

John Paterson Family Handbook 2024-2025



Principal:	Arleen Torres Ruiz
Phone Number:	860-666-4687
Fax Number:	860-667-5847
Website Address:	https://jp.npsct.org/

Handbook

Welcome to a new and exciting year of learning at John Paterson School! This handbook was created to serve as an informational tool for all members of our school community. Our school philosophy, policies, procedures, and programs are included.

Newington Public Schools

Mission

The mission of the Newington Public School system, an educational partnership of school, family and community, is to ensure every student acquires the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to continue to learn, live a productive life, and contribute to a diverse, rapidly changing society. This is accomplished within a caring environment through a planned program of quality learning experiences that challenge and encourage each individual to reach full potential.

Beliefs

We believe:

- *Each individual has worth and deserves respect.*
- *Every individual is unique and deserves recognition.*
- *Every individual can learn.*
- *Motivation directly affects learning.*
- *Performance is directly related to expectations.*
- *Learning is a life-long process.*
- *Effective education empowers individuals to reach full potential.*

- *Education expands options throughout life.*
- *Effective education is essential to the future well-being of our society.*
- *Education is the shared responsibility of the student, family, school system and community.*
- *Individuals are accountable for their own actions.*
- *The teacher's role in the education process is vital to the success of the learner.*
- *Family support and involvement enhances student learning.*
- *Success builds self-esteem; self-esteem promotes success.*
- *The understanding of and respect for diversity strengthens society.*
- *Change is inevitable and creates the opportunity to grow.*
- *Excellence in education is worth the investment of time, effort and resources.*
- *The entire community benefits from an excellent school system.*

Equal Opportunity

The Board of Education reaffirms its policy of equal educational opportunity for all students and prohibits discrimination because of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, learning disability, mental retardation and mental disability or physical disability in district programs and activities, including, but not limited to course offerings, athletic programs, guidance and counseling, and tests and procedures. To the maximum extent possible an intensive affirmative action program shall be an integral part of any educational policies and programs.

Mr. Stephen Foresi, Assistant Superintendent, is the designated district 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.

Newington Public Schools District Directory

Central Office	860-667-2000
Superintendent of Schools	
Dr. Maureen L. Brummett	x8610
Office of Human Capital Development	
Mr. Stephen Foresi	x8639
Assistant Superintendent	
Curriculum Office	
Ms. Kristen Freeman	x8623
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction	
Mr. Tom Santoro	x8629
Manager of Student Information and Data Systems	
Information Technology Office	
Mr. John (Jay) Salerno	x8687
Director of Educational Technology	
Mr. Craig Holland, Jr.	x8625
Director of Information Technology	
Student Services Office	
Mrs. Marilena Gulioso	x8651
Director of Student Services	
Business Office	
Mr. Lucian Jachimowicz	x8641
Chief Finance and Operations Officer	
Mrs. Karen Cyr	x8645
Assistant Business Manager	
Non-Instructional Supervisors	
Mr. Dean Barnes	860-666-2441
Director of Transportation Services	

Mr. Jason Plumb Director of Maintenance Services	860-665-8656
Ms. Dana Markovics Director of Food and Nutrition Services	860-665-8636
Mr. Michael Morgan Director of Residency and Security	860-666-1193
Mr. John Brunetti Central Supply Supervisor	860-667-5854

Newington Public Schools Directory

Newington High School , 605 Willard Avenue Ms. Terra Tigno, <i>Principal</i> Mr. Michael Gaydos, <i>Assistant Principal</i> Mr. Mario Ficocelli, <i>Assistant Principal</i> Mr. James Harris, <i>Assistant Principal</i>	860-666-5611
Martin Kellogg Middle School , 155 Harding Avenue Mr. Jason Lambert, <i>Principal</i> TBD , <i>Assistant Principal</i>	860-666-5418
John Wallace Middle School , 71 Halleran Road Mr. Daniel Dias, <i>Principal</i> Mr. Marco Tirillo, <i>Assistant Principal</i>	860-667-5888
Elizabeth Green School , 30 Thomas Street Mr. Kevin Doran, <i>Principal</i>	860-666-3394
Anna Reynolds School , 85 Reservoir Road Mr. Jason Smith, <i>Principal</i>	860-521-7830
Ruth Chaffee School , 160 Superior Avenue Mr. James Marciano <i>Principal</i>	860-666-4687
John Paterson School , 120 Church Street Mrs. Arleen Torres-Ruiz <i>Principal</i>	860-666-4657

John Paterson Mission and Vision

Mission		
The Mission of John Paterson School is to provide learning experiences that support, challenge, and inspire our students to meet or exceed academic, social, and physical standards. We accomplish this in a caring and collaborative environment that is strengthened by diversity, where we recognize and celebrate each child's development, learning style, and cultural background. Through the combined efforts of teachers, students, families, and members of the Newington community our students acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to make a positive impact on our democratic and global societies.		
Vision		
Our children are the future leaders of an ever-changing global society. We are dedicated to their success.		
Portrait of a Graduate		
Communicator: <i>Students exhibit appropriate oral, written, and interpersonal communication skills to convey and maximize their message to various audiences.</i> Students will... - Express oneself (speak, write, perform, and create) for authentic purposes - Read for a variety of purposes	Citizen: <i>Students demonstrate citizenship through their contributions to their community, making connections to different cultures and perspectives, and being aware of their place in the larger global community.</i> Students will... Recognize and understand multiple and diverse perspectives	Thinker: <i>Students exhibit the ability to gather and synthesize relevant information in order to determine a critical path and to be creative, curious, and innovative through the problem solving process.</i> Students will... - Inquire to define a problem - Analyze information and discriminate resources

3. Actively listen to advance understanding, build consensus, and collaborate	2. Contribute to the classroom, local, and global community	3. Synthesize information and identify solutions and conclusions
4. Use a variety of media including contemporary digital tools to explore, exchange and express ideas	3. Act responsibly and ethically	4. Reflect on processes and products to assess and redesign
Theory of Action		
If PLCs operationalize decisions for equity (interrogations of the what, why and how), then we will eliminate disparities so that all students are successful, regardless of race.		

<u>Academic</u>	<u>Social/Civic</u>
<i>Students will...</i> • Strive to do their best everyday • Achieve excellence in all areas of learning • Acquire the necessary technological skills to compete in a global society • Apply problem solving strategies • Assume responsibility for their own learning • Develop a creative awareness and appreciation for the visual and performing arts	<i>Students will...</i> • Be responsible and productive citizens by adhering to our Chaffee rules • Interact cooperatively with others academically and socially • Value and respect the diverse community • Contribute to the school community and society • Develop positive physical, social, emotional habits

John Paterson School Faculty and Staff

Mrs. Arleen Torres Ruiz	Principal
Miss Daniela Ospina	Nurse
Mrs. Jill Hinton	Preschool
Mrs. Jennifer Gizelis	Preschool
Miss Kimberly DePaolis	Preschool
Mrs. Jodi Klimas	Kindergarten
Mrs. Katie Savvidis	Kindergarten
Mrs. Catherine Flint	Kindergarten
Mrs. Stephani Sanzo	First Grade
Miss Emily Shepherd	First Grade
Mrs. Alison Matwiejczuk	First Grade
Mrs. Melissa Delaney	Second Grade
Mrs. Idalina Cultrera	Second Grade
Mrs. Nina Chevron	Second Grade
Mrs. Andrea Obert-Hahn	Second Grade
Mrs. Kayla Gold	Third Grade
Miss Lindsey Marino	Third Grade
Mrs. Lindsay Jensen	Third Grade
Mrs. Marina DiNino	Third Grade
Ms. Heather Dube	Fourth Grade
Miss Beth Dumais	Fourth Grade
Mr. Jason Koski	Fourth Grade

Mr. Brittany Anderson
 Mrs. Amy Stern
 Mr. Stephen Bennett
 Mr. Sanford Pilz
 Mrs. Courtney Frazao
 Mrs. Corinna Schumacher
 Mrs. Jessi Dalton
 Mrs. Katie Zapatka
 Miss Gabrielle Bielak
 Mrs. Joanna Ives
 Mrs. Stacey Michaud
 Mrs. Michelle Burba
 Mrs. Marisa Murphy
 Mrs. Rebecca Moran
 Mrs. Tyyne Kelly
 Mrs. Nancy Hebert
 Mrs. Joyce Schwalenberg
 Mrs. Brenda Dzwil
 Mrs. Marisa Stark
 Mrs. Marissa Jennes
 Mrs. Denise MacDonald
 Mrs. Karen DiFrancesca
 Mrs. Kelli-Ann Varano
 Mrs. Julie Bennett
 Mrs. Kathryn Wakefield
 Ms. Cynthia Mathieu
 Mrs. Kristen Cunha
 Mrs. Hope DiPietro
 Ms. Lynn Sayers

Fourth Grade
 Music
 Wellness Education
 Wellness Education
 Art
 Art
 Library/Media Specialist
 Special Education
 Special Education
 Special Education
 Special Education
 School Psychologist
 School Social Worker
 Speech/Language
 Speech/Language
 Occupational Therapist
 Physical Therapist (District)
 Instructional Coach
 ELL
 Literacy Coach
 Reading Teacher
 Reading Teacher
 Reading Teacher
 Math Interventionist
 Technology Integration Teacher
 Building Substitute
 Building Substitute
 Learning Tutor
 Learning Tutor

Custodial Staff

Mr. Mark Joseph
 Mr. Scot Greenbaum
 Mr. Richard Ramenda

Secretarial Staff

Mrs. Patti Delzangle
 Mrs. Jessica DiBiase

Cafeteria Staff

Mrs. Arzu Forgione
 Mrs. Stephanie Fairbank
 Mrs. Tammy Voorhies
 Mrs. Tina Knowlton

Board of Education

Newington Town Hall

200 Garfield Street • Newington, CT 06111 • 860-667-2000

The Newington Board of Education is composed of nine members elected for terms of two years. The citizens of Newington are invited to attend meetings held on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are held in the Helen Nelson Meeting Room at the Town Hall. Public participation is allowed at every regular or special meeting of the Board of Education. The ideas of the public for the improvement of our schools are welcome. Please feel free to call with *your* ideas. All BOE policies can be found online and are accessible through this

link: <https://sites.google.com/npsct.org/nps-boe-policies/home>

<i>Mrs. Amy Perrotti, Chairperson 175 Hillcrest Avenue</i>	<i>860-830-1890</i>
<i>Ms. Jessica Weaver, Vice Chairperson 494 Main Street</i>	<i>860-816-3403</i>
<i>Mr. Shaun Holloran, Secretary 35 Florence Street</i>	<i>203-645-9705</i>
<i>Ms. Meri Beatrice, 158 Hartford Avenue</i>	<i>860-995-9764</i>
<i>Ms. Brittany Carri, 81 Mountain View Drive</i>	<i>203-535-6898</i>
<i>Mr. Tony Miele, 124 Apple Hill</i>	<i>860-614-8672</i>
<i>Mr. Tim Newton, 75 Barnard Drive</i>	<i>860-539-9317</i>
<i>Mr. Sam Sharma, 268 Hillcrest Avenue</i>	<i>860-794-8347</i>
<i>Ms. Anastasia Yopp, 138 8th Street</i>	<i>860-985-8311</i>

Newington Education Foundation, Inc.

Member of The Connecticut Consortium of Education Foundations
"A Vision for Today and Tomorrow"

The Newington Education Foundation (NEF) is a non-profit organization founded in 1996 by three former chairs of the Newington Board of Education.

Its mission: **To encourage and support excellence in education by providing funding for innovative projects and programs, which enhance student learning.**

The Foundation operates through awarding mini-grants. Staff members submit mini-grant applications which detail a project concept, the anticipated benefits to the students involved, a list of materials needed and the estimated overall cost of the project. Twice each year the grant committee reviews applications and projects are recommended to the full board for approval and funding. Mini-grants provide enrichment opportunities that the school budget **cannot** provide.

The Foundation continues to receive more requests than it can accommodate. The Foundation is seeking to broaden its volunteer board membership to help evaluate and plan fundraising projects, to develop ongoing grant sponsorships and affinity relationships, and to explore outreach efforts to the community and businesses.

If you are interested in learning more about the Newington Education Foundation or would like to make a tax-deductible donation, please contact us through your school's PTA/PTO liaison or write to:

Dr. Frederic Googel
Newington Education Foundation
131 Cedar Street Newington, CT 06111

School Hours

Regular School Day

K - 4th Grade..... 8:40 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

parent/guardian/Teacher Conference Early Release Days

K - 4th Grade.....8:40 a.m. – 1:40 p.m.

Professional Learning Early Release Days

K - 4th Grade.....8:40 a.m. – 1:40 p.m.

School Office Hours (Monday-Friday) 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Important Reminder:

There is no supervision for walkers before 8:30 a.m.
Students who are not transported to school by bus should arrive at school no earlier than 8:30 a.m. unless given specific permission by the school.

Summer Office Hours (Monday-Friday) 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Notification of School Cancellations or Delayed Openings

Every effort is made to cancel or delay school as soon as conditions warrant. The parent/guardianSquare announcement and message is sent to parent/guardians and staff between 6:30 and 7:00 a.m. **All delayed openings will be a 2 hour delay and school will begin at 10:40 a.m.** In addition, you may listen to these local radio / television stations:

WTIC-AM	1080	WRCH-FM	100.5
WHCN-FM	106	WCCC-AM	1290
WWYZ-FM	92.5	WKSS-FM	95.7
WTNH-TV	Channel 8	WVIT-TV	Channel 30

Academic Programs

Below you will find the links that will take you directly to our Newington Public Schools Website. The grade level overviews have been written to inform you about the academic program, skills, and concepts being studied in each grade level. It is intended to give you a broad overview of the core subjects, instructional goals and learning expectations your child will experience. Newington has a strong comprehensive curriculum, which includes sequential instruction at every grade in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, and wellness. These specific links will take you to the current, updated curricula for each of our elementary grade levels.

[Kindergarten Overview](#)

[Grade 1 Overview](#)

[Grade 2 Overview](#)

[Grade 3 Overview](#)

[Grade 4 Overview](#)

Attendance

Your child is expected to attend school every day that school is in session except for legitimate reasons, as outlined in number 2 below. A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at school or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip) for at least half of the regular school day. A student will be considered truant after 4 unexcused absences in a month or 10 in a school year. The state defines excused absences as follows:

1. For absences one through nine, a student's absence is considered excused when the *parent/guardian/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation (written note or note through ParentSquare); and*
2. ***For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absence from school is considered excused for the following reasons:***
 - a. Student illness (must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional, regardless of the length of the absence).
 - b. Student's observance of a religious holiday.
 - c. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond control of the student's family.
 - d. Mandated court appearance (with written documentation).
 - e. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one student attends; or

- f. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by the district's administration and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

Unexcused absences are considered to be any absence that does not meet the above definition or the appropriate documentation has not been submitted. Family vacations are also deemed to be unexcused absences.

Parents/guardians are expected to call the school before 8:45 a.m. to verify any absence. Our school has a voice mail system (860-666-4657) that you may call any time to verify an absence. If your child is absent, but you have not verified the absence, the school office will attempt to contact you at home or at work. **When a child returns to school after an absence, a written note explaining the reason for the absence is required.** This means that a phone call with no written follow-up will automatically be coded as verified, which is considered unexcused. You can use [ParentSquare](#) to provide a written communication of your child's absence.

Attendance Protocol

In general, the following guidelines will be followed. These may vary in specific cases (for example, when a doctor's note is provided).

- After 5 absences (excused or unexcused): Letter sent home
- After 10 absences: Investigation by the principal
- After 15 absences: Meeting with Attendance Review Board (principal, nurse, school psychologist, and teacher) to develop plan
- After 4 unexcused absences in a month or 10 in a school year: Referral to the Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- Vacations should be scheduled when school is not in session. In general, students who will not be in attendance for more than 10 days due to vacation must be withdrawn and homeschooled.

[John Paterson Elementary School Attendance Procedural Letter](#)

Mental Health Days: Students are afforded (2) two mental health days annually which are excusable with a written note or electronic communication through parent/guardian Square as described above. Mental Health days can not be taken back to back and count toward absences 1-9.

Tardiness

A child who does not arrive before 8:40 a.m., must be accompanied by a parent/guardian/guardian to the Main Entrance and office staff will allow the student to enter to receive a Late Pass. The Secretary will sign the student in. **Tardiness is considered an interruption to the learning process, not only to the child who is late, but also to the other students in the classroom. Students should understand the importance of being on time. After a total of five incidences of tardiness in a marking period, parents will be notified. Chronic tardiness will be investigated.**

Early Childhood Program

An early childhood program is offered at John Paterson for typically developing peers who are 3-4 years old on or before September 1. Children with special needs are identified through a referral/screening process and are invited to attend. Newington Public Schools does provide transportation to and from school, and preschoolers do ride the bus with students in grades K-4. There are two programs, one is a full day program with classes running from 8:40-3:30 4 days a week. This program is for 4 year olds exclusively. The other is a half day program with classes in the morning and afternoon and is open to both 3 and 4 year olds. Both are tuition based programs. A sliding scale is offered to families who qualify. For more information regarding the sliding scale, please contact the Office of the Superintendent at 860-665-8610

Arrival and Dismissal Safety Guidelines

Any student who arrives after 12:00 pm is considered absent with the exception of an early release day due to professional learning or conference dismissals. On these days students who arrive after 11:13 am will be marked absent. Students who are dismissed before 12:00 pm are considered absent as well.

The safety of your child is a top priority at John Paterson. We have established procedures for a safe arrival and dismissal system. **We need your cooperation by following the procedures outlined below:**

Category	Arrival and Dismissal Procedures
Bus Riders & Mini Bus Riders	All bus and van riders will be dropped off in the bus loop and be guided to enter through the Gym lobby Entrance and will again be escorted to the gym lobby in the afternoon where they will board their assigned bus or van.
Day Care Van Riders	Students will report to the Gym lobby where they will wait for Lifeway and KinderCare vans. A staff member will lead the group using the gym lobby entrance doors to the building.
Walkers	Arrival: All students who are walkers will enter through the gym lobby entrance.. Dismissal: If parent/guardians choose to meet their child at dismissal, the student will be dismissed from the back entrance to the school near the walkers' path. Parents can park on Church Street and meet students on the walkers' path.
NECCI	Students who are in the NECCI (Newington Elementary Children's Center Inc.) program after school should proceed to the cafe area at dismissal where they will be met by a staff member from NECCI.
Drop-offs/ Pick-ups	Drop-offs: Parents/guardians should drop-off their children using the gym lobby entrance to the school between 8:30 a.m. and 8:39 a.m. Parents/guardians are asked to pull up to the front curb in an orderly fashion. We ask that you allow your child to get out on the passenger side of the car. Please DO NOT exit your vehicle. Students who arrive at school after 8:40, must be escorted to the main lobby door by a parent/guardian. Our office staff will confirm their status and buzz the student ONLY into the building where they MUST sign in for a late pass. Parent/guardians who arrive for pick up after 3:40, must come to the front lobby to pick up their child. A staff member will be on duty from 8:30 a.m. - 8:40 a.m. to greet the children at the gym lobby door. Parent/guardian Drop-off and Pick-up for Pre-K: Please escort the student to the side PreK entrance under the overhang by the playscape. Pick-ups: One of the two procedures listed below should be followed: - Students who are walkers will be dismissed to meet their parents/guardians. These students will NOT be tracked by the staff member on duty. - For those parents/guardians who have requested lobby dismissal, you will need to report to the main entrance (halleran dr.) no earlier than 3:30 p.m. A staff member will have a Master List of those students being picked up from the main lobby entrance. The staff member on duty will keep track of all students being released. Those students being picked up on a regular weekly basis from school have already been designated as a "pick up". <u>If you plan to pick up your child on one particular day, please send in a note that day.</u> Those students will also be dismissed at the main lobby entrance. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify our office by the morning if there are any changes to the student's dismissal that day. PLEASE NOTE: All walkers should only use the gym lobby entrance to enter in the morning. At dismissal, walker's are dismissed through the back entrance onto the walkers' path. . No other doors should be used at dismissal time in order to maintain the children's safety and security.
♦ Important Reminder: Children being dismissed early must be signed out in the dismissal log and met personally by the parent/guardian or guardian in the lobby, or they will be escorted to the door to greet their parent/guardians.	

Assessments

Student learning is assessed on an on-going basis using a variety of assessment measures. Each type of assessment is designed to provide specific information about student learning. Results are analyzed to determine whether students are meeting grade level expectations, identify gaps in learning, identify what is causing those gaps, and monitor progress over time.

Classroom Assessments

Student learning is assessed on a continual basis. **Formative assessments**, such as independent work samples, quizzes, observations, and performance assessments are used to monitor student progress and inform future instruction. **Common Formative Assessments** include pre- and post-assessments for a particular unit of study. Results are used to determine what is known before instruction begins as well as whether students mastered the objectives of the unit after instruction.

District Assessments

Students in all grade levels participate in District Grade Level Assessments throughout the year. The district assessment schedule includes two types of assessments. **Universal Screening Assessments** are administered in September, January, and May. A universal screening instrument is a standardized, “common” assessment tool that is administered to all students in order to identify those who are meeting grade level expectations. The instrument and its administration directions, timeframe, and scoring procedures are consistent across all teachers and students. Results are analyzed to monitor student progress and identify students in need of intervention. **Benchmark assessments** are also administered in students in grades 2-4. These are also “common,” and administered to all students within a grade level, but their purposes are to monitor maintenance of skills and concepts as well as program effectiveness.

State Assessments

During the spring, all students in the grades 3-8 participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment. The state provides a written document outlining individual student results as well as school/district results. These results are typically received during the month of July.

Behavior Expectations

We believe it is the right of every student and staff member to work in an environment that is safe, pleasant, and conducive to learning. We wish to guarantee all students a chance for success; therefore, we have expectations for positive, cooperative behavior on the part of all. parent/guardians, teachers, and administrators must work together to guide and support students in their development as responsible, cooperative members of the school community.

When students fail to adhere to the rules, they will complete a reflection form. Repeated or major offenses may warrant a visit to the principal's office which may result in a consequence such as: loss of privilege; a restorative process; such as an apology note, conference or service. They are usually accompanied to the office with the following [referral](#). All referrals are copied and sent home for parent/guardians to review, and in some cases, a signature is required.

Birthday or Classroom Celebrations

Birthday Celebrations:

Birthdays may be acknowledged with non-food items such as stickers, colored pencils, classroom book donation, or other non-food items. ***Birthday invitations may not be sent to school with your child to distribute to classmates, unless the ENTIRE class is invited.*** Balloons or any other items should not be delivered or sent into school with your child. Parent/guardians are invited to visit their child's classroom to read a story to the entire class as a way to celebrate.

Classroom Celebrations: *Celebrations occur in conjunction with the classroom teacher*

- No home-prepared foods will be accepted.
- All food must be prepackaged and/or ingredients clearly labeled.
- All food needs to be approved by the school nurse at least 1 week prior to any celebration. If at least 1 week notification is not given, use of food for the celebration may be denied.
- The school must provide an equivalent food option for all students with food allergies or other medically documented food-related conditions to consume. (e.g.: if pizza is served, gluten free or dairy free pizza will be provided.)

Bullying

The Board of Education promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

The Board of Education believes that a school environment in which students feel safe, supported, engaged and helpfully challenged is optimal for learning and healthy development. The Board seeks an environment in which students and adults feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically safe; an environment that is free of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Bullying behavior by any student in the Newington Public Schools 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.

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:

- 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, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board 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.

Prevention and Intervention Strategy

1. Implementation of positive behavioral interventions and support processes or another evidence-based model approach for a safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying identified by the Department of Education.
2. School rules prohibiting bullying, harassment, and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts.
3. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom, and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur.
4. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school.
5. Individual interventions with the bully, parents and school employees and interventions with the bullied child, parents, and school employees.
6. School wide training related to a safe school climate.
7. Student peer training, education and support.
8. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, training, and individual interventions.

For an expanded version of the policy outlined above, please visit: [#5131.911](#)

Care of School Property

The Board of Education supplies textbooks, workbooks, and a reasonable quantity of supplies such as paper and pencils to each pupil. Pupils are expected to exercise reasonable care in handling textbooks and other school materials. Pupils should also realize that the school building, grounds, and other facilities provided for their education are paid for by general tax funds. Marking or in any way destroying school property is subject to a fine and disciplinary action.

Cell Phones/Smart Watches/Electronic Devices

Once students enter the school building, students are to turn off these devices and store them in their lockers and/or backpacks. Students are permitted to use these devices only under the direction of their teachers. When the school day is over and they are dismissed from the building, only then are students permitted to use these devices. Students who do not comply with these guidelines and disrupt the educational process may have their electronic devices confiscated. Appropriate disciplinary action will be determined by the school administration as follows:

- a. First offense – a warning will be issued and the phone must be put away.
- b. Second offense – phone will be taken by the teacher and held until the end of class.
- c. Third offense – phone will be sent to the office and held until the end of the day.
- d. Fourth offense – phone will be sent to the office and a parent/guardian must come to the school to retrieve it.

Chromebooks

With the district's technology initiative, Chromebooks have become an important part of your child's learning. It is expected that students come to school each day with a charged Chromebook. Also, if the Chromebook is forgotten at home, a student can borrow a loaner up to 3 times a month. Chargers should be kept at home.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

The Board of Education believes that the Internet is a valuable tool that should be used in schools to educate and inform students. The Board endorses student use of the Internet for learning and research which enhances information available through other mediums. Therefore, individual users of the Technology Public School Network are responsible for their use of the network and are expected to use it responsibly. To ensure appropriate usage, the administration will establish guidelines for student exploration and use of Information Technology resources. Such guidelines shall address issues of privacy, ethical use of information with respect to intellectual property, illegal uses of the network, and conditions or usage. The guidelines shall strive to preserve students' rights to examine and use information to meet educational goals and objectives of the District.

Internet access is available to students and staff. Students may not:

- use electronic resources for personal or profit making enterprises, political lobbying/campaigning, electronic theft, or copyright violations
- transmit or download material in violation of State & /Federal laws use language or retrieve information that is profane, obscene, abusive, or threatening
- use electronic resources to disrupt the use or compromise the security of electronic resources including hardware/software, networks, or electronic files
- reveal personal information such as home addresses or phone numbers of self or others

Unacceptable use of the Internet or any telecommunications services will result in immediate revocation of access privileges for the student; parent/guardian will be notified. Consequences will be issued according to our Code of Conduct. Misuse can also have legal implications. School technology is not personal property; intentional damage to equipment will be treated as vandalism and consequences will be administered accordingly, including payment for damages. No food or beverages are allowed near technology and personal software, flash drives, etc. cannot be installed without approval of the computer education staff.

Communication

Teacher:

Proactive communication is an integral component to the teacher-parent/guardian partnership. Questions and concerns that are founded in a desire to improve the educational program can be beneficial to all. ***You are encouraged to seek answers to your questions. If a problem arises, teachers appreciate it if you speak directly to them.*** Collaboratively, most problems can be resolved at this level. Problems not

satisfactorily resolved at this level can be taken through successive levels to the Principal, the Superintendent, and subsequently the Board of Education, if necessary.

Office/ Nurse:

For all communication, such as reporting the following: an absence, a late arrival, a change in transportation or dismissal please call us at 860-666-4657 or email us at jpooffice@npsct.org.

Emergency Information

All parents are required to create a Powerschool account. Information and account information are distributed each year to new students. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure all emergency information is up to date and is accurate. This includes but is not limited to current phone numbers, emails addresses, emergency contacts with current numbers. It is absolutely critical that all emergency contacts are local and are completed for each student. Powerschool opens for updating midAugust. **Any changes throughout the school year related to Emergency Information must be updated in Powerschool immediately.**

Smoking Policy

No person shall smoke or use tobacco products 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 Policy

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 suspension/expulsion.

Psychotropic Drug Use

School personnel are prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisors, school social workers and school counselors may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner.

Weapons

Any student bringing a weapon or dangerous instrument or facsimile thereof onto school property or to a school event may be brought to the Board of Education by the Superintendent for an expulsion hearing. Any student bringing a firearm or deadly weapon onto school property or to a school-sponsored activity will be suspended for ten days and will be brought before the Board of Education by the Superintendent for an expulsion hearing. In addition to weapons and other dangerous instruments, laser pointers are not permitted on school grounds or in any public place.

Threats

Any student who threatens in any manner, including orally or in writing, harm to the person or damage to the property of a member of the school community, including any teacher, member of the school administration, any other employee, or a fellow student, shall be subject to suspension/expulsion.

In addition, the Superintendent shall refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible criminal prosecution and shall take all available measures to ensure the safety of those in the school community in the event of the student's return to school.

Discrimination

Discrimination on the basis of race, color, natural origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, or handicap is a violation of Board policy and will be addressed according to terms of the school discipline code under "harassment."

Homeless Students

Homeless students, as defined by federal 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 Dr. Maureen Brummett, (860) 665-8610

Dress Code

Students are expected to wear clothes that are appropriate for an educational environment. Students should consider the following guidelines when choosing their clothing. The dress code is intended to enhance the self-image of students, reduce peer pressure, and promote a healthy, safe and professional learning environment.

- Shoes must be safe and worn at all times.

- Skirts and shorts should be of appropriate length (mid thigh). All shirts and blouses should not go above the belly button but can be above the waistline. The following are not allowed: tube tops (solely) and any see-through shirts or blouses will not be permitted.
- No hoods may be worn during the school day. Any headwear that may cause a distraction or contains a brim will be asked to be removed. Exceptions will be based on religious requirements or administrative approval.
- Outerwear must be placed in lockers/or left in the classroom upon arrival to school. Outerwear is considered to be coats, parkers, jackets, etc. Exceptions will be made based on administration approval.
- Accessories which may be a danger to self or others are not allowed.
- Attire which conveys a message which is vulgar, hateful, conveys gang affiliation, or promotes discrimination is prohibited. (A message which is distasteful and carries a double meaning regardless of its presentation is not allowed).
- Pajamas, onesies, and/or slippers (soft bottom/slip-ons) are not permissible. Flannel pants or pajama bottoms that are approved by administration will be permitted.

If a student dress code does not conform to the above guidelines, students will be required to meet with administration. Based on that discussion and the nature of the violation one of three options may occur:

- A warning will be issued and the student will return to class
- Student will borrow clothing from the school nurse for the day or until a change of clothes arrives
- A parent/guardian or guardian will need to come to school with a change of clothes, the student will remain in the office until their clothes arrive.

Emergency Closing after School Opens

If it becomes necessary to close schools early after the day has begun due to adverse weather conditions or other emergencies, the Superintendent will make the decision, and it will be broadcast over all participating radio and television stations, and the Rapid Notification System as early as possible. **Children should be instructed as to what to do if they arrive at home and their parents/guardians are not there.**

Extracurricular Activities

A variety of activities may be offered to students in the elementary schools. Instrumental music lessons are available to students beginning in grade four. All students in grade four take part in an instrumental music exposure program at the beginning of the year. In addition, students in grade four may choose to participate in chorus which meets weekly during recess. Evening concerts are presented each year. Students may also have the opportunity to participate in student government and intramural activities. A teacher or faculty member supervises all extracurricular activities.

EZSchoolPay

NPS utilizes EZSchoolPay.com to pay for school meals and other school fees. You can click [this link](#) to sign up if you would like to use this service. Please note there is a service fee charged by the company.

Field Trips

The elementary schools recognize that student knowledge and understanding of a subject may be enhanced by a carefully planned field trip. Teachers plan such trips in accordance with the Newington Public Schools Field Trip Guidelines. The safety of students, equal opportunity to all students at a grade level for similar trips, and the educational benefit are factors considered. Since field trips are considered instructional in nature, they are planned with definite educational objectives requiring appropriate instructions preceding and following each trip. A Field Trip Permission Form giving details of the trip is sent home at least one week prior to the scheduled trip for parent/guardian/guardian signature. **It is imperative that this slip is returned in order for students to attend.**

At times, events require the postponement or cancellation of field trip experiences planned for students. In some instances a refund is not possible. When a field trip is canceled, all funds refunded to the school will be returned to the parent/guardians or guardians. It is not possible to provide reimbursement in the event a refund is not provided to the school for the field trip. It is important for all to understand this refund policy prior to agreeing to participate in a field trip experience.

Health Policies



Our nurse, Daniela Ospina, is present in school each day from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Please feel free to call with any questions or concerns about your child. Your input is welcomed and encouraged. She can be reached at 860- 666-4657, ext. 4104.

Administration of Medications

Any medication, including “over-the-counter” medications, is given only with written authorization of the parent/guardian and the physician, physician’s assistant, advanced-practice registered nurse or dentist on a designated form. Certified staff may legally administer medications if the nurse is not available after completing the required medication training. **Medication must be delivered and administered from the original container, clearly labeled with the name of the student, physician, name of medication, directions for dosage and date of original prescription. All medication must be delivered to the school nurse by the parent/guardian or other designated adult. Students are never allowed to carry medications without written medical authorization.**

Annual Screenings

A visual screening test, for distance vision only, is given to all students in kindergarten through grade 4, per state mandate. Color vision will be screened on all students in grade one. Audiometric screening is also done for all students in kindergarten through grade 3. Any student failing to meet the standards established by the State of Connecticut will be re-screened prior to giving the parent/guardian or guardian written notice describing the findings and recommendations.

Contagious Diseases

Students recovering from the following diseases are readmitted to school after an evaluation by the school nurse:

- Chicken pox (varicella) – students should be kept at home until all lesions are scabbed over.
- Strep throat or scarlet fever – students should be kept home a minimum of 24 hours after antibiotic therapy has begun.
- Students with scabies, impetigo, ringworm, pink eye (conjunctivitis) and other conditions that might be easily transmitted to others will be sent home until such condition has been satisfactorily treated.

Immunizations

New students will not be permitted to start school until the school nurse receives a complete immunization record. This includes students entering kindergarten or registering for the first time from an out-of-district school.

Physical Examinations

A physical examination is required for students entering kindergarten and in grade 3. A student may not enter grade 4 until this physical examination is completed. A physical exam by the school physician is available for those students in grade 3 who do not have access to a private physician, any students receiving free or reduced lunch, or those students in grade 3 whose parent/guardians have not indicated a preference to use their own physician, **with written parent/guardian permission**. A parent/guardian wishing to be present at the time of the examination should make arrangements with the school nurse. When a student enters Newington Public Schools from out of state, a physical examination completed within the past school year is required. If a student enters from any Connecticut public school, health records will be transferred and reviewed by the school nurse.

Food Allergy Management Plan

Newington Public Schools Food Allergy Management Plan focuses on assisting every student with a known food allergy in avoiding exposure to the allergen(s). It is recognized, however, that the school district cannot guarantee an allergy free environment for students, and the risk of exposure to all allergens is possible. The following guidelines support the district’s Wellness policy (5141.251).

CLASSROOMS:

All classrooms must be peanut/tree nut free (including Special Area’s and Encore/Reach areas).

Snacks

- All classroom snacks must be peanut/tree nut free.
- Snacks brought in from home for individual consumption may not be shared.
- A snack that contains peanut/tree nut may not be eaten in the classroom.
- Washing hands and desks before and after eating are reinforced and practiced.

Birthday Celebrations

- Birthdays may be acknowledged with non-food items such as stickers, colored pencils, homework passes, classroom book donation, extra recess, or other non-food items. For a more extensive list of non-food suggestions, see the school website.
- Food is not accepted for birthday celebrations.

Classroom Celebrations

- All food must be prepackaged and/or ingredients clearly labeled.
- All food needs to be approved by the school nurse at least 1 week prior to any celebration. If at least 1 week notification is not given, use of food for the celebration may be denied.
- The school must provide an equivalent food option for all students, with food allergies or other medically documented food-related conditions, to consume. (e.g. If pizza is served, a gluten free or dairy free pizza will be provided.)

SCHOOL BUSES:

- Food and beverages are not permitted on school buses. This includes after school events such as athletic activities.

HOME-PREPARED FOODS

- Since nutritional information and possible allergens cannot be identified, home-prepared foods are not permitted for any school event or celebration held at a school during or after school hours.

Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

The Board of Education recognizes that a student's mental and physical health will have an effect on the student's ability to obtain the most benefit from attending school. In order to increase the student's ability to learn while in school, the Board of Education realizes the importance of identifying students who may be suffering from abuse or neglect.

Teachers, principals, coaches of intramural or interscholastic athletics, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, and licensed nurses are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services (DCF). Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect and staff members receive training in their use.

Reporting of child abuse and neglect is a responsibility that is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse or neglect 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, which 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.

CT State Department of Children and Families Services Hotline number is 1-800-842-2288.

Pest Management/Pesticide Application Policy

The Board of Education believes that structural and landscape pests can pose significant hazards to people, property and the environment. Pesticides can also pose such hazards. The purpose of the Pest Management/Pesticide Application Policy is to ensure the health and safety of students, teachers, staff and all others using district buildings and grounds. The school district shall incorporate Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to manage structural and landscape pests and the toxic chemicals for their control in order to alleviate pest problems with the least possible hazard to people, property and the environment. IPM is the coordinated use of pest and environmental information with available pest control methods to prevent unacceptable levels of pest damage by the most economical means with the least possible hazard.

If you would like to be notified in advance of school pesticide applications, please contact the school principal in writing. If an emergency application is necessary to eliminate an immediate threat to human health, prior notice is not necessary except that on or before the day the application is to take place, prior notice is given to those persons who have previously requested notice. Such application shall not involve a restricted use pesticide and no child may enter the area of such application until it is safe to do so according to the provisions on the pesticide label.

Homework Guidelines

Homework is an important component of your child's school experiences. It affords the opportunity for practice and review, and helps your child become an independent learner; an essential life skill. Homework

extends your child's opportunities to learn and provides opportunities for families to be involved with their children's education, but helping children with homework is not always easy. If you are like most parent/guardians, you feel a mixture of emotions about homework, some positive and some negative. All parent/guardians, however, wonder if the homework routine they have set in place is an effective and positive one. Homework assignments are based on the skills and concepts the learner needs to review, practice, expand and apply. Students learn to value the importance of homework during the primary grades. Support and guidance provided by the parent/guardian or guardian is a key to the child's attitude toward homework and quality of homework.

Why Homework is Assigned

- Homework assignments are designed to support students' learning. There are several reasons for giving homework:
 - Allows practice and reinforcement of concepts introduced in the classroom such as language arts activities, math facts, reading, responding to literature or information read.
 - Prepares students for future class work – read an article in preparation for a class discussion.
 - Expands class assignments.
 - Improves skills in reading, mathematics, writing, etc.
 - Develops efficient study skills and work habits.
 - Enables students to complete short and long term projects.
 - Assists students in completing assignments.
 - Prepares students for tests and quizzes.
 - Develops independent study skills.

Home Reading (Take Home Books)

Reading is an important aspect of your child's learning. parent/guardian involvement in their child's education is a factor that has proven to have a positive effect on a child's success. Reading "with" and "to" a child for 15 to 30 minutes each day increases that child's reading ability and contributes to school success.

Newington's take home reading program in kindergarten through second grade provides children and families with the components that contribute to reading success and make reading a lifelong habit. At each grade level the program has a unique name:

- Kindergarten's backpack program is called **BEAR - Books, Enjoy And Read**
- First grade's program is called **STAR - Sit Together And Read**
- Second grade's program is called **WEB - We Enjoy Books**

We request that each family become involved in their child's learning to read through the take home reading program.

Lunch

A nutritious diet is very important to help children learn. All children should bring a lunch from home or purchase a lunch in the cafeteria. Menus are available on the school website.

Parent/Guardian Conferences

Parent/guardian/teacher conferences promote a strong home/school connection. Grades K-4 have scheduled conferences in December (required), and March (required). The opportunities for conferences beyond those scheduled are available upon the request of either the parent/guardian or teacher.

Progress Reports and Conferences

Progress reports are available via PowerSchool for three reporting periods (December, March, and June). The report of student progress to parent/guardians should provide parent/guardians an accurate and understandable indication of the level of their child's progress toward *end-of-year standards*. It is typical that students will receive "Ps" for "Progressing" for most standards in December and March, as this indicates age-appropriate progress. This reporting is done in such a way as to help motivate pupils to do the best work of which they are capable.

Promotion and Retention

The decision for promotion or retention is always made in the best interest of the student. In such cases where non-promotion is recommended, parent/guardians will be contacted by the school. Promotion is based on specific factors such as the student's achievement in relation to his or her potential, the student's age, previous academic and attendance records, parent/guardian input, and the student's social and emotional needs. The final decision about promotion and retention rests with the principal and parent/guardians.

Rapid Notification System

Newington Public Schools uses [parentSquare](#) for district and school communication, primarily with email, text and app notifications. Parent/guardianSquare automatically generates an account for each parent/guardian, using their preferred email address and phone number on file with your student's school. We encourage parent/guardians to access their accounts so they can download the mobile app and update their preferences on when and how they are notified.

Here's what you can do with parent/guardianSquare:

- Receive messages from the school via email, text or app notification
- Choose to receive information as it comes or all at once daily
- Communicate in your preferred language
- Comment on school postings to engage in your school community
- Direct message teachers and staff
- Participate in group messages
- Sign up for parent/guardian-teacher conferences

In addition to routine information, the notification system will also be used to notify you when your child is marked absent from school. Emergency broadcasts will be sent to the primary phone number and all guardian contact numbers. For more information, visit www.bit.ly/NPSparent/guardiansquare.

Release of Information

The following types of information contained in the education record of an enrolled student are hereby designated as directory information and may be disclosed by school officials without prior consent of a parent/guardian or eligible student. Information includes: student's name, photographs, videos, place and date of birth, dates of attendance, grade level, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, honors and awards received by the student. Photographs of students may be taken throughout the school year and submitted to local newspapers for publication. Videos of school events and activities that are open to the public may be shown on Channel 14, public access television. Children's images, projects and voices may be shared through a variety of media both print and electronic for the purpose of celebrating their accomplishments at school or among staff only for the purpose of improving teaching practices.

A parent/guardian or eligible student may refuse to allow school officials to designate any or all of the above listed types of information as directory information. Any such refusal must be made in writing to and received by the building principal by September 15th.

Recess

Children are expected to go outdoors for recess unless medically excused (in writing) by a physician and approved by nursing medical staff. A written excuse from the parent/guardian is acceptable for one day only. Outdoor recess is planned each day unless there is inclement weather. A variety of weather conditions are considered when this decision is made.

Safety Drills

Connecticut state law requires that each school conduct ten (10) fire/crisis drills each year. Most of the drills are fire drills, but some other types of drills include lockdown or shelter-in-place drills. These drills are held at various times under varying conditions. The purpose of the fire drills is to acquaint students and staff with the system of clearing the building in a minimum amount of time. Students are taught to leave the building quickly, quietly, and safely. Other drill types are used to prepare for emergency situations. The lockdown drill is described below.

All Newington Public Schools have emergency plans designed to allow us to respond to a variety of situations. These plans are reviewed annually and practiced with staff and students. There will be at least two secure school drills throughout the year. This drill will provide school personnel and students the opportunity to practice safety procedures. During this drill, teachers will gather all students into a safe area within the classroom, building, or grounds; take attendance; and secure the area.

Search and Seizure

Desks and School Lockers

Desks and school lockers are the property of the schools. The right to inspect desks and lockers assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property with reasonable care for the Fourth Amendment rights of students.

The exercise of the right to inspect also requires protection of each student's personal privacy and protection from coercion. An authorized school administrator may search a student's locker or desk under three conditions:

1. There is reason to believe that the student's desk or locker contains the probable presence of contraband material.
2. The probable presence of contraband material poses a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in the school.
3. The student(s) have been informed in advance that school board policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe those materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Student Search

A student may be searched if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The scope of the search must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and the nature of the infraction.

Student Support Programs **Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI)**

The Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) is a process designed to benefit students experiencing difficulties with learning and/or social behavior. The intent of SRBI is to have a system that enables educators to communicate on a frequent basis about student's needs so that agreed upon modifications are put into practice in an effective and efficient manner.

At John Paterson School, cross grade level teams provide the opportunity for joint problem-solving so that classroom teachers can effectively and efficiently meet student's diverse educational needs. Student's needs are determined early, before a cycle of failure develops. Teamwork brings a variety of perspectives, experiences, and skills together for the benefit of all students.

The teamwork approach is based on the philosophy that educators and parent/guardians work most effectively when they are able to communicate and collaborate systematically. Students are the benefactors of this collaborative partnership.

The Newington Public Schools implement a framework to improve teaching and learning known as Scientific Research-Based Interventions, or SRBI. SRBI is a statewide model in which teachers:

- frequently analyze student performance on common district-wide assessments;
- use that information to group students by skill level and/or content knowledge; and
- provide specific, targeted instruction to those students performing below grade level standards in either academic or behavioral areas.

For additional information on SRBI, please visit the CT State Department of Education's [*A Family Guide to SRBI: Connecticut's Framework for RTI*](#)

Special Education

The special education teachers and classroom teachers work together to help identified special education students as well as unidentified students. A team consisting of classroom teachers, special education teachers, a language arts consultant, a school psychologist, a social worker and a speech language pathologist also meet on a regular basis to assess student referrals. Personnel of Human Services attend as needed. Through brainstorming, discussion, and research, accommodations and/or modifications are made in the environment, the learning materials, and/or the instructional procedures. The teachers work together at these meetings to develop a plan of action that will help the child. The plan is then evaluated

and updated regularly at subsequent meetings. On-going concerns may be referred to the Planning and Placement Team.

If interventions have not been successful, students may qualify to receive special education services as determined by the Planning and Placement Team. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that each public school or agency insure that:

- Each handicapped child's educational placement (1) is determined at least annually, (2) is based on his or her individualized education program, and (3) is as close as possible to the child's home... and, that... the child is educated in the school which he or she would attend if not handicapped. (34CFR 300.552). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that recipients of federal funds provide for the education of each qualified handicapped person in each jurisdiction with persons who are not handicapped to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the handicapped person. (34CFR 104.34).
- The spirit behind these laws and the inclusion movement is a desire to educate children in the least restrictive setting possible. Children should be included rather than excluded from programs and services in the regular classroom whenever and wherever possible.

The Newington Public Schools utilize the inclusion model. Inclusion is a term that is used to refer to the commitment to educate each special needs child to the maximum extent appropriate in the school and/or classroom that he or she would otherwise attend if he or she were not disabled. It is a process that involves bringing support services to the child rather than moving the child to the services. Students with special needs are taught with the rest of the class by the classroom teachers and the special education teacher. Flexible grouping, individual instruction, and co-teaching are utilized to meet the needs of all students. Materials may be modified for any number of students involved in the same lesson, and the level of expectation may vary from student to student, depending on ability and learning style. Small group instruction may take place in the classroom or in a separate setting.

Psychological Services

John Paterson School has a full time school psychologist who provides a variety of services, including assessment, counseling, and consultation. Formal psychological evaluations are available to students referred through the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) process. Appropriate evaluations are requested if pre-referral interventions have been unsuccessful. Written parent/guardian consent must be obtained for these evaluations.

The school psychologist provides individual and group counseling to students who have been identified through the PPT process as needing help with learning, behavioral, and family problems. Students receive counseling services based on their individual needs and with parent/guardian consent. In addition to counseling services, the school psychologist consults with administration, teachers, and parent/guardians to interpret test results, share insights into the child's behavioral characteristics, and develop learning and behavioral strategies.

Social Worker

John Paterson School has a full-time social worker who provides a variety of social services to students and families. These services may include individual or small group counseling, classroom social, emotional and character education lessons, and family assistance with such matters as divorce, the loss of a family member, health care issues, or any other family crisis situation that impacts your child at school. The school social worker is a pivotal member of the school's Crisis Team, Planning and Placement Team (PPT), Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and Early Intervention Team.

Health Services

A full time registered nurse is available to all students. There is a health room where students can be evaluated when the need arises.

Speech and Language Services

Speech and Language services are available to students who have been identified through the PPT process. Services are implemented in the classroom and/or in the speech resource room.

Multilingual Learners (ML)

The district wide ML program provides services to all eligible students in grades K-12. Each ML (Multilingual

Learner) student is initially screened for eligibility, and is evaluated at the end of the year. Initial evaluations of all ML students are conducted when the student is referred for services.

Parents of students with Limited English proficiency (LEP) 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 LEP program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically and learn English.

Student Education Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parent/guardians and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student education records. These rights are:

- ◆ The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. parent/guardians or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- ◆ The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that a parent/guardian or eligible student believe are inaccurate or misleading. parent/guardians or eligible students may ask the Newington Public School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the district will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- ◆ The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is defined as a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the District discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
- ◆ The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with their requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
United States Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

Student Recognition Programs

Outstanding Student of the Month

The Superintendent's Outstanding Student of the Month Program is designed to provide recognition to a student who has been a good example to his/her classmates. Teachers in grades 1 - 4 are given the opportunity to nominate students from their classroom each month, October through May, as Student of the Month. Nominating criteria may be based on one or more of the following: (1) good all around school citizenship, (2) good behavior, (3) contributions to the school, community, or fellow students, (4) most improved student, (5) outstanding effort, attitude, attendance, academic achievement, and so forth. A committee comprised of the principal and special area teachers select one of the nominated students as the

Superintendent's Outstanding Student of the Month who represents all of the other nominees at a special town wide reception.

Celebration of Learning

The Newington Elementary Schools believe it is important to foster and recognize excellence in students' performance in school, to provide positive reinforcement, and reward them for their efforts and achievements. A special *Celebration of Learning* assembly is held at the end of each year to recognize students' efforts and accomplishments. Only parent/guardians of students receiving the Dr. Ernest L. Perlini Leadership Award, David I. Gowell Citizenship Award, the Josephine R. Bojnowski Reading Achievement Award, Dr. William C. Collins STEM Award, the Norman J. Schmitt Writing Prize, the William P. Ward Humanitarian Prize, and the Chaffee School Art Collection will be notified in advance. **Students receiving all other awards will be notified the previous day.**

Every student receives an award certificate based on individual effort and/or accomplishment. The individual awards are presented to each student in his/her respective classroom before or after the school-wide *Celebration of Learning* assembly. Classroom teachers use a variety of sources to choose a meaningful award for each child. Some of the sources include: Student Learning Plan information, input from special area teachers, and classroom performance – strengths and areas of improvement.

Student Transfer

Students leaving our school system should provide the main office with their new address so that the transfer card can be made out properly. A parent/guardian or guardian is asked to inform the school office so that student information concerning the student can be prepared for the new school. All materials, including the district issued Chromebook, that are the property of the school must be returned to the classroom teacher. When transferring from one school to another within Newington or changing an address within the same district, the parent/guardians/guardians must contact the Residency Office at Newington High School at (860) 666-5611 Ext. 1131 to obtain the necessary paperwork to fulfill the residency requirements.

Sunscreen Usage

A recent legislation and Newington Board of Education policy has passed allowing students ages six and older to possess and self-apply an over-the-counter sunscreen product while in school prior to engaging in any outdoor activity in accordance with the procedures outlined by the school. The student must have [written authorization](#) signed by a parent/guardian or guardian to have and apply sunscreen. The written authorization form must be submitted and on record with the school nurse **Miss Daniela Ospina by September 16**. No student is allowed to have sunscreen without this form on file. Additionally, the sharing of sunscreen is not permitted.

Teacher and Other Educator Qualifications

Parent/guardians may request information about the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s) by notifying the Assistant Superintendent. 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 the teacher may have. Parent/guardians will also be informed upon request whether their child is provided service by paraprofessionals, and if requested, their qualifications.

Transportation Policy

The Board of Education, under Statute 10-186, will provide transportation to all eligible students.

Elementary students who live three-quarters of a mile or further from the school will be eligible for bus transportation. Transportation is automatically set up for any kindergarten student that lives in each school's respected walking district. Parent/guardians have the option to request for each of their siblings to ride with the kindergarten sibling. Information on the vacant seat program can be found on the [district website](#).

At the beginning of each school year, all eligible students will be assigned to a bus run by the Transportation Supervisor. Unless an exception is granted, all bus run assignments will be on a five-day per week basis. All students will have one designated pick-up point in the morning and one designated drop-off in the afternoon. Parent/guardians who wish to request a permanent change in bus transportation, for day care purposes or other reasons, must submit a written request in advance to the main office. Please note that it takes 24 to 48 hours for the change to go into effect.

The school district may make modifications to bus run assignments or bus routes during the course of the year. Reconfiguration of bus runs occurs to ensure that students arrive at school on time, recognize changes in enrollment, or enhance the safety of student transportation.

Concerns regarding transportation issues should be made to Dean Barnes, Director of Transportation at (860) 666-2441. A written record of all concerns will be maintained in the Transportation office and a review will be made into all concerns.

Vacations During School Time

Parent/guardians who are taking family vacations during school time are requested to send written notification to the Main Office. If traveling outside the United States, the school nurse will inform the family of any health requirements needed before the student will be allowed to re-enter school. ***Though we strongly discourage this practice***, due to the loss of instructional time, we do understand that at times, these situations cannot be avoided. **Teachers are not required to provide class work ahead of time for family vacations taken during school time.**

Visitor/Vendors

A visitor to John Paterson School will find that security measures are firmly established. These measures are intended to ensure the safety of students and staff by preventing unauthorized persons from entering a school building. All exterior doors in the district are locked at all times during school hours. A visitor or vendor arriving at any school building must proceed to the main entrance and communicate with main office staff by intercom. In addition to audio communication, main office staff can also view the individual at the intercom on surveillance video. The visitor/vendor will be instructed to immediately proceed to the main office once they are allowed to enter the building. Once the visitor/vendor arrives in the main office they will be met by a staff member and processed through our visitor management system (VMS). In order to proceed, all visitors and vendors must have a driver's license or state-issued ID.



Recognizing that a working partnership between the school, the home and the community benefits both children and staff, the Newington School District established the School and Community Program. A part-time coordinator is employed at each school to recruit parent/guardian and community volunteers. Every effort is made to match their talents and interests with the needs of teachers and staff. Opportunities also exist for working parent/guardians to contribute their efforts to the school. Training for specific tasks is available and high standards of confidentiality are expected of all volunteers. Any parent/guardian or other family member wishing to help may contact our **School and Community Coordinator at (860) 666-4657**.

Three categories are designated for individuals wanting access to John Paterson School who are neither students nor staff:

- a. **Visitor:** An individual who requests access to building facilities beyond the confines of the school's main office.
- b. **Guest:** An individual who has been invited by a staff member to render a service. This person will be escorted by a staff member, in all probability, to areas beyond the school's main office.
- c. **Volunteer:** An individual performing an assigned service to the school on a regular basis.

A driver's license or state ID must be scanned at the Visitor Kiosk Window at the main entrance. Admittance will be denied for a person with no identification. A badge will be printed after scanning the ID for the visitor to wear. The individual must check-out with the main office when they leave.

Notification Concerning School Climate

The Board of Education is committed to promoting a positive sustained school climate and has adopted the Connecticut [School Climate Policy](#) for implementation beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. The policy sets forth the framework for an effective and informed school climate improvement process, which includes a continuous cycle of (i) planning and preparation, (ii) evaluation, (iii) action planning, and (iv) implementation, and serves to actualize the Connecticut School Climate Standards, as detailed in the policy. The District has also adopted [Administrative Regulations](#) to assist with the implementation of the policy.

Students, parents or guardians of students enrolled in the District, and school employees may file a written report of alleged challenging behavior or alleged bullying incident using the Challenging Behavior Reporting Form [\(Paper\)](#) [\(Electronic\)](#) . Such reports may be filed with the building principal, program administrator, and/or the School Climate Specialist, and all reports shall be forwarded to the School Climate Specialist for review and actions consistent with the Connecticut [School Climate Policy](#).

In addition, each school is developing a School Climate Improvement Plan to address school-wide instructional practices and relational practices that prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including but not limited to alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment. The School Climate Improvement Plan will be available by the end of December each year and will be linked here.

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

Bullying means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. Bullying includes cyberbullying, which means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any other electronic communication.

The Board of Education has also adopted a [Restorative Practices Response Policy](#). Such policy reflects the Board's commitment to identifying strategies to improve school climate, including, but not limited to, by responding to challenging behavior and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including restorative practices. Restorative practices may be implemented by school employees for incidents of challenging behavior, bullying, and/or harassment in the school environment, or other forms of student conflict that is nonviolent and does not constitute a crime.

In addition to addressing challenging behavior in accordance with the Connecticut School Climate Policy and Restorative Practices Response Policy, the District shall address challenging behavior, bullying, and harassment in accordance with the Board's Student Discipline policy and any other applicable Board policy, administrative regulations, and/or school rules.

To report challenging behavior, including bullying, please complete the challenging behavior form [\(Paper\)](#) [\(Electronic\)](#) and return/submit it to the building principal and/or school climate specialist.

NEWINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPLAINT OF HARASSMENT FORM

Level II Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment Form

(Copy of Student (gold) or Employee (green) Complaint Procedure Regulations must be provided to Complainant with this form)

Please complete:

Complainant's name: _____ Date: _____

Name(s) of alleged Harasser(s): _____

Date(s) of Alleged Harassment: _____

Statement of the circumstances on which the alleged harassment occurred: _____

Complainant's Signature: _____

Complainant's home phone number: _____

Complainant's home address: _____

Date signed: _____

Date Complaint Received: _____

Received by: _____

Principal or Superintendent

Appendix

BOE Policy Highlights

Newington, Connecticut

Bullying Report

Date of Incident _____ Date of Report _____

(To be completed by the person making the referral)

Student(s) being reported for

bullying

Victim's Name:

Person Reporting:
Time of Day:

Location of incident: ☐ Classroom ☐ Hall ☐ Lavatory ☐ Café ☐

Gym/Locker Room [] Bus

☐ Van ☐ Recess ☐ Playground ☐ Other

Please include in your statement whether you personally witnessed the incident or were informed of the incident you are reporting by the victim or someone else.

Description of incident/bullying behavior:

[illegible]

Person Reporting Signature

(For administration use) Write the date the action took place: _____ Verified: _____

☐ Yes ☐ No

Notified parent/guardians/guardians of the victim of the results of investigation

Invited parent/guardians/guardians of the victim to a meeting

Meeting held on

Notified parent/guardians/guardians of the perpetrator(s) of the results of investigation

Invited parent/guardians/guardians of the perpetrator(s) to a meeting _____
Meeting held on _____
Interviewed reported victim _____ Interviewed
witness(es) _____
Interview perpetrator(s) _____ Notified
counselor _____

Bullying/Harassment – The Board has established a policy that prohibits any form of bullying by a student/group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate, harass, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at school-sponsored activity or on a school bus. Complaints will be investigated promptly and corrective action will be taken when allegations are verified. All persons will maintain confidentiality involved in the investigation and no reprisals or retaliation will be allowed to occur. A copy of the Board policy can be obtained in the school's main office.

NEWINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPLAINT OF HARASSMENT FORM

Please complete:

Complainant's Name: _____ Date: _____
Name(s) of Alleged Harasser(s): _____

Date(s) of Alleged Harassment: _____

Statement of the circumstances on which the alleged harassment occurred (attached a separate sheet if needed):

Complainant's Signature: _____ Complainant's Home
Phone Number: _____ Date Signed: _____
Date Complaint Received: _____ Received By: _____