developmentally and age appropriate and informed by the required curricula standards and performance indicators contained in the SDE Guidelines

3. Implementing a child sexual abuse curriculum to provide age-appropriate information to teach students the difference between appropriate and inappropriate conduct in situations where child sexual abuse or sexual assault could occur, and to identify actions a child may take to prevent and report sexual abuse or sexual assault. Students will be:
 - a. Provided with resources and referrals to handle these potentially dangerous situations.
 - b. Provided access to available counseling and educational support.

The Board of Education directs the Superintendent develop administrative regulations to address the issues of students obtaining assistance, intervention and counseling options, access to educational resources and procedures for reporting instances of child sexual abuse and assault.

A student shall be excused from participating in classroom instruction regarding sexual abuse and sexual assault upon receipt by the Principal of a written request from the student's parent or guardian.

Any student exempted from the sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program shall be provided, during the period of time in which the student would otherwise be participating in such program, an opportunity for other study or academic work.

Reporting Child Sexual Abuse and Assault

Students shall be encouraged to disclose abuse to a trusted adult member of the staff, including, but not limited to, teachers, administrators, nurses, coaches, and counselors. Child abuse reporting procedures will be followed for all acts of violence and sexual abuse against children as delineated in policy #5141.4, "Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse," and its accompanying regulations.

An oral report by telephone or in person shall be made as soon as possible but no later than 12 hours to the Commissioner of Children and Families and to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee followed within 48 hours by a written report to the Department of Children and Families.

Reporting suspected abuse and/or neglect of children, in addition to the requirements pertaining to staff training, record keeping and dissemination of this policy, shall be in accordance with the procedures established and set forth in the Administrative Regulation

(cf. [5131.911](#) - Bullying)

(cf. [5141.4](#) - Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse)

(cf. [5145.5](#) - Sexual Harassment)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

[17a-101q](#) Statewide sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention program

A Statewide K-12 Sexual Assault and Abuse Prevention and Awareness Program developed by DCF, SDE, and Connecticut Alliance (The Alliance) to End Sexual Violence.

[PA 22-87 An Act Concerning the Identification and Prevention of and Response to Adult Sexual Misconduct Against Children.](#)

Policy adopted: March 12, 2018