

**Regional School District #4
Chester – Deep River – Essex – Region 4**

**AGENDA & NOTICE FOR JOINT BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

To: Members of the Chester, Deep River, Essex, and Region 4 Joint BOE Policy Committee
Subject: September 16, 2019 Joint BOE Policy Committee Meeting
Time & Place: 6:30 p.m. in Central Office Large Conf. Rm

If you are unable to be in attendance, please e-mail jbryan@reg4.k12.ct.us.

Mission Statement

We, the communities of Chester, Deep River, Essex and Region 4, engage all students in a rigorous and collaborative educational program. We prepare our learners to be respectful citizens who are empowered to contribute in a globalized society.

AGENDA

- a. **Call to order: Chair of the Policy Committee - TBD**

- b. **Policies for review & discussion**
 - b.1 Review recommended revision for Policy #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Due Process based on new State legislation (P.A. 19-91, An Act Concerning Various Revisions and Additions to the Education Statutes) *(encl #1)*

 - b.2 Review requested revisions for Region 4 Only Policy #6172.6 Virtual/On-line Courses *(the Committee gave redlined revisions to R4 Board for their consideration. The R4 Board has requested the Committee review additional bluelined revisions prior to the R4 Board's second reading and vote on the policy) (encl #2)*

 - b.3 Discuss Committee Review Process

- c. **Future Agenda Items:** Continue review of policies last updated prior to 2008 – move on to 6000s once done with 5000s
 - c.1 Administration Policies 5000 & 6000 Series – Finish 5000s and then
Continue review of all policies in the series last updated prior to the year 2010

Policy #:

5131.7 *Revisit*

Students

Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process

I. Definitions

- A. **Dangerous Instrument** means any instrument, article or substance which, under the circumstances in which it is used or attempted or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury, and includes a "vehicle" or a dog that has been commanded to attack.
- B. **Deadly Weapon** means any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon or metal knuckles. A weapon such as a pellet gun and/or air soft pistol may constitute a deadly weapon if such weapon is designed for violence and is capable of inflicting death or serious bodily harm. In making such determination, the following factors should be considered: design of weapon; how weapon is typically used (e.g., hunting); type of projectile; force and velocity of discharge; method of discharge (i.e., spring v. CO2 cartridge); and potential for serious bodily harm or death.
- C. **Electronic Defense Weapon** means a weapon which by electronic impulse or current is capable of immobilizing a person temporarily, but is not capable of inflicting death or serious physical injury, including a stun gun or other conductive energy device.
- D. **Emergency** means a situation in which the continued presence of the student in school poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that a hearing may be delayed until a time as soon after the exclusion of such student as possible.
- E. **Exclusion** means any denial of public school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.
- F. **Expulsion** means the exclusion of a student from school privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. The expulsion period may not extend beyond one (1) calendar year.
- G. **Firearm**, as defined in 18 U.S.C § 921, means (a) any weapon that will, is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon, (c) a firearm muffler or silencer, or (d) any destructive device. The term firearm does not include an antique firearm. As used in this definition, a "**destructive device**" includes any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous gas device, including a bomb, a grenade, a rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, or any other similar

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device; or any weapon (other than a shotgun or shotgun shell particularly suited for sporting purposes) that will, or may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by explosive or other propellant, and which has a barrel with a bore of more than ½" in diameter. The term "destructive device" also includes any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device or any device from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. A "destructive device" does not include: an antique firearm; a rifle intended to be used by the owner solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes; or any device which is neither designed nor redesigned for use as a weapon.

- H. **In-School Suspension** means an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such in-school suspension was imposed. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one (1) school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.
- I. **Martial Arts Weapon** means a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa, chinese star, or other martial arts weapons.
- J. **Removal** is the exclusion of a student from a classroom for all or part of a single class period, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond ninety (90) minutes.
- K. **School Days** shall mean days when school is in session for students.
- L. **School-Sponsored Activity** means any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board and includes activities conducted on or off school property.
- M. **Seriously Disruptive of the Educational Process**, as applied to off-campus conduct, means any conduct that markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operation of a school.
- N. **Suspension** means the exclusion of a student from school and/or transportation services for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, provided such suspension shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed; and further provided no student shall be suspended more than ten (10) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, unless such student is granted a formal hearing as provided below.

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- O. **Weapon** means any BB gun, any blackjack, any metal or brass knuckles, any police baton or nightstick, any dirk knife or switch knife, any knife having an automatic spring release device by which a blade is released from the handle, having a blade of over one and one-half inches in length, any stiletto, any knife the edged portion of the blade of which is four inches and over in length, any martial arts weapon or electronic defense weapon, or any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument, unless permitted by law under Section 29-38 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Notwithstanding the foregoing definitions, the reassignment of a student from one regular education classroom program in the district to another regular education classroom program in the district shall not constitute a suspension or expulsion.

II. Scope of the Student Discipline Policy

- A. Conduct on School Grounds or at a School-Sponsored Activity:

Students may be disciplined for conduct on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity that endangers persons or property; ~~or~~ is seriously disruptive of the educational process; ~~or that~~ and violates a publicized policy of the Board.

- B. Conduct off School Grounds:

1. Students may be suspended or expelled for conduct off school grounds if such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violative of a publicized policy of the Board. In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and the impartial hearing board may consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to, the following factors: (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school; (2) whether other students from the school were involved or whether there was any gang involvement; (3) whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon, as defined in section Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38, and whether any injuries occurred; and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.

In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and/or the impartial hearing board may also consider whether such off-campus conduct involved the illegal use of drugs.

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III. Actions Leading to Disciplinary Action, including Removal from Class, Suspension and/or Expulsion

Conduct which may lead to disciplinary action (including, but not limited to, removal from class, suspension and/or expulsion) includes conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity (including on a school bus), and conduct off school grounds, as set forth above. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Striking or assaulting a student, members of the school staff or other persons.
2. Theft.
3. The use of obscene or profane language or gestures, the possession and/or display of obscenity or pornographic images or the unauthorized possession and/or display of images, pictures or photographs depicting nudity.
4. Violation of smoking, dress, transportation regulations, or other regulations and/or policies governing student conduct.
5. Refusal to obey a member of the school staff, law enforcement authorities, or school volunteers, or disruptive classroom behavior.
6. A walkout from or a sit-in within a classroom or school building or school grounds.
7. Any act of harassment based on an individual's sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, disability, national origin, or ancestry.
8. Inappropriate displays of public affection of a sexual nature and/or sexual activity on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity.
9. Blackmailing, threatening or intimidating school staff or students (or acting in a manner that could be construed to constitute blackmail, a threat, or intimidation, regardless of whether intended as a joke).
10. Possession of any weapon, weapon facsimile, deadly weapon, martial arts weapon, electronic defense weapon, pistol, knife, blackjack, bludgeon, box cutter, metal knuckles, pellet gun, air pistol, explosive device, firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, whether

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functional or not, or any other dangerous object or instrument. The possession and/or use of any object or device that has been converted or modified for use as a weapon.

11. Possession of any ammunition for any weapon described in paragraph 10 above.
12. Possession or ignition of any fireworks, combustible or other explosive materials, or ignition of any material causing a fire. Possession of any materials designed to be used in the ignition of combustible materials, including matches and lighters.
13. Unauthorized possession, sale, distribution, use, consumption, or aiding in the procurement of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages (or any facsimile of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages, or any item represented to be tobacco, drugs or alcoholic beverages), including being under the influence of any such substances. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term “drugs” shall include, but shall not be limited to, any medicinal preparation (prescription and non-prescription) and any controlled substance whose possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption is illegal under state and/or federal law.
14. Sale, distribution, or consumption of substances contained in household items; including, but not limited to glue, paint, accelerants/propellants for aerosol canisters, and/or items such as the aerators for whipped cream; if sold, distributed or consumed for the purpose of inducing a stimulant, depressant, hallucinogenic or mind-altering effect.
15. Unauthorized possession of paraphernalia used or designed to be used in the consumption, sale or distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, as described in paragraph 13 above. For purposes of this policy, drug paraphernalia includes any equipment, products and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use or designed for use in growing, harvesting, manufacturing, producing, preparing, packaging, storing, containing or concealing, or injecting, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise introducing controlled drugs or controlled substances into the human body, including but not limited to items such as "bongs," pipes, "roach clips," vials, tobacco rolling papers, and any object or container used, intended

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- or designed for use in storing, concealing, possessing, distributing or selling controlled drugs or controlled substances.
16. The destruction of real, personal or school property, such as, cutting defacing or otherwise damaging property in any way.
 17. Refusal by a student to identify himself/herself to a staff member when asked, or misidentification of oneself to such person(s), lying to school officials or otherwise engaging in dishonest behavior.
 18. Unauthorized entrance into any school facility or portion of a school facility or aiding or abetting an unauthorized entrance.
 19. Accumulation of offenses such as school and class tardiness, class or study hall cutting or failure to attend detention.
 20. Trespassing on school grounds while on out-of-school suspension or expulsion.
 21. Making false bomb threats or other threats to the safety of students, staff members and/or other persons.
 22. Defiance of school rules and the valid authority of teachers, supervisors, administrators, other staff members and/or law enforcement authorities.
 23. Throwing snowballs, rocks, sticks and/or similar objects, except as specifically authorized by school staff.
 24. Unauthorized and/or reckless and/or improper operation of a motor vehicle on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity.
 25. Leaving school grounds, school transportation or a school-sponsored activity without authorization.
 26. Use of or copying of the academic work of another individual and presenting it as the student's own work, without proper attribution, or any other form of academic dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism.
 27. Possession and inappropriate use of a cellular telephone, iPod, iPad, radio, walkman, CD player, blackberry, personal data assistant, walkie talkie, smart phone, mobile or handheld device or similar

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electronic device on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity that is disruptive of the educational process, in violation of Board policy and/or administrative regulations regulating the use of such devices. (Please see Policy 5131.81 Addendum for VRHS)

28. Possession and/or use of a beeper or paging device on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity without the written permission of the principal or his/her designee.
29. Unauthorized use of any school computer, computer system, computer software, internet connection or similar school property or system, or the use of such property or system for inappropriate purposes.
30. Possession and/or use of a laser pointer.
31. Hazing.
32. Bullying, defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at another student attending school in the same district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district, which:
 - a. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;
 - b. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
 - c. creates a hostile environment at school for such student;
 - d. infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
 - e. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying includes, but is not limited to, repeated written, oral or electronic communications or physical acts or gestures based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or

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expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

33. Cyberbullying, defined as any act of bullying through the use of the internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.
34. Acting in any manner that creates a health and/or safety hazard for staff members, students, or the public, regardless of whether the conduct is intended as a joke.
35. Any action prohibited by any federal or state law.
36. Engaging in a plan to stage or create a violent situation for the purposes of recording it by electronic means, or recording by electronic means acts of violence for purposes of later publication.
37. Engaging in a plan to stage sexual activity for the purposes of recording it by electronic means; or recording by electronic means sexual acts for purposes of later publication.
38. Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.
39. Use of a privately owned electronic or technological device in violation of school rules, including the unauthorized recording (photographic or audio) of another individual without permission of the individual or a school staff member.
40. Any other violation of school rules or regulations or a series of violations which makes the presence of the student in school seriously disruptive of the educational process and/or a danger to persons or property.

Students**Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process****IV. Procedures Governing Removal from Class**

- A. A student may be removed from class by a teacher or administrator if he/she deliberately causes a serious disruption of the educational process. When a student is removed, the teacher must send him/her to a designated area and notify the principal or his/her designee at once.
- B. A student may not be removed from class more than six (6) times in one school year nor more than twice in one week unless the student is referred to the building principal or designee and granted an informal hearing at which the student should be informed of the reasons for the disciplinary action and given an opportunity to explain the situation.
- C. The parents or guardian of any minor student removed from class shall be given notice of such disciplinary action within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of such removal from class.

V. Procedures Governing Suspension

- A. The principal of a school, or designee on the administrative staff of the school, shall have the right to suspend any student for breach of conduct as noted in Section III of this policy for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days. In cases where suspension is contemplated, the steps defined in Regulation 5114.1 shall be followed.
- B. In cases where a student's suspension will result in the student being suspended more than ten (10) times or for a total of fifty (50) days in a school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, the student shall, prior to the pending suspension, be granted a formal hearing before an impartial hearing board. The principal or designee shall report the student to the Superintendent or designee and request a formal hearing. If an emergency situation exists, such hearing shall be held as soon after the suspension as possible.

VI. Procedures Governing In-School Suspension

- A. The principal or designee may impose in-school suspension in cases where a student's conduct endangers persons or property, violates school policy, seriously disrupts the educational process or in other appropriate circumstances as determined by the principal or designee.

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- B. In-school suspension may not be imposed on a student without an informal hearing by the building principal or designee.
- C. In-school suspension may be served in the school that the student regularly attends or in any other school building within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- D. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or for a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.
- E. The parents or guardian of any minor student placed on in-school suspension shall be given notice of such suspension within twenty-four (24) hours of the time of the institution of the period of the in-school suspension.

VII. Expulsion

- A. Procedures Governing Expulsion Recommendation
 - 1. A principal may consider recommendation of expulsion of a student in a case where he/she has reason to believe the student has engaged in conduct described at Sections II.A. and II.B., above.
 - 2. A principal must recommend expulsion proceedings in all cases against any student whom the administration has reason to believe:
 - a. was in possession on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity of a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, martial arts weapon, or firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921 as amended from time to time; or
 - b. off school grounds, possessed a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921, in violation of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-35, or possessed and used a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921, a deadly weapon, a dangerous instrument or a martial arts weapon in the commission of a crime under chapter 952 of the Connecticut General Statutes; or

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- c. was engaged on or off school grounds in offering for sale or distribution a controlled substance (as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-240(9)), whose manufacturing, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting, or possessing with intent to sell or dispense, offering or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 21a-277 and 21a-278.
 3. The terms “dangerous instrument,” “deadly weapon,” “electronic defense weapon,” “firearm,” and “martial arts weapon,” are defined above in Section I.
 4. Upon receipt of an expulsion recommendation, the Superintendent may conduct an inquiry concerning the expulsion recommendation. If the Superintendent or his/her designee determines that a student should or must be expelled, he or she shall forward his/her recommendation to an impartial hearing board as established by this policy.
 5. In keeping with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233d and the Gun-Free Schools Act, it shall be the policy of the Board to expel a student for one (1) full calendar year for the conduct described in subdivisions (a), (b), and (c) in subsection (2), above. For any mandatory expulsion offense, the impartial hearing board may modify the term of expulsion on a case-by-case basis.
 6. A period of expulsion may extend into the next school year.
- B. Procedures Governing Expulsion Hearing

1. Emergency Exception:

Except in an emergency situation, the impartial hearing board shall, prior to expelling any student, conduct a hearing to be governed by the procedures outlined herein and consistent with the requirements of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233d and the applicable provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 4-176e to 4-180a, and § 4-181a. Whenever an emergency exists, the hearing provided for herein shall be held as soon as possible after the expulsion.

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2. Hearing Panel:

Expulsion hearings will be conducted by an impartial hearing board composed of one (1) or more persons to hear and decide the expulsion matter. No member of the Board may serve on such impartial hearing board.

Each member of an impartial hearing board shall be a current or former attorney who does not have an interest in the outcome of the proceeding.

3. The expulsion hearing procedures shall be conducted in accordance with Regulation 5114.1.

VIII. Alternative Educational Opportunities for Expelled Students

A. Students under sixteen (16) years of age:

Whenever the Board of Education expels a student under sixteen (16) years of age, it shall offer any such student an alternative educational opportunity.

B. Students sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) years of age:

The Board of Education shall provide an alternative education to a sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) year old student expelled for the first time if he/she requests it and if he/she agrees to the conditions set by the Board of Education, except as follows. The Board of Education is not required to offer an alternative program to any student between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18) who is expelled for the second time, or if it is determined at the hearing that (1) the student possessed a dangerous instrument, deadly weapon, firearm or martial arts weapon on school property or at a school-sponsored activity, or (2) the student offered a controlled substance for sale or distribution on school property or at a school-sponsored activity. The Board of Education shall count the expulsion of a pupil when he/she was under sixteen years of age for purposes of determining whether an alternative educational opportunity is required for such pupil when he/she is between the ages of sixteen (16) and eighteen (18).

C. Students eighteen (18) years of age or older:

The Board of Education is not required to offer an alternative educational program to expelled students eighteen (18) years of age or older.

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- D. Students identified as eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”):

Notwithstanding Sections VIII.A through VIII.C above, if the Board of Education expels a student who has been identified as eligible for services under the IDEA, it shall offer an alternative educational program to such student in accordance with the requirements of IDEA, as it may be amended from time to time.

- E. Students for whom an alternative educational opportunity is not required:

The Board of Education may offer an alternative educational opportunity to a pupil for whom such alternative educational opportunity is not required as described in this policy.

IX. Procedures Governing Suspensions and Expulsions for Students Eligible under the IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”).

Notwithstanding any contrary provisions of this policy, the procedures governing the suspension and expulsion of students eligible under the IDEA or Section 504 shall be those outlined in Sections III and IV, respectively, of Regulation 5114.1.

X. Procedures Governing Expulsions for Students Committed to a Juvenile Detention Center

- A. Any student who commits an expellable offense and is subsequently committed to a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement for such offense may be expelled by the impartial hearing board in accordance with the provisions of this section. The period of expulsion shall run concurrently with the period of commitment to a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement.
- B. If a student who committed an expellable offense seeks to return to a school district after having been in a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement and such student has not been expelled by the Board of Education for such offense under subdivision (A) of this subsection, the Board shall allow such student to return and may not expel the student for additional time for such offense.

Students**Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process****XI. Early Readmission to School**

An expelled student may apply for early readmission to school. The Board delegates the authority to make decisions on readmission requests to the Superintendent. Students desiring readmission to school shall direct such readmission requests to the Superintendent. The Superintendent has the discretion to approve or deny such readmission requests, and may condition readmission on specified criteria.

XII. Dissemination of Policy

The Board of Education shall, at the beginning of each school year and at such other times as it may deem appropriate, provide for an effective means of informing all students, parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of this policy.

XIII. Compliance with Documentation and Reporting Requirements

- A. The Board of Education shall include on all disciplinary reports the individual student's state-assigned student identifier (SASID).
- B. The Board of Education shall report all suspensions and expulsions to the State Department of Education.
- C. If the Board of Education expels a student for sale or distribution of a controlled substance, the Board shall refer such student to an appropriate state or local agency for rehabilitation, intervention or job training and inform the agency of its action.
- D. If the Board of Education expels a student for possession of a deadly weapon or firearm, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-3, the violation shall be reported to the local police.

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Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes:

[P.A. 19-91, An Act Concerning Various Revisions and Additions to the Education Statutes](#)

§§ 4-176e through 4-180a and § 4-181a Uniform Administrative Procedures Act

§§ 10-233a through 10-233e Suspension and expulsion of students

§ 10-233f In-school suspension of students

§ 21a-408a through 408p Palliative Use of Marijuana

§ 29-38 Weapons in vehicles

§ 53a-3 Definitions

§ 53a-206 (definition of “weapon”)

[Packer v. Board of Educ. of the Town of Thomaston](#), 246 Conn. 89 (1998)

[State v. Hardy](#), 896 A.2d 755, 278 Conn. 113 (2006)

[State v. Guzman](#), 955 A.2d 72, 2008 Conn. App. LEXIS 445 (Sept. 16, 2008)

Federal law:

[Honig v. Doe](#), 484 U.S. 305 (1988)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., as amended by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-446.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794(a).

18 U.S.C. § 921 (definition of “firearm”)

18 U.S.C. § 930(g)(2) (definition of “dangerous weapon”)

18 U.S.C. § 1365(h)(3) (identifying “serious bodily injury”)

21 U.S.C. § 812(c) (identifying “controlled substances”)

34 C.F.R. § 300.530 (defining “illegal drugs”)

Gun-Free Schools Act, Pub. L. 107-110, Sec. 401, 115 Stat. 1762

(codified at 20 U.S.C. § 7151)

Board Policy cross-reference: 5131.8 Conduct off School Grounds

Policy Revised: October 02, 2014

CHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEEP RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ESSEX PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO.4

REGIONAL SUPERVISION DISTRICT

Redlined are the original Joint BOE Policy Comm recommendations & Bluelined are additional revisions made by the R4 BOE at their First Reading. They would like the Comm. to consider and advise before R4 holds a 2nd Reading and vote.

6172.6

Encl #2

Distance Education

Policy for ~~Virtual~~/Online Courses

~~The Regional School District 4 Board of Education provides a comprehensive educational program to the students of Chester, Deep River, and Essex. The Board believes that enrollment in virtual/online courses provide enrichment opportunities for the students of John Winthrop Middle School and Valley Regional High School when taken as a part of a comprehensive educational program. Virtual/online courses increase instructional flexibility while enhancing opportunities for academic rigor through Internet or Web-based methods. In addition, virtual/online courses may extend the curriculum by allowing students to take courses not currently offered or unique courses of special educational interest.~~

Students enrolled at John Winthrop Middle School or Valley Regional High School shall be allowed to enroll in ~~virtual~~/online courses as part of a pre-approved educational program. In addition to regular classroom-based instruction, high school students may earn credit toward graduation through ~~virtual~~/online courses. Approved ~~virtual~~/online courses must be consistent with the mission of the district and aligned with academic standards.

~~1. Virtual High School~~

~~The Regional School District 4 Board of Education belongs to a Virtual High School consortium. Students, with the endorsement of their parent/guardian, may enroll in online courses through the Virtual High School consortium to augment and expand their educational program within John Winthrop Middle School and Valley Regional High School, so long as this program is available and approved by administration. Students may elect to enroll in online courses from institutions that are:~~

~~2. Other Institutions~~

~~Students, with the endorsement of their parent/guardian, may elect to enroll in virtual/online courses from institutions other than the Virtual High School consortium. This virtual/online course delivery must be from institutions accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, or Western Association of Schools and Colleges.~~

~~3.1. Procedures~~

The following procedures shall be followed for students to enroll in ~~virtual~~/online courses, ~~whether through Virtual High School or other institutions,~~ as part of the school's educational program.

- A. Request - The student, parent/guardian, and/or faculty member shall provide at least twenty (20) school days advance written notice to the principal of the request for approval for student enrollment in an ~~virtual~~/online course. The request shall include:
 - a. A course description, course objectives, performance criteria, the name of the sponsoring institution, and any other pertinent information
 - b. A statement of how the course enhances the students' overall educational program
- B. Review - A committee composed of the principal, school counselor, and the department coordinator in the area related to the specific request shall review the request in a timely manner. The committee shall consider the following:
 - a. Course content; rigor, assessment method, and its connection to the mission of the district
 - b. Student completion of any necessary pre-requisites

- c. If deemed necessary, name of a Region 4 teacher willing to supervise the student
 - d. Student maturation, readiness, and other related factors
- C. Notification - The administration shall notify the parent/guardian in writing of the committee's decision in a timely manner.
- a. The notification shall be included in the student's record
 - b. If approved, the notification shall include expectations for course completion including student monitoring and expected completion date
- D. Record - The administration shall maintain a record of the completion of ~~virtual~~/online courses in the student's record.
- a. The school must receive an official record of the final grade in the ~~virtual~~/online course
 - b. The final grade in the approved ~~virtual~~/online course shall be recorded on the transcript of John Winthrop Middle School and Valley Regional High School students
 - c. The final grade in the approved ~~virtual~~/online course shall be factored into the student's grade point average and class rank. Up to 7 credits total per year, inclusive of online and VRHS courses. Courses taken beyond 7 credits per year will always be factored as a level 0.

3.2.Limitations

The Regional School District 4 Board of Education believes enrollment in ~~virtual~~/online courses, whether through Virtual High School or other institutions, provides enrichment opportunities for students when taken as a part of a comprehensive educational program. However, ~~a~~n important component of a comprehensive educational program includes the opportunity for substantial, personal, and timely interactions between staff and students and among students in academic and co-curricular settings. Therefore, the following limitations shall apply:

- A. John Winthrop Middle School students may enroll in a maximum of ~~three-one (31)~~ pre-approved ~~virtual~~/online classes within the following guidelines:
- ~~a. No more than a total of two (2) courses may be taken in any combination of English, mathematics, science or social studies~~
 - ~~b. Virtual/online courses may be taken as elective courses~~
- B. Valley Regional High School students may earn a maximum of ~~three-two (32)~~ credits by successfully completing pre-approved ~~virtual~~/online courses within the following guidelines:
- ~~a. No more than one (1) credit may be applied toward the required credits for graduation in any combination of English, mathematics, science, or social studies~~
 - ~~b. Credit earned from virtual/online courses may be applied toward graduation requirements as elective credits~~
 - ~~a.c. Students cannot enroll in an Virtual/Online course that is included in the Valley Regional High School course catalog.~~

Student participation in ~~virtual~~/online courses requires a high degree of maturity and ethical behavior. It is the expectation that students will demonstrate the maturity and ethical behavior necessary to protect their well-being and maximize their educational growth in any ~~virtual~~/online course taken pursuant to this policy. The administration may withdraw students from ~~virtual~~/online courses if they fail to demonstrate the necessary maturity or ethical behavior. In this event, the cost for the ~~virtual~~/online course may be non-refundable. Furthermore, students enrolled in ~~virtual~~/online courses must comply with all board policies, school rules, and/or student handbook regulations.

The cost for an virtual/online course ~~provided through the Virtual High School consortium~~ shall be ~~borne determined by the Region 4 Board annually by the District. The cost for a virtual/online course provided through other institutions shall be borne by the parent/guardian.~~

The administration shall periodically review student enrollment in virtual/online courses and the consistency of such courses with the mission of the district, instructional goals, and alignment with academic standards.

~~Virtual/online-Online~~ courses may serve as an option for students placed on extended homebound instruction.

~~Virtual/online-Online~~ courses may serve as an option for students expelled from the regular school setting, provided educational services are to be continued.

Exceptions to this policy may be made by the Superintendent or designee based on supporting psychological and/or educational evidence.

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

Policy revised: TBD Regional School District 4 Board of Education