

Agenda

- I. **Call to Order**
- II. **Public Comment** - *The Board welcomes public participation. We ask that speakers please limit their comments to three minutes. Please be aware that the Board will not respond to any comments made during the public comment period, except to clarify issues, but we will take into consideration your comments, and when appropriate, district administration will follow-up with you at a later point in time. Public Comment may be submitted electronically to mdegennaro@woodbridgeps.org*
- III. **Superintendent Update on School Climate and Title IX**
- IV. **Review Policies**
 - A. 6000 - Concept and Roles in Instruction
 - B. 6111 - School Calendar
 - C. 6114 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness
 - D. 6114.1 - Fire Emergency (Drills) / Crisis Response Drills
 - E. 6115 - School Ceremonies and Observances
 - F. 6121 - Affirmative Action: Instruction Program
 - G. 6142.10 - Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students
 - H. 6154 - Homework and Class Assignments
- V. **Public Comment** - *The Board welcomes public participation. We ask that speakers please limit their comments to three minutes. Please be aware that the Board will not respond to any comments made during the public comment period, except to clarify issues, but we will take into consideration your comments, and when appropriate, district administration will follow-up with you at a later point in time.*
- VI. **Adjournment**

Existing policy, adopted 5/20/14, appropriate as updated.

Instruction

Concept and Roles in Instruction

The Board of Education believes the instructional program of the public schools to be among its highest priorities, and it is, therefore, important for the Board and the professional staff to work cooperatively in determining educational goals and objectives which meet the needs of students.

Within limitations of budgets made available to it by the Town, the Board of Education will provide personnel, equipment, instructional supplies and materials, and other support required to meet professional staff needs and community goals. The Board, understanding that education requires continuing change, also supports continuing in-service education for certified and non-certified staff.

The Superintendent of Schools shall present regular evidence of student progress and of program modifications based on evaluations which are consistent with district goals and objectives. Evidence of educational productivity is important in order to evaluate the educational system, to guide improvement efforts and to develop public support for the schools.

~~Legal Reference: No Child Left Behind Act, §1116, 20 U.S.C. §6316.~~

~~105 ILCS 5/2-3.63, 5/2-3.64, 5/10-21.3a, and §5/27-1.~~

*Existing policy, adopted 5/20/14 not reflective of PA 19-195, PA 22-47 and PA 22-145.
Recommended replacement follows for comparison.*

Instruction

School Calendar

The school calendar shall show the beginning and ending of school dates, legal and local holidays, orientation meeting days, number of teaching days, vacation periods, and other pertinent dates providing for at least 182 school days for students.

The Superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Education a school calendar that meets all statutory requirements.

The calendar recommended to the Board may include the operation of schools on state holidays providing a suitable nonsectarian educational program is held to observe the holiday, except for those holidays that occur in December and January.

The Board of Education may declare a holiday in the schools under its jurisdiction when good reason exists.

To benefit children, families, and school staff in their planning, multiple year school calendars are preferable to single year school calendars.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 1-4 Days designated as legal holidays
 10-15 Towns to maintain schools
 10-16 Length of school day
 10-29a Certain days to be proclaimed by Governor.
 Distribution and number of proclamations.
 10-261 Definitions.
 10-161 Establishment of graduation date.
 10-233j Student possession and use of telecommunication devices.

P.A. 19-195: An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Firm Graduation Date and the Date When a School District May Commence School Sessions

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(Background Information for Policy Review Committee)

Previous law established that a local or regional board of education must wait until at least April 1st to set a firm high school graduation date that provides at least 180 days of school which is the minimum required number of days. Prior to April 1st, the board was permitted to set a firm graduation date no earlier than the 185th day noted in the school calendar the board adopted for that year.

This Act allows a board to establish, at any time in the school year, a firm graduation date no earlier than the 180th day of the board-adopted school calendar for that year.

The legislation also specifies that school boards can set their calendars to begin school on any day before or after Labor Day (the first Monday in September).

The effective date of this legislation is July 1, 2019.

Policy Implications

Policy #6111, "School Calendar" has been revised to reflect this new legislation and it follows for your consideration. This is considered a recommended, "good practice" policy for inclusion in a district's policy manual.

Optional policy to consider.

Instruction

School Calendar

The school calendar shall show the beginning and ending dates of school, legal and local holidays, meeting days, number of teaching days, vacation periods, and other pertinent dates.

The Board of Education may operate schools on state holidays providing a suitable nonsectarian educational program is held to observe the holiday, except for those holidays that occur in December and January.

The Superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Education a school calendar that will meet the requirements of the law as well as the needs of the community, students, and personnel.

The Board of Education may declare a holiday in the schools under its jurisdiction when good reason exists.

Note: *A Board of Education for a school that has been designated as a low achieving school pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (c) of C.G.S. 10-223e may increase the number of actual school sessions during each year, and may increase the number of hours of actual school work per session in order to improve student performance and remove the school from the list of schools designated as a low achieving school maintained by the State Board of Education.*

The Board of Education may use the RESC developed and approved uniform regional school calendar.

The Board of Education may establish for any school year a firm high school graduation date which is no earlier than the one hundred eightieth day noted in the school calendar originally adopted by the Board for that school year.

The Board of Education may develop and adopt its own school calendar to begin school on any day before or after Labor Day.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 1-4 Days designated as legal holidays.
 10-15 Towns to maintain schools
 10-29a Certain days to be proclaimed by governor. Distribution and
 number of proclamations.
 10-261 Definitions.
 10-16l Establishment of graduation date.
 10-66q Development and adoption of uniform regional school calendar.
 Report.
 PA 22-47 An Act Concerning Children's Mental Health
 PA 22-128 An Act Establishing Juneteenth Independence Day as a Legal
 Holiday

Policy adopted:

rev 7/22

rev 3/24

Existing policy, adopted 5/20/14 while appropriate as written, a CABE sample follows for comparison and review.

Instruction

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness

The Board of Education recognizes its obligation to students, staff and the community to be prepared to deal with various emergencies as they arise, ensuring to the greatest extent possible the safety of District students, staff and visitors.

All employees of the school system are responsible for doing everything in their power to promote the safety of all of the students at all times.

District staff shall be prepared to respond immediately and responsibly to any combination of events which threaten to result in a disaster when it occurs.

The Superintendent shall develop and maintain an emergency preparedness plan. The emergency plan shall be kept current. Governmental agencies and bodies vested with the responsibility for directing and coordinating emergency services on local and state levels shall be included in the preparation and implementation of the plan.

The plan shall specify procedures to be taken in the District in the event of an emergency. As appropriate, the Board shall enter into cooperative agreements with other governmental entities to assure proper coordination and support during emergencies.

The administration shall require the Building Principal to maintain procedures for fire, civil defense, and other emergencies, in accordance with the District's plan and to insure the maintenance of the fire alarm system and regular and emergency exits of all buildings.

(cf. 5141.6 – Crisis Prevention/Response)

(cf. 5142 – Student Safety)

(cf. 6114.1 – Fire Emergency/Drills)

(cf. 6114.3 – Bomb Threats)

(cf. 6114.6 – Emergency Closings)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules
10-231 Fire drills
52-557b Immunity from liability for emergency medical assistance, first aid or medication by injection. School personnel not required to administer or render.

Policy adopted: May 20, 2014

WOODBRIAGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut

A recommended sample policy to consider.

Instruction

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness

The Board of Education recognizes that the health, welfare and safety of its students and employees are dependent upon sound emergency preparedness planning. All employees of the school system are responsible for doing everything in their power to promote the safety of all of the students at all times. District staff shall be prepared to respond immediately and responsibly to any combination of events which threaten to result in a disaster as well as to a disaster when it occurs.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall use state-approved School Security and Safety Plan Standards and the accompanying School Security and Safety Plan Template to be compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and incorporate the National Incident Command System when updating District and site-level emergency and disaster preparedness plans. Each school in the District, each school year, will develop and implement a school security and safety plan. Such plan shall be based upon the standards issued by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection/Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DESPP/DEMHS) and the accompanying School Security and Safety Plan Template. In addition to preparedness and response, the plan shall provide guidance on recovery from any emergency incident.

Each school shall establish a school security and safety committee which will assist in developing and administering the school's security and safety plan. The members of the Committee shall include a local police officer, local first responder, teacher and administrator from the school, a mental health professional, a parent or guardian of a student at the school and any other person deemed necessary; (school nurse, custodian, local health director, transportation coordinator, etc.)

Alternative language:

The Board of Education recognizes its obligation to students, staff and the community to be prepared to deal with various emergencies as they arise, ensuring to the greatest extent possible the safety of District students, staff and visitors.

The administration shall require the Building Principal to maintain procedures for fire, civil defense, and other emergencies, in accordance with the District's plan and to insure the maintenance of the fire alarm system and regular and emergency exits of all buildings. All building security and safety plans must be compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), incorporate the National Incident Command System and be based upon the standards issued by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, beginning with the 2014-2015 school year.

The District will cooperate with local law enforcement, fire department and civil defense authorities and other civic agencies in the event of a declared emergency situation.

Instruction

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness (continued)

or (alternate paragraph to the previous paragraph)

The Superintendent shall develop and maintain an emergency preparedness plan which shall make provisions for handling a variety of foreseeable emergencies, all-hazard threats, including terroristic activity. The emergency plan shall be kept current. The Superintendent shall use state-approved Standardized Emergency Management System guidelines and the accompanying School Security and Safety Plan Template, be compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and incorporate the National Incident Command System when updating District and site-level emergency and disaster preparedness plans and be compliant with the standards issued by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

Governmental agencies and bodies vested with the responsibility for directing and coordinating emergency services on local and state levels shall be included in the preparation and implementation of the plan.

The plan shall specify procedures to be taken in the District in the event of an emergency. As appropriate, the Board shall enter into cooperative agreements with other governmental entities to assure proper coordination and support during emergencies. At the beginning of each school year, parents and staff of each school shall receive a written summary of relevant sections of the plan relevant to that school.

The Board will conduct a security and vulnerability assessment for each of its schools every two years and develop a school security and safety plan for each such school in compliance with Section 87 of P.A. 13-3. By November 1 of each year the District must submit to the DEMHS Regional Coordinator one of the following: (1) those plan pages that have been updated; (2) the DEMHS provided form that the plan has not changed; or (3) a revised plan if the current plan has undergone a major revision.

First Aid

At least one person at each school site should hold current first aid and/or CPR certification.

(cf. 5141.6 – Crisis Prevention/Response)

(cf. 5142 – Student Safety)

(cf. 6114.1 – Fire Emergency/Crisis Response Drills)

(cf. 6114.3 – Bomb Threats)

(cf. 6114.6 – Emergency Closings)

(cf. 6114.7 – Safe Schools)

Instruction

Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness (continued)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

- 10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules
- 10-231 Fire drills
- 52-557b Immunity from liability for emergency medical assistance, first aid or medication by injection. School personnel not required to administer or render.
- P.A. 13-3 An Act Concerning Gun Violence Prevention and Children's Safety (Section 86, 87, 88)
- 10-222m – School security and safety plans. School security and safety committees
- 10-222n – School security and safety plan standards

Policy adopted:

rev 2/13
rev 7/13
rev 3/16

This sample letter contains some issues on which parents/guardians are deeply concerned. The purpose of this sample letter is to generate ideas for a similar letter designed to meet a district's specific circumstances and plans.

Letter to Parents Regarding Student Safety

_____ **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
_____, **Connecticut**

Date

Re: Student Safety

Dear Parents:

The District's top priority is student safety. In addition to physical safety, the District is concerned with the emotional well-being of students and will help students cope with an emergency or disaster and its aftermath. Our emergency and disaster response plans are as follows:

Safety Plans

The District has plans for the four phases of emergency and disaster management:

1. **Preparedness** – planning for an emergency or disaster event;
2. **Response** – planned response to an emergency or disaster event;
3. **Recovery** – the process of returning to normal operations; and
4. **Mitigation** – steps taken to minimize the effects of an emergency or disaster.

These plans are covered in each school's site-based safety plan. In addition, the District has a Safety Program Coordinator. Each school also has a Crisis Management Team.

Communications

The District monitors the Homeland Security Office and other emergency preparedness resources. The District will disseminate emergency information via its website, information hotline, through the media and by telephone contact.

Emergency Responses

Emergency responses will depend on the circumstances and may include evacuation, shelter-in-place or lockdown. For evacuation purposes, each school has at least one off-campus site where students and staff assemble. If the threat is chemical or biological in nature, to avoid contamination, we ask that no one enter or leave the building until it is safe to do so.

In the event your child's school is evacuated, the school will attempt to notify you as soon as possible at the home and/or emergency numbers provided previously to the school. The news media will also be notified.

All students at _____ School will go to _____. You may pick-up your child at this location after notifying the school official in charge. Additional instructions will be given in the event of an evacuation, including alternative methods to return your child home.

Cooperation and Assistance Request

During any emergency or potential disaster and for the safety of all students and staff, we request that you follow the instructions of the District's Safety Program Coordinator as well as the Building Principal. These instructions will be widely disseminated.

Defamatory or disruptive behavior will only lessen our response effectiveness.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the District office or your child's Principal.

Thank you for your understanding, cooperation and support.

Website Address: _____

Information Hotline Number: _____

Sincerely,

Superintendent of Schools

Existing policy, adopted 5/26/20, appropriate as written.

Instruction

Fire Emergency (Drills)/Crisis Response Drills

A fire drill shall be held at least once a month in each school building. The initial fire drill must be held not later than ~~thirty~~ 15 days after the first day of each school year. A crisis response drill shall be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills every three months. Each Building Principal shall prepare a definite fire emergency plan, and furnish to all teachers and students information as to route and manner of exit. Fire drills shall be planned in such a way as to accomplish the evacuation of school buildings in the shortest possible time and in the most efficient and orderly fashion.

The format of the crisis response drill shall be developed in consultation with the appropriate local law enforcement agency. Further, a representative of the law enforcement agency may supervise and participate in any of the required crisis response drills. Such drills shall incorporate the basic protocols of lockdown, evacuation and shelter-in-place responses. The activation and utilization of the Incident Command System shall also be a part of the crisis response drills.

Principals shall keep a record of all fire and crisis response drills held in their schools, stating the date the drill was held and the time required for the response protocols utilized in the drill. They shall furnish such reports to the Superintendent or his designate as may from time to time be required.

Local law enforcement and other local public safety officials shall evaluate, score and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills conducted pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 10-231. "Public Safety Officials" include the local emergency management director, fire marshal, building inspector and emergency medical services representative. Each of the named officials should evaluate and provide feedback on a representative sampling of fire/crisis response drills each year. The Administration shall annually submit reports to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection regarding such fire drills and crisis response drills.

(cf. 5141.6 – Crisis Management Plan)

(cf. 5142 – Student Safety)

(cf. 6114 – Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-231 Fire drills. (as amended by PA 00-220 and PA 09-131)

Policy adopted: May 26, 2020

WOODBRIIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut

Existing mandated policy, number 6115 adopted 5/20/14, appropriate as written.

Instruction

School Ceremonies and Observances

The Board directs that the administration provide students and staff with appropriate direction and guidance regarding school ceremonies and observances.

United States Flag

The American Flag shall be raised above Beecher Road School during all school sessions, weather permitting. The Flag shall be raised before the opening of school and taken down at its close every day.

The American Flag shall be displayed in each classroom each day school is in session.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Board further directs that an opportunity to say the Pledge of Allegiance shall be provided each school day, preferably during the time of morning opening exercises.

In accordance with Connecticut Statute the intent of this policy shall not be construed to require any person to recite the “Pledge of Allegiance”. If because of family belief or personal philosophy a parent(s) or guardian has made the decision not to salute the flag or participate in similar such activities of this nature, a student will be permitted to remain silent. Students may wish to use this period of time to reflect on personal belief or to remember loved ones.

In any event, we must all be courteous and respectful of the beliefs of others.

Silent Meditation

The Board directs that the administration shall provide for students and teachers the opportunity to observe an appropriate period of time for silent meditation at the beginning of each school day.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-16a Silent meditation
10-29a Certain days to be proclaimed by governor. Distribution and number of proclamations
10-230 Flags for schoolrooms and schools
PA 02-119, An act concerning bullying behavior in schools and concerning the pledge of allegiance

Policy adopted: May 20, 2014

WOODBRIIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut

Existing policy adopted 5/20/14, appropriate as written.

Instruction

Affirmative Action: Instruction Program

The school district pledges itself to avoid any discriminatory actions, and instead seeks to foster good human and educational relations which will help to attain:

1. Equal rights and opportunities for students and staff members in the school community.
2. Equal opportunity for all students to participate in the total program of the school.
3. Continual study and development of curricula toward improving human relations and understanding and appreciating cultural differences.
4. Training opportunities for improving staff ability and responsiveness to educational and social needs.
5. Opportunities in educational programs which are broadly available to all students.
6. An appropriate learning environment for students which includes (1) adequate instructional books, supplies, materials, equipment, staffing, facilities and technology; (2) equitable allocation of resources; and (3) a safe school setting.

Each student, at the time s/he becomes eligible for participation, will be advised of his/her right to an equal opportunity to participate in school programs without discrimination of any kind.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-15 Towns to Maintain Schools.
10-15c Discrimination in Public School Prohibited.
10-18a Contents of Textbooks and other General Instructional Materials.
10-226a Pupils of Racial Minorities.
10-145a(b) Certificates of Qualification for Teachers; Intergroup Relations Programs.
10-220 Duties of Boards of Education, As Amended by PA 97-290,
An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities.
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
Section 504, U.S. Rehabilitation Act. 1973, 29 U.S.C. 791

Policy adopted: May 20, 2014

WOODBRIIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut

Existing policy, presently numbered 5144.4 adopted 4/29/19, appropriate as renumbered.

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. 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 recess or in other sustained opportunities for physical activity during classroom learning 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.

Loss of recess or other physically active learning opportunities as a form of discipline may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if approved in writing by the building administration prior to the imposition of the discipline. Such approval may be granted for safety reasons, as a last resort before in-school suspension, or in extraordinary situations when alternative strategies to address student misconduct have been ineffective.

This restriction shall not apply to students who are receiving in-school suspension.

2. 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.

3. Wellness Instruction

School employees shall not prevent students from participating in physical exercise 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.

Students

Discipline

Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students (continued)

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 may 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 (as amended by P.A. 12-116, An Act Concerning Educational Reform, and P.A. 13-173, An Act Concerning Childhood Obesity and Physical Exercise in Schools)
 10-221u Boards to adopt policies addressing the use of physical activity as discipline. (as amended by PA 18-15)

Policy adopted:

WOODBRTDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Woodbridge, Connecticut

Existing policy, number 6154 adopted 5/20/14, appropriate as written.

Instruction

Homework and Class Assignments

Homework is considered to be any assignment that is completed outside of the school day. The purpose of homework is to reinforce skills and to develop good independent study habits. Homework is a responsibility shared among the student, the teacher and the family.

Homework should be:

1. Respectful of the child's ability and developmental level,
2. Related to the work of the classroom and, where possible, to the interest of the individual student, and
3. Reasonable in amount and degree of difficulty.

Under most circumstances, homework will not be assigned during weekends, vacations and breaks unless sufficient school time was already provided.

Materials necessary to complete the homework should be readily accessible for all students.

Homework is an essential part of an effective and well planned instructional program. Homework serves to enhance learning opportunities for students beyond the classroom and the school day, developing students' life-long skills and attitudes towards learning and contributing to academic achievement. Homework is also an important way to communicate with families about what is occurring in the classroom.

Homework assignments should consider times of religious celebrations at home and conflicts in school with testing or special events, such as concerts, which require participants to be at school for long hours.

Guidelines - Daily Work Monday through Thursday

Primary School

Kindergarten	Weekly assignments, 15 minutes Reading
First Grade	Up to 20 minutes per day, includes Reading
Second Grade	Up to 30 minutes per day, includes Reading

Intermediate School

Third Grade	Up to 30 minutes per day, 20 minutes Reading
Grade Four	Up to 40 minutes, not including Reading
Grade Five	Up to 50 minutes, not including Reading
Grade Six	Up to 60 minutes, not including Reading

Instruction

Homework and Class Assignments (continued)

If a student is unable to complete homework assignments within the recommended period of time, the student should stop work and the student or parents should inform the teacher.

At the beginning of the school year, teachers will inform parents of their specific practices regarding homework. Frequency, duration and purposes of homework will be communicated and discussed. The Open House, scheduled each September, is an opportunity to discuss student homework with parents.

Students who are absent from school are responsible for completing work missed during their absence as soon as possible after their return to school. Parents should request homework for a child who is absent from school for more than two days due to illness, injury, or a family emergency. The request may be made through the teacher or school office. Teachers will make those materials available. Advance assignments will not be given to children who will be absent for vacations or trips made during the time when school is in session.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules, policies and procedures.