

EASTCONN

Where Learning Comes to Life



2025-2026

STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK

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Table of Contents

MISSION STATEMENT OF DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS.....	4
PREFACE.....	5
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION.....	5
AGE OF MAJORITY.....	6
AIDS CURRICULUM.....	6
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT & SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973.....	6
ASBESTOS.....	7
ATTENDANCE.....	8
ABSENCE.....	8
EXCUSED ABSENCE.....	9
UNEXCUSED ABSENCE.....	9
CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM.....	9
LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS/RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL.....	10
TARDINESS.....	10
TRUANCY.....	10
BACKPACKS AND BOOKBAGS.....	11
BEHAVIOR.....	11
DANGEROUS WEAPONS AND INSTRUMENTS.....	13
DRESS CODE.....	13
SMOKING.....	14
SUBSTANCE ABUSE.....	14
BULLYING.....	15
BUS CONDUCT.....	17
CHEATING/PLAGIARISM (ACADEMIC DISHONESTY).....	17
CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND SEXUAL ASSAULT.....	18
COMPUTER RESOURCES.....	18
CYBER BULLYING.....	19
DEFIBRILLATORS IN SCHOOLS (AED'S)/SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST.....	20
DISCIPLINE.....	20
EXPULSION.....	20
SUSPENSION.....	22
EASTCONN POLICY.....	22
ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND GAMES.....	22

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION.....	23
EQUITY AND DIVERSITY.....	23
EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION.....	24
FACILITIES.....	24
FIELD TRIPS.....	24
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.....	24
FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.....	24
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.....	25
GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING.....	25
HARASSMENT STATEMENT.....	26
HAZING ACTIVITIES.....	26
HEALTH SERVICES.....	26
ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION.....	28
COMMUNICABLE/INFECTIOUS DISEASES.....	28
DISABILITIES.....	28
EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT.....	28
HEALTH RECORDS.....	28
HOMEBOUND.....	29
HOMELESS STUDENTS.....	29
ILLNESS.....	29
IMMUNIZATIONS.....	29
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS.....	30
HOMEWORK.....	30
HONOR ROLL.....	30
LASER POINTERS.....	30
LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS (ENGLISH LEARNERS).....	31
LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE.....	31
LOST AND FOUND.....	31
MIGRANT STUDENTS.....	31
OUT OF SCHOOL MISCONDUCT.....	32
PARENT CONFERENCES.....	32
PARENT INVOLVEMENT/COMMUNICATIONS.....	32
PARENT PORTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM.....	32
PESTICIDE APPLICATION.....	33
PHOTOGRAPHS.....	33
PHYSICAL EXERCISE.....	33
POSTERS.....	33
PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND PLACEMENT.....	33

PROPERTY, LOCKERS, AND EQUIPMENT.....	34
PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE.....	34
RECORDING OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.....	34
RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS.....	35
SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION.....	35
SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES.....	35
SCHOOL CLIMATE.....	35
SCHOOL SECURITY AND SAFETY.....	35
SEARCH AND SEIZURE.....	36
SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM.....	37
SEXUAL HARASSMENT.....	37
STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES: DUE PROCESS.....	37
STUDENT RECORDS.....	38
TARDY PROCEDURE.....	39
TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS.....	39
TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES.....	39
TITLE I PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT.....	40
TRANSPORTATION.....	40
TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES.....	41
VIDEO RECORDERS ON SCHOOL CAMPUS (FOR SCHOOL SECURITY PURPOSES).....	41
VISITORS.....	41
WEBSITES.....	42
WELLNESS.....	42
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF REVIEW AND UNDERSTANDING OF ACT/QMC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES VIA PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK	
SIGNATURE STATEMENT.....	44

MISSION STATEMENT OF DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS

EASTCONN's Mission: EASTCONN will empower all learners to achieve academic and personal excellence by advocating for innovative partnerships that can have a transformative impact on individuals, schools, and communities.

ACT's Mission: Through rigorous and unique educational experiences, conducted in a caring and safe environment, students learn to understand and embody the critical importance of our school's philosophical foundation: Respect Yourself, Respect the Work and Respect the Community.

Quinebaug Middle College's Mission: The mission of the Quinebaug Middle College {QMC} is to provide a challenging, personalized, comprehensive learning environment that fosters the skills, knowledge, habits and individual discipline necessary for students from diverse backgrounds to realize their ambitions and contribute in a positive, meaningful way to their community and culture.

PREFACE

The material covered within this student handbook is intended as a method of communicating to students and parents/guardians regarding general information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any EASTCONN policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superseded by such EASTCONN policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Any information contained in this handbook is subject to unilateral revision or elimination from time-to-time without notice. Consult the agency's website or the individual school's website for any significant changes.

This booklet is written for our students and their parents/guardians. It contains required and useful information. Because it cannot be as personal a communication as we would like, we address students not directly as "you" but rather as "the student," "students," or "children." Likewise, the term "the student's parent" may refer to the parent, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume responsibility for the student. Both students and parents/guardians need to be familiar with the Agency's Student Code of Conduct and school safety and security plans which are intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning.

The Student/Parent Handbook is designed to be in harmony with EASTCONN policy. Please be aware that the handbook is updated yearly, while policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy that affect portions of this Handbook will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources. Programs and activities shall be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities as prescribed by law. The school principal is the designated school compliance officer, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

AGE OF MAJORITY

In all school matters requiring the approval or presence of a parent or guardian, the 18-year-old student will be allowed to represent him/herself and sign all appropriate forms under his/her responsibility. However, the school reserves the right to require parent signature and/or contact parents regarding student issues. These include, but are not limited to, school attendance, school withdrawals, permission for psychological or academic testing, early dismissals, changes in courses, representation at PPTs, appeals, hearings, and access to or release of records.

AIDS CURRICULUM

It is the policy of EASTCONN to provide during the school day, planned, ongoing, systematic instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiencies Syndrome (AIDS). Parents who wish to have their child excused from such instruction shall communicate this request to the principal.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ensures support for individuals with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities are provided a free and appropriate education (FAPE), and are accommodated and employed without discrimination related to their disabilities.

It is the intent of EASTCONN to provide a free and appropriate public education to each Section 504/ADA qualified and eligible student with a disability within its jurisdiction, as defined in 28 CFR, Parts 35 and 36, of the Amendments to Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II and Title III.

Section 504 prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities (both students and staff members) by school districts receiving federal assistance of any kind for any program or activity. Districts may not discriminate against any person with a disability, regardless of whether the program or activity in which that person is involved receives federal funding directly.

All individuals who are disabled or "handicapped" are protected under Section 504. However, individuals who have been determined to be "handicapped" under Section 504 may not be considered disabled under IDEA. IDEA, which can be viewed as a subcategory of Section 504, provides for special programming or placement, while Section 504 protects the rights of individuals with handicaps. Under IDEA, students are qualified for services under 13 IDEA disabling conditions; specially designed individual education programs are planned for each student by Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams. Under Section 504, students with "handicaps" are entitled to special accommodations to ensure that they can participate in and benefit from public education and programs, and a 504 accommodation plan is designed for each student according to individual needs.

Section 504 is not an aspect of special education, but is, rather, a responsibility of the comprehensive general public education system. Unlike an eligibility system based on clinic categories of disabilities, Section 504 works on a more functional premise. Under 504 [29 U.S.C. & § 706(8)] a person is considered to have a disability if that person:

1. has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities,
2. has a record of such an impairment, or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

While Section 504 provides a means for preventing discrimination against students with disabilities, this does not mean that 504 plans must focus on the disabling condition or on addressing the disability directly. Rather, 504 plans offer a means for focusing on students' strengths, for capitalizing on what students bring to the instruction process - not on what they lack.

Students with disabilities, pursuant to Section 504 and/or ADA, will be provided a free appropriate public education which may include, but is not limited to, providing a structured learning environment; repeating and simplifying instructions about in-class and homework assignments; supplemented verbal instructions with visual instructions; adjusting class schedules, modifying test delivery; computer-assisted instructions; using modified textbooks and tailoring homework assignments.

Should you have any questions regarding Section 504, please call either your child's school principal or the Civil Rights Coordinator, Melanie Marcaccio, for the agency at EASTCONN.

Any eligible person, including any student, parent/guardian, staff member or other employee who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability may submit a written complaint to the agency's designated Section 504 Coordinator within 30 days of the alleged occurrence.

ASBESTOS

Legislation requires all school buildings to be evaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building's occupants. The agency has on file plans showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to comply with regulations to maintain a safe school environment. Request to review these plans may be made in the school office.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a requirement for success! We know that students will succeed when they are regularly in class. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that students are attending school daily and on time. We ask if your student will be absent or tardy to school to please call or email your school's Main Office that morning to report your child's absence. Parents may excuse up to 9 absences for the year without a note from a medical professional.

If a student reaches 15 absences from a class, they will lose credit for that course. Students may be eligible to complete a credit appeal process. Students need to be in good standing with classroom attendance to participate in school activities such as dances, field trips, and club activities. Students who miss class unexcused (cut class) can lose these privileges. Students with over ten **unexcused absences** from a class will lose privileges to attend school dances or participate in other school events as designated by the school administration.

Absence means an excused absence or an unexcused absence.

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day. A student serving an out-of-school suspension or an expulsion will always be considered absent.

A child whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than 10% of the total number of days that the student has been enrolled at the school during the school year is considered a "chronically absent child." The child will be subject to review by the district and/or the school attendance team.

All children attending district schools must obtain the required immunizations unless they have medical contraindications or religious objections. This obligation may be waived for homeless students.

A student must remain in school until age 18.

Absence

Every attempt should be made to confine necessary appointments to after school, weekends and vacation periods. When a parent determines that an absence is necessary, parents are requested to contact the school between 6:30 A.M. and 9:30 A.M. on the day of the absence by telephoning the school.

If it is not possible to telephone the school on the day of absence, the parent is requested to send a written excuse to the school on the date of the student's return. The student should submit the excuse directly to the office. Parents should contact the school counselor in order to take advantage of special services such as the collection of homework assignments for the student who must be out several days.

Excused Absence

A student's absence from school shall be considered "excused" only if a written documentation of the reason for such absence has been submitted within ten {10} school days of the student's return to school and meets the following criteria:

- A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits written documentation to school officials.
- B. Students receive an excused absence for the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, when they are absent from school for the following reasons:
 - 1. Student illness, verified by a licensed medical professional, regardless of the length of the absence.
 - 2. Students observance of a religious holiday.
 - 3. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.
 - 4. Court appearances that are mandated (documentation required).
 - 5. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by the district other than the one the student attends.
 - 6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by District administration and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidelines.
 - 7. Additional 10 days for children of military service members.
- C. A student may not participate in any after school activity if not present for a minimum of 4 hours on the designated day.

Unexcused Absence

Unexcused absences are those that do not fall under any of the excused absences. Being more than 10 minutes tardy to a class period will be considered an unexcused absence.

Absences which are the result of school disciplinary action are excluded from the definitions.

Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards when issued. Parents are also encouraged to contact the teachers, school counselors and administrators to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

Chronic Absenteeism

A student whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than ten percent of the total number of days that such student has been enrolled at

such school during the school year is considered to be a "chronically absent child." Such a student will be subject to review by the attendance review team and the chronic absenteeism prevention and intervention plan developed by the State Department of Education. The agency will also collect and analyze data on student attendance, truancy and chronic absenteeism for students with disabilities.

Leaving School Grounds/Release of Students From School

Under no circumstances may a student leave the school or school grounds during school hours without permission from his/her parents or guardians and school administration. In the event it is necessary for a student to be dismissed early, a parent or guardian should send a written request to the office. Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student shall be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent or guardian. Children of single- parent families will be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child and who is identified as such in the school records, unless prior arrangements have been made with the school. Arrangements should be made with the building administrator on the parent or guardian to pick up the student in the school office. No student may be released in the custody of any individual, not the parent or guardian of the student, unless the individual's name appears on the list maintained by the school's principal as authorized to obtain the release of students.

If someone other than a parent/guardian picks up the student, the person appearing in the school office must bring a note of identification from the parent or guardian along with identification. EASTCONN does not condone/approve students leaving a school campus in third- party ride sharing vehicles, especially such services (Uber, Lyft) whose own policies explicitly prohibit minors from using them unless accompanied by an adult.

Tardiness

It is expected students will be on time to ensure maximum instructional time. Students who are not in their first period class on time are considered tardy to school and must report directly to the office. A student discovered on school grounds who has not signed in at the office will also be considered tardy. A student who is repeatedly tardy may be considered truant and may be subject to consequences determined by administrator or their designee.

Truancy

Truancy is defined by statute as absence(s) from school without the knowledge or approval of parents/guardians and/or school officials. A student age five to eighteen inclusive with 4 (four) unexcused absences in one month or 10 (ten) unexcused absences in a school year will be considered truant. When students are determined truant they will be subject to appear in front

of an attendance review board in order to assist the student/family to ensure regular school attendance.

Parents have the responsibility to assist school officials in remedying and preventing truancy. School staff are mandated by the state to report excessive absences or patterns of concern.

Information about truancy will also be posted in the annual district report cards required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

BACKPACKS AND BOOKBAGS

ACT students are expected to leave backpacks and bookbags in lockers for the entirety of each day.

QMC students may carry backpacks with them throughout the day.

BEHAVIOR

Students are responsible for conducting themselves properly in a responsible manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity. They must accept responsibility for misbehavior and engage with school staff to identify how a different choice of action could result in a better outcome. EASTCONN has authority over students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on agency transportation. This jurisdiction includes any school-related activity, regardless of time or location, and any off-campus school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location.

Student responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment in school or school- related activities include:

1. Attending all classes, regularly and on time.
2. Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
3. Being dressed appropriately.
4. Showing respect toward others, engaging in civil discourse.
5. Behaving in a responsible manner.
6. Abiding by the code of conduct.
7. Obeying all school rules, including safety rules, and rules pertaining to Internet safety.
8. Seeking change in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
9. Taking accountability for actions and owning up to responsibilities.

Students who violate these rules will be subject to disciplinary action and shall be referred when appropriate to legal authorities for violation of the law.

Students at school or school-related activities are prohibited from:

1. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
2. Throwing objects that can cause bodily injury or damage property.
3. Leaving school grounds or school-sponsored events without permission.
4. Directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward other students or staff.
5. Disobeying directives from school personnel or school policies, rules, and regulations.
6. Being disrespectful or directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures toward teachers or other school employees.
7. Playing with matches or fire, or committing arson.
8. Committing robbery or theft.
9. Damaging or vandalizing property owned by the school, other students, or school employees.
10. Disobeying school rules on school buses.
11. Fighting, committing physical abuse, or threatening physical abuse.
12. Committing extortion, coercion, or blackmail; that is, forcing an individual to act through theme of force or threat of force.
13. Name-calling, making ethnic or racial slurs or derogatory statements that may substantially disrupt the school program or incite violence.
14. Engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual contact disruptive to the school environment or disturbing to other students.
15. Assaulting a teacher, staff member or other individual.
16. Selling, giving, delivering, possessing, using, or being under the influence of drugs such as: marijuana; a controlled substance or drug; or an alcoholic beverage.
17. Possessing a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, firearm, martial arts weapon, or weapon facsimile.
18. Possessing prescription drugs that are given to a person other than to whom the drug is prescribed.
19. Smoking or using tobacco products, including electronic nicotine delivery systems (e- cigarettes) and vapor products.
20. Hazing.
21. Bullying.
22. Behaving in any way that disrupts the school environment or educational process.
23. Violating the district's Internet Safety policy and/or Online Social Networking Policy.
24. Cheating or plagiarizing, including by electronic means.
25. Threatening in any manner, including orally, in writing, or via electronic communication, a member of the school including any teacher, a member of the school administration or another employee, or a fellow student.
26. Taking, storing, disseminating, transferring, viewing or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or other means, including but not limited to texting and

emailing.

27. Violating any state or federal law that would indicate that the student presents a danger to any person in the school or to school property.

28. Damaging in a willful manner school electronic equipment and/or software.

Students are urged to participate in efforts to build a positive school climate as well as alternatives to exclusionary discipline such as restorative practices or peer monitoring.

During school dances, students may not leave the building unless written permission is received from parents indicating that the parents will pick up the student at a pre-determined time prior to when the school building and school grounds will be secured and adult supervision will end. Students without such written permission will not be allowed to leave and reenter the dance activity. Smoking is not allowed at any school functions. All school rules are in effect during such activity.

Dangerous Weapons and Instruments

No guns, knives or any other objects, including martial arts weapons and facsimiles of weapons, capable of threatening or causing injury or death may be brought onto school grounds. Any object used to cause injury will be considered a weapon. Violators will be subject to arrest and prosecution as well as appropriate disciplinary action. Any student found to possess a weapon on school grounds or during a school activity will be expelled from school.

An expelled student may apply for early readmission to school. Such readmission is at the discretion of EASTCONN. EASTCONN, as appropriate, may condition such readmission on specified criteria.

Dress Code

Student dress may be regulated and students are encouraged to dress in clothing appropriate to the school situation. Restrictions on freedom of expression may be applied whenever the mode of dress is unsafe, disruptive to the educational process or contrary to law.

Administrators will use reasonableness and discretion when determining the appropriateness of attire. The school staff will enforce the dress code in a consistent manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type/size. Enforcement of the dress code will be gender neutral.

Any school dress that impairs safety or increases the risk of injury to self or others, causes discomfort to others (e.g., uncleanness, malodorousness, inappropriate language), causes distraction or disruption of the learning environment, advertises or advocates the use of alcohol or drugs, pornography, or is libelous or inherently contains unreasonable potential to upset and hurt others is prohibited.

Smoking

Students shall not possess nor smoke or use tobacco products or e-cigarettes or vapor product devices on school property or at any school-related or school-sanctioned activity, on or off school property as provided by state and federal law.

Substance Abuse

As stated in the BEHAVIOR section of this handbook, the school prohibits the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of alcohol or controlled substances on school grounds or during school activities. Any student in violation of this will be subject to the following disciplinary actions: In addition to the prohibition pertaining to alcohol, drugs, tobacco and inhalants, EASTCONN prohibits the use of performance-enhancing drugs, including anabolic steroids and food supplements, including Creatine, by students involved in school-related athletics or any co-curricular or extracurricular school activity or program, other than use for a valid medical purpose as documented by a physician. Substance abuse or distribution of drugs and/or drug paraphernalia including alcohol may indicate serious, underlying problems. Every effort will be made to offer student assistance, including early identification, referral for treatment to private or community agencies and aftercare support.

Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interests of the student, school population and community in mind and with due consideration of the rights of students. However, consideration must be given to the fact that substance abuse is illegal and subject to criminal prosecution. Unauthorized possession, distribution, sale or consumption of dangerous drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages may result in a recommendation for expulsion.

Students are encouraged to consult with teachers, administrators and other professional staff on substance abuse problems. A staff member who is contacted by a student regarding a drug or alcohol problem may elect to keep that information confidential and not disclose it to any other person in accordance with state law. However, the student will be encouraged at the earliest appropriate time to seek help from parents or guardians.

In such cases, the decision to involve the parents/guardians will be arrived jointly by the student and educator unless, in the judgment of the educator, the mental or physical health of the student is immediately and dangerously threatened by drug/alcohol use. If such danger is imminent, the parents/guardians and health officials will be notified so that appropriate action can be taken.

As required by statute, instruction will be provided regarding the "knowledge, skills and attitudes required to understand and avoid the effects of alcohol, of nicotine, of tobacco, and of drugs."

BULLYING

Bullying of a student by another student is prohibited. Such behavior is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending an EASTCONN school or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed to another student attending an EASTCONN that:

- 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 students,
- 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 shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or 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. (The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.) Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Physical violence and attacks
- 2. Verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethnically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs
- 3. Threats and intimidation
- 4. Extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
- 5. Exclusion from peer groups within the school
- 6. The misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing other students within school or out of school {"cyberbullying"}
- 7. Targeting of a student based on the student's actual or perceived "differentiating" characteristics such as race; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; socioeconomic or academic status; physical appearance; or mental physical, developmental, or sensory disability.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school- related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

1. creates a hostile environment at school for the victims,
2. infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school, are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspensions, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement official.

Student and/or their parent may file a written report of conduct they consider bullying. Students may also make an informal complaint of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbal report to any school employee, who will promptly put the complaint to writing and forward it to the Safe School Climate Specialist for review and action. The complaint procedure is also posted on the agency's website and the school website. Students and parents are permitted to make anonymous reports of bullying. Parent written reports and student anonymous reports will be investigated by the Safe School Climate Specialist but no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Safe School Climate Specialist is responsible for taking a bullying report and investigating the complaint. Parents/guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying act and the parents/guardians of the student against whom such alleged act was directed will receive prompt notification that such investigation has begun. Parents of students involved in a verified act of bullying will be invited to attend at least one meeting at school. Safe School Climate Specialists are required to receive mental health first aid training.

Bullying behavior by any student at EASTCONN is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- 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 shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or physical, mental, 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.

Teen dating violence means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening that occurs between two students who are currently in or have recently been in a dating relationship.

Students who engage in any act of bullying or teen dating violence, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by EASTCONN, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by EASTCONN, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

- A. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
- B. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
- C. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior or teen dating violence behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying or teen dating violence to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior or teen dating violence will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying and/or teen dating violence are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. EASTCONN policy and regulation #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

BUS CONDUCT

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditional upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Students may be suspended from transportation services for unsatisfactory conduct while awaiting or receiving transportation to and from school that endangers persons or property or violates an EASTCONN policy or administrative regulation.

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM (Academic Dishonesty)

Students are expected to pursue their school work with integrity and honesty. Cheating and plagiarism demonstrates a lack of integrity and character that are inconsistent with QMC/ACT goals and values. All forms of cheating and plagiarism, including by electronic means, are not acceptable. The misrepresenting by students of homework, class work, tests, reports, or other assignments as if they were entirely their own work shall be considered forms of cheating and/or plagiarism. Consequences of cheating and/or plagiarism shall be academic in nature unless repeated incidents require disciplinary action. Consequences for cheating will take into account the grade level of the student and the severity of the misrepresentation.

CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

All school employees, including teachers, superintendents, administrators, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, school counselors, paraprofessionals, social workers, psychologists, licensed nurses, physicians, licensed behavior analysts, and substitute teachers are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm or sexual assault by a school employee to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receives training in their use, as required by state law.

Reporting of child abuse, neglect and sexual assault by a school employee is a responsibility that is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse, neglect or a sexual assault a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases.

Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries that are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment or neglect are also considered child abuse.

EASTCONN will post in each school 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 a conspicuous location frequented by students. Such posting shall be in various languages appropriate for the students enrolled in the school.

COMPUTER RESOURCES

EASTCONN utilizes computer technology to broaden instruction and to prepare students for a computerized society. Use of these resources is restricted to students working under a teacher's supervision and for approved purposes only. Students and parents will be asked to sign a user agreement regarding appropriate use of these resources. Violations of this agreement may result in withdrawal of privileges and other disciplinary action.

Students and parents should be aware that e-mail communications, using school computers, are not private and may be monitored by staff. Students may not access social media sites using school equipment, while on school property, or at a school-sponsored activity unless the posting is approved by a teacher. The school will not be liable for information posted by students on social media websites, such as Facebook, Instagram, etc., when the student is not engaged in agency activities and not using agency equipment.

The school reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store at any time and without prior notice any and all usage of the computer network and Internet access and any and all information transmitted or received in connection with such usage. All such information files shall be and remain the property of EASTCONN and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such material.

EASTCONN is committed to aiding students and staff in creating a 21st Century learning environment. Therefore students (plus staff) will be permitted to access the wireless network with their personal devices during the school day. With teacher approval, students may use their own devices to access the Internet and collaborate with other students. Students and parents/guardians participating in the Bring Your Own Device/Technology program must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct, as well as all applicable school/EASTCONN policies, particularly the Computer Acceptable Use policy.

CYBER BULLYING

EASTCONN's computer network and the Internet, and the personal electronic devices of students, whether accessed on campus or off campus, during or after school hours, may not be used for the purpose of harassment. All forms of harassment over the Internet, commonly known as cyber bullying, are unacceptable, a violation of EASTCONN policy and of EASTCONN's acceptable computer use policy and procedures. Cyberbullying means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to, such misuses of technology as harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs. It is also recognized that the author (poster or sender) of the inappropriate material may be disguised or logged on as someone else.

Students and community members who believe they have been the victims of such misuses of technology as described should not erase the offending material from the system. A copy of the material should be printed and brought to the attention of the Safe School Climate Specialist, the Principal or Director of Technology. All reports of cyberbullying will be investigated by the Safe School Climate Specialist.

In situations in which the cyberbullying originated from a non-school computer but were brought to the attention of school officials, any disciplinary action shall be based upon whether the conduct is determined to be severely disruptive of the educational process so that it markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operation of school. Also, such conduct must be violative of a publicized school policy. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, threats, or making a threat off school grounds, to kill or hurt a teacher or student.

Disciplinary action may include consequences such as loss of computer privileges, suspension, or expulsion. A communicated threat or a hate crime will be reported to the police.

Students will be provided instruction about appropriate online behavior.

DEFIBRILLATORS IN SCHOOLS (AED'S)/SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

Each school has (1) one automatic external defibrillator (AED) and (2) school personnel trained in AED operation and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The AED and trained personnel will be available during the school's normal operational hours, at school-sponsored athletic events and practices on school grounds and at school-sponsored events not taking place during normal school operational hours. The school also has an emergency action response plan addressing the use of trained school personnel to respond to individuals experiencing sudden cardiac arrest or similar life-threatening emergencies.

DISCIPLINE

A student who violates EASTCONN's code of conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. EASTCONN's disciplinary actions may include using one or more discipline management techniques, such as a restorative justice model, removal from class, removal to an alternative education program, in school suspension, out of school suspension, and expulsion. Disciplinary measures will be appropriate for the offense. In addition, when a student violates the law that student may be referred to legal authorities for prosecution. Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct, which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violates publicized agency policy even if such conduct occurs off school property and during non-school time. The agency believes that exclusionary discipline practices {suspension, expulsion} limit students' access to classroom instruction and fail to improve student outcomes and school climate. These practices will be used as a last resort.

Expulsion

Prior to an expulsion hearing, parents will be given notice of at least five (5) business days before such hearing. It will contain information about the legal rights of the student and parent and information concerning legal services that are provided free of charge or at a reduced rate that are available locally and how to access such services shall be provided to the student and his/her parent or guardian. An attorney or other advocate may represent any student subject to expulsion proceedings. The parent/guardian of the student has the right to have the expulsion hearing postponed for up to one week to allow time to obtain representation, except that if an emergency exists, such hearings

shall be held as soon as possible after the expulsion.

EASTCONN may expel a student from school privileges if, after a full hearing, EASTCONN finds that the student's conduct endangers person(s), property or the educational process or is in violation of a publicized EASTCONN policy. Students who have been expelled for the first time may be eligible for an alternative educational program, as defined in accordance with State Board of Education standards.

Expulsion from school will result in the loss of all extra-curricular and social privileges during the period of expulsion.

For any student under 16 years old who is expelled and students between 16 and 18 expelled for the first time and who have never been suspended, EASTCONN may shorten the length of or waive the expulsion period if the student successfully completes an EASTCONN specified program and meets any other conditions required by EASTCONN. Such an EASTCONN program does not require the student or the parent/guardian of the student to pay for participation in the program. Such students must be offered an alternative educational opportunity that complies with the State Board of Education's "Standards for Alternative Educational Opportunities."

Students are subject to mandatory expulsion for the possession and/or use of weapons, including martial arts weapons, or other dangerous instruments in any school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle, or at any school sponsored activity for a calendar year. A student who offers illegal drugs for sale or distribution on or off school grounds is also cause for expulsion for a calendar year. EASTCONN may modify the expulsion period on a case-by-case basis.

Whenever a student is expelled, notice of the expulsion and the conduct for which the student was expelled will be included on the student's cumulative education record. The record will be expunged if the student graduates from high school and the expulsion was not for weapon possession and/or for the sale or distribution of illegal drugs.

If students expulsion is shortened or the expulsion period waived based upon the fact that the student was expelled for the first time, has never been suspended and successfully completed an EASTCONN specified program and/or met other conditions required by EASTCONN, the notice of expulsion will be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school or, if EASTCONN so chooses, at the time the student completes the EASTCONN specified program and meets other EASTCONN required conditions.

Expelled students, under age 16, will be offered an individualized learning plan as part of an alternative education. Students between ages 16 and 18 who are expelled, even for conduct that endangers others, will be offered an alternative educational opportunity if it is the students first expulsion (PA 16-147). Once a student is admitted to an alternative educational placement, an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) will be developed to govern the programming for the student during the period of expulsion.

An EASTCONN student who has committed an expellable offense who seeks to return to an EASTCONN school after having been in a juvenile detention center, the Connecticut Juvenile Training School or any other residential placement for one year or more, in lieu of expulsion from EASTCONN, shall be permitted to return to the appropriate school setting within EASTCONN. Further, EASTCONN will not expel the student from any additional time for the offense(s).

Suspension

The administration may suspend a student for infraction of school rules. Suspension is defined as an exclusion from school privileges for not more than ten (10) consecutive days, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which suspension was imposed.

Suspension from school will result in loss of extracurricular and social privileges during the period of suspension.

For any student suspended for the first time and who has never been expelled, the administration may shorten the length of or waive the suspension period if the student successfully completes an administration-specified program and meets any other administration-required conditions, which shall not incur an expense to the student or his/her parents.

EASTCONN POLICY

EASTCONN policies are available on the district's website at www.eastconn.org. The policies are subject to modifications by EASTCONN at any time.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND GAMES

The school strives to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment while providing students with opportunities for reasonable access to cell phones and other electronic devices. This policy also recognizes the use of electronic devices for educational purposes with administrative permission or with teacher approval within the classroom. The possession and use of electronic devices is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in the loss of privileges.

Students are solely responsible for any electronic devices brought to school. Do not leave them unattended. The school is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen devices.

Mobile devices such as cell phones may be used for information access and/or text-based communication during lunch in the cafeteria, during passing time and before and after school.

The devices are not allowed to be used in classes, unless their use is part of the teacher's lesson plan. Teachers have discretion concerning how the devices may be used for learning.

No recording, video or audio, or photographs may be taken in school unless it is part of a lesson and all appropriate privacy protections, such as contained in FERPA, are honored.

The sending, sharing, viewing or possessing pictures, emails or other material of a sexual nature in electronic or any other form on cell phones or other electronic devices is prohibited in the school setting.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

In the event school is closed because of bad weather or another emergency, announcements will be made on local television and radio stations. EASTCONN also uses an automated calling system (School Messenger) to notify parents/guardians, especially in situations requiring an early dismissal from school.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Students deserve a respectful learning environment in which their cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity is valued and contributes to successful academic outcomes. The school learning and work environment is enriched and improved by the contributions, perspectives, and the very presence of diverse participants.

EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION

A student will be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) or Family Life and Sex Education upon receipt of a written request for such exemption from his/her parent or guardian. In addition, a student will be excused from participating in or observing animal dissections as part of classroom instruction upon a written request from the student's parent or guardian. The student must complete an alternate assignment determined by the school.

FACILITIES

Certain areas of the school will be accessible to students before and after school for specific purposes. Students are expected to remain in the area in which their activity is scheduled to take place.

After dismissed and unless involved in a teacher/staff supervised activity, students are expected to leave the campus immediately.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be scheduled for educational, cultural, or extracurricular purposes. Any student whose behavior is considered detrimental to the well-being of other students may be barred from participation by the principal. While on a trip, all students are considered to be "in" school. This means that conduct and dress standards will be appropriate for the field trip activity. EASTCONN strongly encourages all transportation of student to be on buses or other transportation vehicles that conform to the requirements of law and regulations of the State Department of Education.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in any class or school-sponsored activity because of inability to pay for material fees, transportation costs, admission prices, or any other related expenses. Any student who needs financial assistance for school activities should contact a guidance counselor or administrator to request confidential help.

FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. A crisis response drill will be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills every three months. Such crisis response drill will be planned and conducted with the local law enforcement agency and will incorporate the basic protocols of lockdown, evacuation, and shelter-in-place responses.

Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner.

When the alarm sounds, students are to proceed along the posted exit routes in a quick, quiet and calm manner. Students should not return to the building until the return signal is given.

Local law enforcement and other local public safety officials will evaluate and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students must successfully complete the required number of credits and must demonstrate proficiency in the skills identified by EASTCONN, as required for graduation. A multi-facet assessment procedure will be used, including specific target scores on the statewide proficiency/mastery examinations. Credits can also be earned at an institution of higher education, through online coursework, or through a demonstration of mastery based on a competency and performance standards, in accordance with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education. A Community Service Recognition Award will be granted by the State Board of Education to students completing at least 50 hours of community service and meets the statutory criteria to earn one-half credit toward graduation. (See the program of studies for full graduation details.)

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The school's counseling department is committed to a program of comprehensive developmental services structured to anticipate and nurture the personal, social, career, and educational growth of all students as they pass through specific developmental stages. This complete program incorporates a school counseling curriculum, individual planning, responsive services and program management. Social services and counseling are rendered by professionally qualified members of the school staff. The responsibilities of the social workers and guidance/school counselors include helping the student function more successfully within the school environment.

School counselors will use a variety of methods to assist students in overcoming barriers to learning, to make strong connections with the educational opportunities in the school and to ensure that every child learns in a safe, healthy and supportive setting.

Counseling is an opportunity to talk with someone about things that are important to students. These opportunities to talk may be personal, social, educational or vocational. Counselors will listen and be open and honest with students. Guidance/School Counselors are encouraged to issue appointment request forms to students. Appointments can also be arranged by filling out a Guidance Appointment request form in the office or by stopping by the guidance office before school, between classes or after school.

Educational and career planning guidance is available along with information to develop a plan for the student's future. This may include a long-range plan of studies for grades 9-12 and selecting student's subjects year by year in keeping with student's career interests and special skills or talents. Parent notification and involvement will be solicited.

Referral for psychological and/or psychiatric assistance by other social services agencies within or outside the school may also be recommended. Please note: The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test, or treatment without first obtaining the parents/guardian's written consent.

HARASSMENT STATEMENT

Every child has the right to feel safe, valued and comfortable in school. No one else's behavior should ever make children feel afraid or embarrassed because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any disability they may have. EASTCONN prohibits harassment of any kind. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop.

Parents are urged to reinforce with their child(ren) that if he/she is harassed or sees harassment happening to someone else that he/she should report the behavior to a teacher or the principal. To maintain a productive and positive learning environment, EASTCONN will make every attempt to halt any harassment of which they become aware by calling attention to this policy or by direct disciplinary action, if necessary.

A student who believes he/she has been harassed is encouraged to report the incident to the principal. The allegations will be investigated and addressed and appropriate disciplinary action taken, where necessary.

HAZING ACTIVITIES

Students are prohibited from participating in any hazing activities. Hazing is any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purposes of initiation or admission into or affiliation with any student organization.

HEALTH SERVICES

The school health office is designed to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school.

Parents are notified of any deviation from the normal pattern of health and suggestions are given for follow-up. It is likewise important that parents notify the school nurse in case of a student's illness. If a student is to be excused or limited for an extended

period from participation in school activities, he/she is required to bring a statement signed by a physician. The school nurse is available to parents and students for conferences regarding health issues.

Administration of Medication

Parents of students requiring medication during school should contact the school nurse. Special forms are required to permit the administration of medicine in school. They are available from the school nurse. All medication must be in original containers with proper labels.

In cases in which a student is able to self-administer medication, the parents or guardians must submit a signed statement that the medication must be taken during the school day and the student is capable of administering the medication. The statement must be accompanied by a physician's, dentist's or advanced practice registered nurse's statement indicating the necessity and naming the medication, the strength, and the prescribed dosage. It must specify the schedule on which it is to be taken and the details of administration. Such statements must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

A student with asthma or an allergic condition may carry an inhaler or an EpiPen or similar device in school at all times if he/she is under the care of a physician, physician assistant or advanced practical nurse and such practitioner certifies in writing that the child needs to keep an asthmatic inhaler or EpiPen at all times to ensure prompt treatment of the child's asthma or allergic condition and to protect the child against serious harm or death. A written authorization of the parent/guardian is required.

A school nurse, or in the absence of the nurse, a "qualified school employee" may administer epinephrine in a cartridge injector for the purpose of emergency first aid to students who experience allergic reactions but were not previously known to have serious allergies and therefore do not have prior written authorization of a parent/guardian or qualified medical professional for the administration of epinephrine. Parents/guardians may submit in writing to the school nurse and school medical advisor that epinephrine shall not be administered to his/her child.

A school nurse, or in the absence of the nurse, a "qualified/school employee" may administer anti-epileptic medication to a specific student with a medically-diagnosed epileptic condition that requires prompt treatment in accordance with the student's individual seizure action plan. Written parental permission and a written order from a physician is required.

A student with diabetes may test his/her own blood glucose levels if the student has written permission from his/her parents/guardian and a written order from a Connecticut licensed physician. The time or place of such testing shall not be restricted.

A school nurse or the principal will select a qualified school employee to, under certain

conditions, give a glycogen injection to a student with diabetes who may require prompt treatment to protect him/her from serious harm or death. Written parental permission and written order from a physician are required.

School bus drivers are trained to administer epinephrine in a life-threatening anaphylactic reaction to a student who is in need of emergency care due to a medically diagnosed allergic reaction.

EASTCONN does not allow the ingestion of marijuana for palliative (medical) use in any school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, on or off school grounds.

Communicable/Infectious Diseases

Students with any medical condition that within the school setting may expose others to disease or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. Additional information concerning this may be obtained from the school nurse.

Before a child may return to school after an absence due to such condition, parents and students may be required to submit medical evidence that their child has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others.

Disabilities

School district will not discriminate on the basis of disability as required under ADA, IDEA and Section 504 and C.G.S. 10-76a and any similar law or provision.

Emergency Medical Treatment

Parents are asked each year to complete an emergency information form for use by the school in the event of a medical emergency.

Health Records

School nurses maintain health records using the Connecticut "Health Assessment and Record Form." These records are accessible to certified staff working with the child and to school health aides if permission is granted by the nurse or building administrator. Parents may request to inspect the health records of their child. Copies may be provided if requested.

Original copies of the record are sent when a student transfers to another school in the state. If moving out-of-state, a copy will be forwarded. Health records are maintained for at least six years after the student graduates. The District will comply with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to maintain the privacy of protected health information.

A diabetic student may test his/her own blood glucose level per the written order of a

physician or advanced practice nurse stating the need and the capacity of the student to conduct self- testing. Such self-testing shall be done in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Commissioner of Education.

Homebound

Home instruction is available to students who are unable to attend school for medical and/or mental health reasons for a period of two weeks or longer as diagnosed by a physician, psychiatrist or the Planning and Placement Team. Home instruction may also be provided for those students who have been excluded from regular school attendance for disciplinary reasons.

Homeless Students

Homeless students, as defined by federal and state legislation, will have all programs, services, and transportation that other students enjoy and may continue to attend the school of origin. The local liaison for homeless children is EASTCONN's Director of Pupil Services. EASTCONN has reviewed its existing policies and regulations to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth. Homeless children and youths are defined as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence." Homeless children have the right to attend the school of origin "to the extent feasible," unless doing so is contrary to the request of such student's parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.

A homeless student who is not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian shall have full access to his/her educational and medical records in the Board's possession.

Illness

If a student does not feel well, the student should report to the school nurse or the main office.

Immunizations

All students must be immunized against certain diseases and must present a certificate from a physical or local health agency. If the student should not be immunized due to medical or religious reasons, a statement from a physician or the parent as appropriate must be provided. The required immunizations are: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio, Pertussis, Measles, Mumps, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chickenpox), Meningococcal, Pneumococcal, Rubella, Influenza and Hemophilus Influenza Type B. Parents or guardians of any children unable to have the mandated immunizations prior to initial school entry and the boosters as required in the later grades may have the immunizations, on the recommendation of the Board of Education, be paid by the town.

Parents/guardians wanting their children to be excused from immunizations if such immunizations are contrary to the religious beliefs of the child or of his/her

parent/guardian must request such exemption in writing to the superintendent. The request must be officially acknowledged by any of the following: notary public, judge, clerk/deputy clerk of a court, town clerk, justice of the peace, attorney or school nurse. Such request must be made before initial entry into the school system and prior to entering grade 7.

In addition to the required immunizations for initial entry into school for kindergarten, regular and special education preschool programs, additional immunizations are required for entry into seventh grade and for entry into eighth grade and ninth or tenth grade. The school must enroll any homeless student even if the student is unable to produce the required medical and immunization records.

For further information regarding immunizations contact the school nurse.

Physical Examinations

All students must present evidence of a physical examination upon enrollment to the district. (C.G.S. 10-204a) Health assessment shall also be required in grade 9 (or 10). Postural screening will be conducted for all male students in grade 9. If a homeless student, as defined by federal statute, lacks immunization/medical records, the school will enroll the child and refer the parent/guardian to the district's homeless liaison.

HOMEWORK

The purpose of homework is to help students become self-directed, independent learners and is related to the educational progress of the student. It serves to help all students reach their instructional goals.

In order for homework to be an effective support for learning, the homework policy requires a partnership among the school system represented by the teacher, the student and their parents. Without this partnership in support of learning, students will not achieve their full potential.

HONOR ROLL

An honor roll is published at the end of each term and at the end of the school year. To be considered for the honor roll, students must meet the appropriate criteria.

LASER POINTERS

Students are not permitted to possess or use laser pointers while on school property, while using EASTCONN transportation, or while attending school-sponsored or school-related activities, whether on or off school property unless under a staff member's supervision and in the context of instruction. Laser pointers will be confiscated and students will be

disciplined.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS (ENGLISH LEARNERS)

Parents of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students/English Learners participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the English Learners program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion.

Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services which may include, but are not limited to, English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, homework assistance and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE

In the event of a critical emergency, all school personnel, including students, will follow the "Lock Down Procedures." Students will be informed of specific actions they should take when a Lock Down Procedure is put into effect. Lock down drills, like fire drills, will occur periodically during the school year.

LOST AND FOUND

Any articles that are found in the school or on school grounds should be turned in at the main office. Unclaimed articles will be disposed of at the end of the school year. Loss or suspected theft of personal or school property should be reported to the main office. Whenever practical, items brought to school should have a name placed on them to assure return to the rightful owner.

MIGRANT STUDENTS

EASTCONN has a program to address the needs of migrant students. A full range of services will be provided to migrant students, including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes. Parents/guardians of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the migrant program.

OUT OF SCHOOL MISCONDUCT

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct that is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of EASTCONN policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time.

Examples of off-school conduct that may result in such discipline include but are not limited to:

1. Sale, possession, use, or distribution of dangerous weapons, including martial arts weapons;
2. Use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs;
3. Violent conduct;
4. Making of a bomb threat;
5. Threatening to harm or kill another student or member of the staff; where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood of threatening the health, safety or welfare of school property, individuals thereon, and/or the educational process.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to become partners in their child's educational successes. In addition to dedicated conference time referenced on the school calendar, conferences with teachers may be held at any time during the school year. Parents and students, as well as teachers, counselors, or administrators may initiate a conference.

A parent or student may arrange a conference with an individual member of the school staff or a group conference with school staff members. Conferences are held during school hours but every effort will be made to accommodate parent schedules.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT/COMMUNICATIONS

Education succeeds best when there is a strong partnership between home and school based on communications, interactions, and engagement. Parents/guardians are urged to encourage their children to put a high priority on education and to make the most of their educational opportunities available. Parents/guardians should become familiar with all of the child's school activities and with EASTCONN's academic programs, including special programs. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences, participation in campus parent organizations, attendance at Board of Education meetings and being a school volunteer are strongly encouraged.

PARENT PORTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

EASTCONN has enhanced its student information system to include a parent portal

(PowerSchool). The parent portal will allow a parent/guardian of students to access student records via a secure website. A parent/guardian will be able to view attendance, homework assignments and grades.

PESTICIDE APPLICATION

Only certified pesticide applicators shall be used in schools for any non-emergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Pesticide applications are limited to non-school hours and when activities are not taking place. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years.

Parents/guardians and staff who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use will be listed on a registry and such notice will be provided as required by law.

PHOTOGRAPHS

From time-to-time during the school year, school personnel and/or the media take photographs. If a parent/guardian does not want their child to be photographed for school use, school website use or for media purposes, the school office must be alerted in writing. Photos of individual and classroom groups are taken annually, which may be purchased by parents/guardians, but they are not obligated to do so.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Students are encouraged to get exercise through the physical education program. In addition, students cannot be assigned physical activity as a form of punishment.

POSTERS

Signs and posters that students wish to display must be approved by the principal. Posters displayed without authorization will be removed. Any student who posts such material without authorization shall be subject to disciplinary action.

PROMOTION, RETENTION, AND PLACEMENT

Student promotion is dependent on each student's mastery and acquisition of basic learning objectives. Normally, students will progress annually from grade to grade. Students who master objectives at an exceptional rate may be considered for acceleration to another grade or class. Students who fail to master basic learning objectives at a normal rate will be considered for retention. Retention and acceleration decisions are the responsibility of the teaching staff and principal, after prior notification and discussion with parents. The final decision rests with the school principal. Students must demonstrate attainment of the basic skills needed for graduation based on the district's assessment program. A failure to attain these skills may necessitate

involvement in additional courses, special help programs, summer school and retesting.

PROPERTY, LOCKERS, AND EQUIPMENT

It is the policy of EASTCONN to hold students responsible for any loss of or damage to the property of the school under the jurisdiction of EASTCONN when the loss or damage occurs through fault of the student.

Any student damaging or defacing school property will be financially liable for restoring the property regardless of the condition of the property at the time of the destructive act, in addition to any other discipline up to and including arrest or civil prosecution as deemed appropriate.

In addition, anyone who witnesses such an act and fails to report it to the proper authorities will be considered as having contributed to that action. Such charges for damaged property will be exactly those which the school must incur to repair the damage.

Searches of desks or lockers may be conducted at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by district policy. Parents will be notified if any prohibited items are found in the student's desk or locker.

Students should not attempt to repair school equipment but should notify the main office immediately if it isn't functioning properly. Any damage done will be the responsibility of the person to whom it was loaned for the current year. Students may not bring in locks from home and attach to assigned lockers. Students are warned not to bring large sums of money or valuables to school. Liability for these items remains with the student.

PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE

School personnel is prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisor, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, EASTCONN is prohibited from requiring a child to get a prescription before he/she may attend school, be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education or receive special education.

RECORDING OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

EASTCONN prohibits the covert recording of any classroom or non-classroom activities. Video recording is not permitted anywhere or anytime at school or during school sponsored events with anyone - staff and/or students - unless prior approval has been granted and video is used for educational purposes only. Students violating this rule will be subject to discipline and confiscation of the electronic device.

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS

The school district acknowledges each individual's rights to follow or not to follow religious beliefs and practices, free from discriminatory or harassing behavior. EASTCONN strives to provide religious accommodations to students in an equitable and appropriate way in accordance with District policies and corresponding guidelines.

SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION

Student safety on campus and at school related events is a high priority of EASTCONN. Although EASTCONN has implemented safety procedures, the cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the school's code of discipline.
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards, such as intruders on campus.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow immediately the instructions of staff who are overseeing the welfare of students.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

An opportunity will be provided at the beginning of each school day for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Participation in these activities is voluntary. Non-participants may stay seated and are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

School climate means the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults. In order for teaching and learning to occur there must be a positive climate in which students are appreciative and accepting of individual differences and behave responsibly toward others. Students are encouraged to report bullying, discrimination, or harassment to any faculty member or administrator and may request anonymity.

SCHOOL SECURITY AND SAFETY

QMC and ACT are developing and implementing a school security and safety plan based upon the standards issued by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. Each school, as required by law, shall establish a school security and safety committee which will assist in the development and administration of the school's security and safety plan. Each district school will conduct a security and vulnerability assessment every two years.

The Agency has developed, and maintains, an emergency disaster preparedness and response plan for implementation as needed ("School Security and Safety Plan"). The plan is based upon the standards promulgated by the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Development and implementation of the plan includes collaboration with local and state emergency responders (law enforcement, fire department, emergency rescue squads and local public health administrators). The plan, representing an all-hazards approach, utilizes the four recognized phases of crisis management:

1. mitigation/prevention
2. preparedness
3. response
4. recovery

Our schools utilize security intervention specialists as part of our overall school safety and security plan.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The right to inspect desks, lockers and other equipment assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property. An authorized school administrator may search a student's locker or desk under the following conditions:

1. There is reason to believe that the student's desk or locker contains contraband material.
2. The probable presence of contraband material presents a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in school.

This document serves as advance notice that EASTCONN policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Under special circumstances, school officials may search students or their belongings, particularly if there is reasonable suspicion that a student possesses illegal matter, such as a dangerous weapon or illegal drugs. Students must be aware that such items are forbidden both on school property and at school-related activities.

Student vehicles parked on school grounds may be searched if there is reasonable cause to search.

SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

Students in grades 9-12 will be involved in a prevention-oriented child sexual abuse program that teaches students age-appropriate techniques to recognize child sexual abuse and how to report it. Parents/guardians may permit their child to opt out of the awareness program or any part of it by notifying the school in writing of such a request.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

EASTCONN wants all students to learn in an environment free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is against state and federal laws. It is unwelcome sexual attention from peers, teachers, staff or anyone with whom the victim may interact. Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately to his/her teacher, social worker, guidance counselor, administrator, school nurse or any responsible individual with whom the student feels comfortable, either informally or through the filing of a formal complaint.

EASTCONN will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) when the allegations are not minor and will notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee.

A complaint alleging sexual harassment by a student or staff member may be presented by a student and/or parent in a conference with the principal or designee or with the Title IX Coordinator.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES: DUE PROCESS

A student or parent who has a complaint should first bring the matter to the appropriate teacher. If the outcome is not satisfactory, a conference with the principal should be requested within 10 calendar days of the event or events causing the complaint. If the outcome of the conference with the principal is not satisfactory, a conference with the Executive Director or his/her designee can be requested within 10 calendar days following the conference with the principal. If the outcome of this conference is not satisfactory, the student or parent may appear before the Board of Education, in accordance with Board policy. A student and/or parent with a complaint regarding possible discrimination on the basis of gender should contact the school principal.

A complaint or concern regarding the placement of a student with disabilities concerning special education or programs and services should be discussed with the Special Education Director.

STUDENT RECORDS

A student's school records are confidential and are protected by federal and state law from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Executive Director is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours upon completion of the written request form. The record's custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employee such as an administrator, teacher, support staff, Board of Education member, attorney, agents, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

1. Working with the student;
2. Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504;
3. Compiling statistical data; or
4. Investigating or evaluating programs.

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher and records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students in the district, do not have to be made available to the parents or student.

A student over 18 and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation

of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with the law regarding student records. The district's policy regarding student records is available from the principals or superintendent's office.

Military recruiters or institutions of higher learning shall have access to secondary school students names, addresses and telephone listings, unless a parent/guardian or secondary student aged 18 or over requests in writing that such information not be released.

Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the Requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be addressed to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 5400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.

The district's HIPPA Privacy Officer is Melanie Marcaccio.

TARDY PROCEDURE

If a student arrives after the start of the official starting time, he/she is to report directly to the office for check-in. All tardy arrivals will be considered unexcused unless accompanied by a doctor's note for illness and be signed by a parent.

All unexcused tardy arrivals are subject to school disciplinary consequences.

TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Parents have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). The response will indicate whether the teacher is certified for the subject matter and grade taught; the teacher's undergraduate major; and any graduate degrees or certifications a teacher may have. Parents will also be advised, if requested, as to whether the child is provided service by paraprofessionals and their qualifications.

TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES

All EASTCONN schools, regardless of whether they receive Federal Title I funds, provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum

materials and instructional supplies are provided in a manner to ensure equivalency among district schools.

TITLE I PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Parents of a child in a Title 1 funded program will receive a copy of the district's parental and family engagement involvement policy, including provisions of an annual meeting and involvement of parents in the planning, review and implementation of Title 1 programs and opportunities for parents and family members to participate in the education of their children.

TRANSPORTATION

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditioned upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Unsatisfactory student behavior on the bus may result in suspension of transportation services or such other disciplinary action that is appropriate for misconduct.

The following rules shall apply to student conduct on school transportation:

1. Passengers shall follow the driver's directions at all times.
2. Passengers shall board and leave the bus in an orderly manner at the designated bus stop nearest their home.
3. Passengers shall not stand while the bus is in motion.
4. Passengers shall keep books, instrument cases, feet, and other objects out of the aisle of the bus.
5. Passengers shall not deface the bus and/or its equipment.
6. Passengers shall not extend head, hands, arms, or legs out of the window nor hold any object out of the window nor throw objects within or out of the bus.
7. Passengers shall not smoke or use any form of tobacco.
8. Passengers shall not eat on the bus.
9. Usual classroom conduct shall be observed. Unruly conduct, including the use of obscene language, will subject the passenger to disciplinary action.
10. Upon leaving the bus, the passenger will wait for the driver's signal before crossing in front of the bus.
11. Students must ride the bus to which they are assigned.

The following procedures shall be followed when a discipline concern arises on a bus serving a regular route or an extracurricular activity:

1. A conference involving the principal, the student passenger, the driver, and the parent(s) may be required.
2. The principal may suspend the student's bus-riding privileges. If such a suspension occurs, the parents will be notified prior to the time the suspension

takes effect.

3. In the case of serious misconduct that endangers the safety of other passengers or the driver, the driver shall have the authority to remove the student and call for law enforcement assistance. The principal and parents shall be notified of the situation as soon as possible. The student shall not be provided bus service again until a conference involving all persons listed above has been held.

Disciplinary sanctions and changes in transportation for a student with a disability shall be made in accordance with the provisions of the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

All vehicles coming into or leaving the school grounds are subject to the regulations of the school. A student may drive to school, provided the student abides by the traffic rules and has parental permission. Students are not allowed to go to their cars during school hours. In case of emergency, they will be given a pass to do so by the administration. Any violation of proper automobile use may result in the suspension of parking privilege or any such discipline which is appropriate for the circumstances.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES

All complaints concerning school transportation safety are to be made to the Transportation Coordinator. A written record of all complaints will be maintained and an investigation of the allegations will take place.

VIDEO RECORDERS ON SCHOOL CAMPUS (for School Security Purposes)

Video equipment is used to enhance the safety and security of all individuals. It is also used to monitor student behavior in common areas or campus. Discipline will be in accordance with the school's discipline policy. Any student, staff member, or visitor to the school is prohibited from tampering with or damaging the school's video surveillance equipment.

VISITORS

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit schools. All visitors must first report to the principal's office. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the principal's approval, and such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment.

All doors that open to the outside of any school must remain locked in order to preserve the safety and security of students and staff. Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds. School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent such persons from entering the building or from loitering on the grounds. Such persons will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior or uncivil discourse will not be permitted. Visits cannot interfere with the educational program of the school nor interrupt teaching activities.

WEBSITES

School web pages must contain material that reflects on educational purposes. School webpages are not to be used for personal, commercial or political purposes; and are considered a publication of EASTCONN. The Principal or his/her designee will approve all material posted on the school's web page. Students maintaining personal web pages may be subject to disciplinary action for the content of such sites under certain conditions. The Agency is committed to ensuring accessibility of its website(s) for parents, students and members of the community with disabilities.

WELLNESS

Student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, is promoted through the Agency's educational program, school activities, and meal programs. Federal and state standards will be met pertaining to all foods and beverages available for sale to students. A sequential program of physical education is provided.

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Acknowledgement of Review and Understanding of ACT/QMC Policies and Procedures via Parent /Guardian Handbook

SIGNATURE STATEMENT - INFORMATION REQUIRED

Please read and review the ACT/QMC Parent/Guardian Handbook together with your child which reviews the policies and procedures related to ensuring a safe and successful school experience that prepares every individual for their future. The Parent/Guardian handbook may be found on each schools website under "about us" or "quick-links" at: www.eastconn.org/ACT or www.eastconn.org/QMC

We have reviewed the ACT/QMC Parent/Guardian Handbook for 2025-2026. We (guardian and child) understand the handbook outlines EASTCONN Schools policies and procedures related to daily operations and expectations. We also understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and consequences outlined in this handbook at school, school-sponsored or related activities and for any school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location. While EASTCONN fosters restorative practices, we understand that any student who violates the Students' Code of Conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion and referral for criminal prosecution for violation of the law.

Regarding student records, I understand that certain information about my child is considered directory information. Directory information includes:

- A student's name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Date and place of birth
- Participation in officially recognized activities
- Dates of attendance
- Awards received in school
- Most recent previous school attended

Directory information may be released by the school to anyone who requests it unless I object to the release of any or all of this information within (10) ten school days of the time this handbook was issued to my child.

I have marked through those types of directory information listed above that I wish the school to withhold.

By signing my name below, I acknowledge that I have reviewed this Student Handbook and agree to the policies included.

Student's Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: _____