

North Canaan Elementary School

Student Handbook
2025-2026



NCES: Purposeful People
Be Strong • Be Kind • Be Well

PREFACE

The material covered within this student handbook is intended as a method of communicating to students and parents/guardians regarding general district information, rules and procedures and is not intended to either enlarge or diminish any Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement. Material contained herein may therefore be superseded by such Board policy, administrative regulation or negotiated agreement.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 Region One website, region1schools.org or the North Canaan Elementary School webpage, www.nceschool.org 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 District’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 Handbook is designed to be in harmony with Board 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 communication.

The Superintendent of Schools and staff may be reached at (860) 824-0855.
The Director of Pupil Services and staff may be reached at (860) 824-5639.

Melony Brady-Shanley, Superintendent
Dr. Jeanine Rose, Assistant Superintendent
Rebecca Gaschel-Clark, Director of Pupil Services
Ashley Holmes, Supervisor of Special Education
Samuel Herrick, Business Manager

North Canaan Elementary School Office – (860) 824-5149

The office is open from 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. every day that school is in session.

North Canaan Elementary School Nurse’s Office – (860) 824-5149, press 2

The nurse is available from 8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. every day that school is in session.

NORTH CANAAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

North Canaan Elementary School (NCES) has approximately 240 pupils enrolled in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade and is one of six elementary schools comprising the Region One School District. The NCES campus is ideally located close to the center of town, which allows students access to the Douglas Library, town offices, and other resources. North Canaan is very proud of its school with its programs and outstanding personnel. We are especially happy to have Canaan Childcare Center as a part of our school.

Each kindergarten through third grade has two teachers who share responsibility for the teaching of basic subjects. Language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and Spanish are taught by individual teachers in grades five through eight. Art, career exploration, music, physical education (PE), library media, and technology skills are taught at all grade levels by specialists in those disciplines. Individual education programs for pupils with special learning needs are provided by Region One Pupil Services. The school is also served by a nurse, psychologist, social worker, secretaries, paraeducators, custodians, and cafeteria employees.



School Personnel

Faculty

Beth Johnson	Principal	Allison Curtiss	Assistant Principal/Coach
Amanda Richard	PreKindergarten	Denise Sorrell	Grade EK-8 STEAM
Leigh Ann Merrill	Early Kindergarten	Mike Nolan	MLL instructor
Courtney Tomich	Kindergarten	Abby Fifer	Art
Melissa Bachetti	Grade One	Luke Nelson	Physical Education
Melissa Youmans	Grade One	Danielle O'Neil	Music
Skylar Agard	Grade Two	Jeffrey Reed	Music
Melanie Mancarella	Grade Two	Debbie Erickson	Library Media Specialist
Abigail Cowles	Grade Three	Sage Benjamin	Counselor
Stephanie Remillard	Grade Three	Caroline Sanicola	Social Worker
Dena Noubleau	Grade Four	Anne Dealy	School Psychologist
Katie Stolarczyk	Grade Four	Abby Cornell	Special Education
Melissa Asselin	Grade $\frac{5}{8}$ Science	Rachel Englund	Special Education
Shelby Diorio	Grade $\frac{5}{8}$ Math	Brittni Scavotto	Special Education
Renee Fleming	Grade $\frac{5}{8}$ Humanities	Tracy Firth	Special Education
Eve Davis	Grade $\frac{7}{8}$ Language Arts	Josie Pratt	Speech Pathologist
Melissa Greenwood	Grade $\frac{7}{8}$ Math	Marlena McDonnell	Reading Specialist
Alison Hasenbein	Grade $\frac{7}{8}$ Science	Jaime Crane	Reading Specialist
Jack Weber	Grade 5-8 Humanities	Sarah Ponkos	Math Specialist

Support Staff

Caitlin Hickey-Simboli	Building Substitute	Betty Swiderski	Paraeducator
Jeanne Taylor	Paraeducator	Justin Hajek	Paraeducator
Heather Zucco	Paraeducator	Angie Veilleux	Paraeducator
Jenny Dunn	Paraeducator	Tyler Scarpa	Paraeducator
Kira McCarthy	Paraeducator	Briana Diaz	Paraeducator
Tammy McGuire	Lunch Secretary	Allycia Soule	Paraeducator
Michelle Hewins	Office Secretary	Erica Bachman	Paraeducator
Kerry Rooney	Admin. Secretary	Lori Foley	School Nurse
Brandey Fogarty	Board Clerk	Damian Gwinn	Head Custodian
Tammy Fleming	Cafeteria Manager	Larry Gwinn	Custodian
Kathy Whiting	Cafeteria Staff	Jessica Jaskinisi	Custodian
		Michael Spring	Custodian

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MISSION STATEMENT OF DISTRICT AND SCHOOL

North Canaan Elementary School is dedicated to developing a collaborative community of learners who achieve academic excellence, exhibit social awareness, and demonstrate respect and responsibility.

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 a 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.

Dr. Jeanine Rose 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.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

District schools recognize and accept the need to prepare students to live and work productively in an increasingly diverse society. This is an integral part of the school system's commitment to offer an educational program of excellence, which includes teaching students awareness and understanding of the diverse cultures and heritages that form our society.

The school will not tolerate student behavior which insults, degrades or stereotypes any race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical or mental condition or ethnic group.

ADMISSION/PLACEMENT

Parents/guardians of preschool students who will be five (5) years of age by September 1, 2024 or earlier are expected to register their child for kindergarten. Parents/guardians of kindergarten- aged children who plan on holding their child back from entering kindergarten must contact their school's principal to complete a "Kindergarten Opt-Out Form".

A student seeking enrollment in the North Canaan Elementary School for the first time or following attendance in another Connecticut public school district, out-of-state attendance, private school attendance or admission through a bona fide foreign exchange program should contact the principal. A student who is transferring from non-public schools or schools outside the district will be placed at his/her current grade level pending evaluation and observation of the student after such assessment and consultation with the parents, the principal will determine the grade placement of the child.

Students who are classified as homeless under federal law and do not have a fixed residence will be admitted pursuant to federal law.

Completion of immunization and health assessments are required prior to a child's attendance in school, but are not prerequisites for enrolling a child who resides in the District and is of appropriate age to attend school.

In order to determine a child's eligibility as a Multilingual Learner (MLL), parents/guardians of all new students enrolling for the first term and all re-enrolling students who have not previously attended public school in Connecticut must complete a Home Language Survey. The student, after enrollment, may also take a screening exam.

ADVERTISING

The public schools maintain careful controls on the way in which students are exposed to materials and announcements, other than those directly related to school sponsored programs and activities. Caution is exercised to prevent exploitation of the system and its students. District-prescribed standards shall be met.

AMERICAN 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 the District 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 after enrollment, may also take a screening exam.

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 Sage Benjamin or the Civil Rights Coordinator, Melony Brady-Shanley, for the Region One School District.

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 district's designated Section 504 Coordinator Sage Benjamin within 30 days of the alleged occurrence.

ANTI-IDLING POLICY FOR CARS / SERVICE VEHICLES

The Board of Education has established an anti-idling policy pertaining to cars. Drivers are requested to turn off their engines while waiting in their cars for more than three minutes to pick up students or adults, weather permitting.

ANTI-RACISM

The District rejects all forms of racism as destructive to the mission, vision, values and goals of this school system. All forms of racism must be eliminated from the District. Children must find school a safe and welcoming place, where they are able to achieve success, irrespective of their racial or ethnic background. Racism will not be tolerated in any form. The goal is to enable all students to thrive in a socially cohesive community within a positive, multi-cultural society.

ASBESTOS

Legislation requires all school buildings to be reevaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building's occupants. The District 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. Requests to review these plans may be made in the school office.

ASSEMBLIES

There are times when classes, grades, teams or the entire school may gather for assembly programs. These programs are arranged to bring information or entertainment to the student community. A student's conduct in assemblies must meet the same standards as in the classroom.

ATTENDANCE

Connecticut state law requires parents to make sure that their children between the ages of 5 to 18 attend school regularly. Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up school work missed due to a legitimate absence. Students are required to attend school on a regular basis.

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.

The parent or person having control of a child shall have the option of waiting to send the child to school until the child is six or seven years of age, upon signing an option form at the school district offices.

A child whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than 10 percent 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, unless he/she graduates or gets written consent from a parent/guardian on a district provided form to leave school at age 17.

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 8:00 A.M. and 9:00 A.M. on the day of the absence by telephoning the school nurse at 860-824-5149, then press 2.

Please refer to the procedures outlined in the North Canaan Board of Education [Attendance and Truancy Policies](#) (including [Chronic Absenteeism](#)).

Makeup Work

Students are expected to make up all work missed due to absence. Parents should use Seesaw (PK-2) and Google Classroom (3-8) to take advantage of the collection of assignments for the student who must be out for several days. In the event of a prolonged absence, the teacher(s) will set a reasonable deadline for all makeup work to be completed.

Excused Absence

While it is understood that students will not attend school when they are ill and that there are allowable circumstances when students are unable to come to school, the Statutes require that schools, parents and caregivers follow strict guidelines to allow for close monitoring of student attendance. The definitions noted below are provided as guidelines so that all parents and caregivers understand the expectations regarding student attendance. Parents and caregivers should review this information and report student absences in accordance with these expectations.

1. Excused Absences - A student's absence will be considered excused if a signed note including the reason for the absence is submitted to the school within ten days of the student's return to school and meets the following criteria:
 - a. Absences one through nine are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves the absence and submits a note/call to the school. We prefer that you share the reason as it helps us with record keeping.
 - b. Absences beginning with number ten are excused only for the following reasons:
 - i. Student illness that the state says "must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional"
 - ii. Death in the student's family
 - iii. Emergency beyond the control of the student's family
 - iv. Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required)
 - v. Observance of a religious holiday
 - vi. Extraordinary educational opportunities that are preapproved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.
 - vii. Additional 10 days for children of military service members.

School staff **must receive or generate documentation for each incidence of absence**. An incidence of absence is a set of consecutive school days absent. This means if a student is out three consecutive days, that is one incidence of absence which requires only one note.

Note: A student is not considered absent if they are on a field trip, or if they are in attendance for at least half of the regular school day. Also, a student's absence due to discipline is considered excused.

2. Chronic absenteeism - students who are not present for 10% of in-class instruction time during the course of a school year. Since the school year is 180 days, students who miss 18 days or more (excused or unexcused) are considered to be chronically absent.
3. Truancy - Truancy is a term that generally refers to unexcused absences. According to state statute and board of education policy 5113.2, a student who has **four unexcused absences in any month**, or **ten unexcused absences** in a school year, is considered truant.

Students who are chronically absent and/or truant can be referred to PPT meetings and/or outside agencies in order to further investigate and take appropriate action regarding the lack of attendance.

According to the [*American Academy of Pediatrics*](#), missing school days can have a great impact on your children's health as well as negatively affect their learning. Additionally, it is important to note that children who are chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are less likely to read on grade level by the third grade. For older students, being chronically absent is strongly associated with failing at school—even more than low grades or test scores. When absences add up, data show that these students are more likely to be suspended and drop out of high school. Chronic absenteeism is also linked with teen substance use, as well as poor health as adults.

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.

The Board of Education does not condone/approve students leaving a school campus in third-party ride sharing vehicles; especially such service (Uber, Lyft) whose own policies explicitly prohibit minors from using them unless accompanied by an adult.

Tardiness

Students who are not in their homeroom/classroom by 8:40 A.M. are considered tardy 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. Mrs. Johnson will work with families in regard to chronic tardiness.

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 a truant.

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).

Vacations

School policy strongly encourages the scheduling of family vacations and trips during times which coincide with school vacations. Student absences for reasons of a family vacation or trip that takes place when school is in session may be considered “unexcused absences,” in light of SBE guidelines.

BACKPACKS AND BOOK BAGS

Students find it useful to carry book bags, duffel bags and knapsacks. Students are allowed to carry/use these items to and from school only. Students do not need to carry all of their books and notebooks during the entire school day. Lockers or designated storage spaces should be used. Safety and comfort of both students and adults must be considered.

BICYCLES

Students riding a bicycle to school are responsible to park and secure it properly at a designated area. For the best bicycle security, students should lock and chain the bicycle to one of the provided bicycle racks.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district. The members of the North Canaan Board of Education are:

Chairperson: Amy Dodge

Vice-Chairperson: Christopher Jacques

Secretary: Amy Helminiak

Members: Lindsey Crane, Stephannie Grant, Brooke Riva,

In order to perform its duties in an open and public manner and in accordance with state law, the North Canaan Board of Education holds regular business meetings on the second Tuesday of every month in the school library. Parents, students and other community members are encouraged to attend.

Meetings of the Board follow a planned and posted agenda. At a certain time in the agenda the Board chairperson will recognize individuals who want to make a statement, not more than 5 minutes in length, or to express a viewpoint. In addition, if they give advance notice to the Superintendent, individuals with relevant issues for discussion may have such issues placed on a future Board agenda for a more thorough discussion of the topic.

Board of Education policies are available on the district's website at nceschool.org/boardofeducation The policies are subject to modifications by the Board at any time.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is available for daily purchase in the cafeteria. There will be a hot and cold option available each day. The cost of breakfast is \$2.00. Students who qualify for free and reduced lunch may receive breakfast at no cost.

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 which endangers persons or property or violates a Board policy or administrative regulation.

CAFETERIA

Lunch is eaten in the cafeteria. Rules of cleanliness are to be observed at all times. Misconduct in the cafeteria may be cause for receiving an assigned seat or forfeiting the right to eat in that location or such other disciplinary action deemed appropriate for the misconduct.

The District participates in the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program and offers to students nutritionally balanced meals daily. Free and reduced price lunches are available based on financial need. The link to the application can be found on the school webpage as soon as it is available. Information on this program can be obtained through [this link](#).

The cost of lunch for the 2025-2026 school year is \$3.30 per meal. Payments can be made via cash or check. Please send payments in your child's take home folder. Payments can also be made using a credit card via the online payment portal which can be accessed [here](#) and on the school website.

The District complies with the professional standards for school nutrition personnel who manage and operate the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

It is the intent of the Board of Education that schools take a proactive effort to encourage students to make nutritious food choices. Food and beverages offered for sale to students, whether in the cafeteria, school store, or vending machines will meet federal and state standards and guidelines. All sodas and sports drinks will not be available for sale.

In conformity with applicable law, necessary accommodations will be provided, where required, for students with food allergies, including emergency procedures to treat allergic reactions which may occur.

The school is committed to providing a safe environment for students with food allergies and to support parents regarding food allergy management. A plan based upon guidelines promulgated by the State Department of Education will be implemented for each student for the management of students with life-threatening food allergies and glycogen storage disease.

Substitutions to the regular meal provided by the school will be made for students who are unable to eat school meals because of their disabilities, when that need is certified in writing by a physician. Meal services will be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the disabled student. An Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) and an Emergency Care Plan (ECP) shall be developed and implemented for students identified with food allergies. Such students may also be eligible for accommodations and services under Section 504 and special education law.

The school's specific policy for managing students with life-threatening food allergies will be posted on the website.

A student with glycogen storage disease is permitted to have a parent/guardian or a person they so designate to provide food or dietary supplements on school grounds during the school day.

A student with an allergic condition may retain possession of an EpiPen or similar device while receiving school transportation services.

CALENDAR

The district calendar shows the beginning and ending dates of school, legal and local holidays, meeting days, number of teaching days, vacation periods and other pertinent dates. [A link to the 2025-2026 calendar is available here.](#)

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS

If there is a question about a student's classes or work in school, it is best to first contact the person who is closest to the situation. In most cases, this is the teacher. The proper channeling of complaints regarding instruction, discipline

or learning materials is (1) teacher, (2) Beth Johnson, Principal (3) Melony Brady-Shanley, Superintendent (4) Board of Education.

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 is inconsistent with District goals and values. All forms of cheating and plagiarism, including by electronic means, are not acceptable. The misrepresentation 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, 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 receive training in their use, as required by state law.

Reporting of child abuse, neglect and sexual assault by a school employee is a responsibility which 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 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.

The Board of Education 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.

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

The District collaborates with state and local child welfare agencies to ensure school stability for children in foster care. A child in foster care must remain in his/her school of origin if it is determined to be in the child's best interest. Transportation will be arranged as required.

COMPUTER RESOURCES

The District 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 district computers, are not private and may be monitored by staff. Students may not access social media sites using District equipment, while on District property, or at a District sponsored activity unless the posting is approved by a teacher. The District will not be liable for information posted by students on social media websites, such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, etc., when the student is not engaged in District activities and not using District equipment.

The District 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 the School District and no user shall have any expectation of privacy regarding such material.

Federal law requires the district to place filtering devices on school computers to block entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, harmful or inappropriate for students as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The Board of Education is committed to aiding students and staff in creating a 21st Century learning environment.

[The NCES Acceptable Use Form](#) needs to be completed each school year.

CONDUCT

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. The district has authority over students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on district 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 (see dress code).
4. Showing respect toward others, engaging in civil discourse.
5. Behaving in a responsible manner.
6. Paying required fees and fines.
7. Abiding by the code of conduct.
8. Obeying all school rules, including safety rules, and rules pertaining to Internet safety.
9. Seeking change in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
10. Cooperating with staff investigations of disciplinary cases and volunteering information relating to a serious offense.

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, 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 the use 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 which 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, bullying
21. Behaving in any way that disrupts the school environment or educational process.
22. Using electronic devices during the school day in school buildings, without prior approval of the principal.
23. Violating the district's Internet Safety policy and/or Online Social Networking Policy.
24. Cheating, 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 which 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 circles or peer monitoring.

Students are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of publicized Board of Education policy, even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. In determining whether conduct is "seriously disruptive of the education process" for purposes of suspension and expulsion, the administration in cases of suspension, and the Board of Education or impartial hearing board, in matters of expulsion may consider, but consideration is not limited to (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school, (2) whether other students were involved, or whether there was gang involvement, (3) whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon and whether any injuries occurred, and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of illegal substances.

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 the Board of Education (unless the Board has delegated authority for readmission decisions to the Superintendent.) The Board or Superintendent, as appropriate, may condition such readmission on specified criteria.

Dress Code

NCES takes pride in the appearance of its students. All clothing should be clean and neat. It is helpful when clothing items are marked so that ownership is easily identified. The attire of a student reflects the level of respect for oneself, respect for one's peers and respect for one's school. NCES is an environment that reflects the seriousness of education and prepares students for future roles in the professional workplace.

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, disrespectful, or contrary to law. Students not in compliance with these guidelines shall be immediately sent to the principal who is responsible for making decisions concerning the appropriateness of dress based on this board policy. Consequences may include but are not limited to a verbal warning to the student, a call to the parents to request a change of clothing be brought to school, or the student may be given a change of clothing to wear during the school day.

Rude or Offensive Clothing

Students shall not wear clothing items, jewelry, body art or tattoos that contain messages that display words or symbols that advocate or depict profanity, violence, drugs, alcohol, sex, hate groups, gang affiliation or illegal or disrespectful activity, expressed or implied.

Headgear

Students shall not wear headgear during the school day. Headgear includes but is not limited to headphones/earbuds, caps, hoods, bandanas, headbands (other than the type worn to hold back hair), wave caps, doo-rags, and sweatbands. All headgear must be kept out of sight and placed in the student's backpack or locker upon arrival in the classroom. Exceptions will be granted for caps at recess, for religious or medical reasons, and on designated hat days as granted by the principal.

Accessories

Students must not wear or possess articles of clothing or clothing accessories that could cause injury or threat of injury to others, including but not limited to sunglasses (permitted at outdoor recess), chains, cleats, spikes, or studs.

Accessories also must not disrupt learning due to noise.

Other

Exceptions to the above dress code will be considered for medical reasons, special events, cultural beliefs, or to promote school spirit as determined by the school principal. Permission from the school principal must be granted prior to the event or activity.

Smoking

Students shall not possess nor smoke or use tobacco products or e-cigarettes or vapor product devices on all school property both inside and outside, 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 CONDUCT 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, the Board of Education 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.

Students are prohibited from possessing, using, selling, delivering, manufacturing, or being under the influence of any substance containing cannabidiol (CBD) or tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), regardless of whether it constitutes a controlled substance under federal laws.

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 at 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.”

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Teachers may be contacted either through voicemail or email. A staff directory is available on each school’s website. Please allow teachers 24 hours, during the school week, to respond to your email/voicemail. Please be aware that District policy prevents teachers from discussing confidential information in an email correspondence.

CYBERBULLYING

The District’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 cyberbullying, are unacceptable, a violation of District policy and of the District’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.

Cyberbullying 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 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 loss of computer privileges, detention, 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 will have (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. Coaches, as required by law, review before beginning his/her assignment the State's sudden cardiac awareness education plan. Parents of participating students will be provided with a copy of the State-adopted informed consent form authorizing their child to participate in the intramural or interscholastic athletics.

DISCIPLINE

A student who violates the district's code of conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. North Canaan Elementary School's disciplinary actions may include using one or more discipline management techniques, such as a restorative justice model, detention, 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 board of education policy even if such conduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. The school district 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.

Detention

A student may be detained outside of school hours for not more than 1 hour on one or more days for violation of the code of conduct. The detention shall not begin, however, until the students' parents have been notified of the reason for the detention (and can make arrangements for the student's transportation on the day(s) of the detention).

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.

The Board of Education may expel a student in grades 3 through 12 inclusive, from school privileges if, after a full hearing, the Board finds that the conduct of the student to be both (1) a violation of a Board policy; and (2) either seriously disruptive of the educational process or endangering persons or property. 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 extracurricular and social privileges during the period of expulsion.

For any student under 16 years old who are expelled and students between 16 and 18 expelled for the first time and who have never been suspended, the Board of Education may shorten the length of or waive the expulsion period if the student successfully completes a Board specified program and meets any other conditions required by the Board. Such a Board-specified 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 in grades kindergarten through grade 12 inclusive 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 in grades kindergarten through grade 12 inclusive, who offers illegal drugs for sale or distribution on or off school grounds is also cause for expulsion for a calendar year. The Board 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 a Board specified program and/or met other conditions required by the Board, the notice of expulsion will be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school or, if the Board so chooses, at the time the student completes the Board specified program and meets other Board 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 student's 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.

A district student who has committed an expellable offense who seeks to return to a District 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 expulsion from the District, shall be permitted to return to the appropriate school setting within the District. Further, the District 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. School administrators will determine, using state guidelines, whether the suspension will be in-school or out-of-school. 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.

Students in preschool through grade 2, inclusive, may only receive in-school suspensions, unless, after an informal hearing, the administration determines that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate based on evidence that the students conduct on school grounds is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.

However, no student shall be suspended without an informal hearing before the building principal or his/her designee at which time the student shall be informed of the reasons for the disciplinary action and given an opportunity to explain the situation, unless circumstances surrounding the incident require immediate removal. In such an instance the informal hearing will be held during the suspension.

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.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by students as a means of communication. All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to the community, with the exception of school-connected organizations, will be referred to the office of the superintendent to determine whether the request complies with school policy.

The principal or his/her designee may approve such distribution providing:

1. The material is related to the school, community, local recreational or civic activity.
2. The material does not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain.
3. The material does not promote any outside governmental political party, candidate or position.
4. Does not promote profit making organizations.
5. Does not advocate a position regarding a referendum question.

Materials that have a religious content may be made available to students during non-instructional time. The District has the right to impose neutral time, place and manner restrictions on the dissemination of religious materials to ensure that students are aware that the materials are not endorsed or sponsored by the District.

Publications prepared by or for the school may be posted or distributed, with prior approval by the principal, sponsor or teacher. Such items include school posters, brochures, school newspapers and yearbooks.

DISTRICT-PROVIDED PERSONAL LEARNING DEVICES

All students will be provided with a Chromebook. Parents and students must sign and agree to the student device guidelines provided by their school. Parents are financially responsible for damages, loss or theft of the device. Students leaving the District must return their devices, with accessories, on the day of departure.

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 a crisis response drill will be planned and conducted with the local law enforcement agency. Such crisis response drills 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. The signal for a fire drill is a constant blast on a special horn. 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.

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.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND GAMES (Radios, CD Players, Cell-Phones)

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 at North Canaan Elementary School is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in the loss of privileges.

If students do bring a cell phone and or an electronic watch to school, they both must be powered off and placed in the cell phone holder at the beginning of the day. “Students and parents should be aware that the Board is not liable for any privately owned technological device that is stolen, lost, or damaged while at school” (Board Policy 5131.81.) If students have phones or watches when they should not or do not use the holder, the following progressive discipline will be followed:

- FIRST time: We will take the phone and a parent or guardian will have to come in to pick it up.
- SECOND time: Students will lose phone privileges for the remainder of the week, meaning they cannot bring them to school.
- THIRD time: Students may not bring their phone to school for the remainder of the week and the entire following week.
- FOURTH time: Students may not bring their phone to school for a month.
- FIFTH TIME: Students cannot bring their phone to school for the remainder of the school year.

EMERGENCY MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS

We try to avoid interrupting classroom learning to deliver messages to students. If there is an emergency where a student must be contacted, please contact the main office at 860-824-5149.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION and AUTOMATED PHONE MESSAGING SYSTEMS

The Region One School system uses an automated phone messaging system which gives school administrators the ability to easily contact parents/guardians immediately of news that needs to be communicated. Administrators have the ability to send personally prerecorded messages to the entire school community, or they can tailor transmissions to smaller groups, when needed. The system allows the District to program up to three numbers for each parent/guardian of a District student. (home phone, work phone, cell). Such calls are permitted without prior consent if limited to notice of emergency items, such as weather-related closures, issues of student safety and health, and threats of imminent danger. Parental consent will be sought when the messaging system will be used for other informational items.

In the event school is closed because of bad weather or another emergency, announcements will be made on television and radio stations; NBC Channel 30 New Britain, CBS Channel 3 Hartford, and ABC Channel 8 from New Haven. Families will also be contacted via a main phone number submitted for emergency purposes. Emergency closings will also be posted on the district's website, www.region1schools.org.

EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION

A student will be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Bilingual Education, 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.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Athletics

Athletics, including e-sports, are considered an integral part of the school's educational program. Whether participation is on the intramural, interscholastic, or class level, students have an opportunity to acquire qualities of fitness, self-discipline, and cooperation.

Student athletes may not participate in any intramural or interscholastic activity unless the student athlete and his/her parent/guardian completes the concussion education plan and sign the informed consent form.

The concussion education plan may consist of written materials, online training or videos, or in person training. The consent form includes a summary of the school/district's concussion education plan and applicable school board concussion policies.

Beginning with the 2022-23 school year, parents/guardians and students must also comply with heat illness awareness education requirements, which includes prohibiting a student from participating in intramural or interscholastic athletics unless the student and the parent/guardian reads or views the training material, or attends an in-person training. The parent or guardian must sign an informed consent form that acknowledges compliance with the requirement.

Student interscholastic activities, including e-sports, are governed by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) regulations. Eligibility for participation is determined by ability and scholarship and is governed by state law as well as the regulations of the CIAC. Any student athlete who has not reported to school by noon will not be permitted to practice or play that afternoon or evening. Exceptions to this rule will be considered only if the player's parent explains the unusual circumstances to the principal or designee.**

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. The Board of Education strongly encourages all transportation of students to be on buses or

other transportation vehicles which conform to the requirements of law and regulations of the State Department of Education.

The District does not endorse, sanction, sponsor or approve student travel to foreign countries by teacher-sponsored private trips/tours. Such programs are sponsored by outside agencies, not the Board 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, advisor or administrator to request confidential help.

FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

The North Canaan Public Schools recognize that students have a right to bring into our schools, in a judicious manner governed by regulations, items for posting that are not considered obscene, libelous, disruptive, vulgar, and are deemed by the Administration to be consistent with community standards. Further, no expressed idea will be suppressed because it is not shared by the majority. However, expressions which involve false statements, disruptive or potentially dangerous content, the use of obscenities, and advocacy of violation of law or school regulations are unacceptable.

FUNDRAISING

Guidelines for fundraising and crowdfunding can be found in [Policy #3281](#).

GRADING SYSTEM

Region One Grading Practices are founded in research that support best practice for evaluating, communicating, and reporting how students learn. Additionally, these practices adhere to the Region's belief that the purpose of grading is to accurately communicate a student's progress toward mastery of identified standards.

Report cards are published three times a year to provide parents with feedback on how a student's progress is aligned to standards. Students are expected to deliver report cards to their parents. Report card envelopes must be signed by the parents and returned to the school.

For additional information, please see the link to [Region One Grading Practices Handbook](#)

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. The District 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, the Board of Education 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 or the Region One Title IX coordinator, Dr. Jeanine Rose. The allegations will be investigated and addressed and appropriate disciplinary action taken, where necessary.

HEALTH SERVICES

The nurse's office is designed to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school. Nurse Foley will send a family communication at the start of each school year regarding attendance, screenings, medication, required immunizations, physicals, and any other health related information. All students must provide evidence of physical examination upon enrollment to the district. If you have any questions or concerns that are health services related, please contact our school nurse, Nurse Foley at 860-824-5149, then press 2.

Disabilities

The 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.

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 the Superintendent. The District 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. For additional information, please reference [Policy #5118.1](#).

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.

Specific homework assignments may strengthen basic skills; extend classroom learning; stimulate and further interests; reinforce independent study skills; develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction; stimulate worthwhile use of leisure time; and acquaint parents with the student's work in school.

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.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The public version of the instructional programs utilized by North Canaan Elementary School can be found on the Region One website at <https://region1schools.org/overview-of-region-1/strategic-plan-curriculum/>.

ITEMS NOT PERMITTED IN SCHOOL

In order to ensure student safety and the protection of personal property, parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor closely those items that are brought or worn to school by students. The following items are specifically prohibited on school grounds: weapons, including martial arts (real or fake), knives, razor blades, sharp items, skate boards, roller skates, rollerblades, sneakers with wheels, baseball bats, lacrosse sticks, matches, caps, fireworks, laser pointers and portable game systems.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

Students are responsible for any material they sign out. Materials must be returned to the circulation desk. Students must pay for any materials they lose or damage.

LOST AND FOUND

Any articles which 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

The district 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.

MULTI-LANGUAGE LEARNERS (MLL)

Parents of 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.

ON-CAMPUS RECRUITMENT

Students at the middle and high school level will be informed of the availability of (1) vocational, technical and technological education and training of technical high schools and (2) agricultural sciences and technology education at regional agricultural science and technology education centers. Full access for the recruitment of students by technical high schools, regional agricultural science and technology education center, magnet schools, and charter schools will be provided. Military recruiters and institutions of higher learning shall have access to secondary school students' names, addresses and telephone listings unless the student's parent/guardians submits a written request that such information not be released without their prior written consent.

OUT OF SCHOOL MISCONDUCT

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of a publicized board 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 PORTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Board of Education has enhanced its student information system to include a parent portal. The parent portal will allow a parent/caregiver of students in grades 5 to 8 to access student records via a secure website. A parent/caregiver will be able to view attendance, homework assignments and grades. The portal can be accessed through the school website, www.nceschool.org. If you are having difficulty accessing the portal, please contact the main office.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

PTO is a vital link between the school, community and the parents it serves. Its aim is to support the school and coordinate efforts of parents/guardians to develop a closer relationship between home and school. Thus, parents are urged to join and take an active part in the PTO.

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/caregivers 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 (Schools without an integrated pest -management plan must send prior notice by mail.) . Parents/caregivers who want to be notified prior to pesticide applications inside their child(ren)'s school assignment area may contact Beth Johnson. Note: If the district is implementing the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) concept, similar requirements as above must be met. Notice will be provided at least 24 hours in advance of the application of a pesticide either on the school's homepage or on the school or district's primary social media account.

POSTERS

Signs and posters that students wish to display must be approved by Mrs. Johnson. 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

A student shall be promoted from one grade to the next on the basis of academic performance.

A student in grades 6-8 who is not promoted shall be retained in the same grade or placed in an alternative education program. No student shall be retained more than once in grades 5-8 unless a committee of the student's teacher(s) and two administrators approve and the parent(s) agree because of special circumstances.

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 enrichment. Students who fail to master basic learning objectives at a normal rate may 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, retesting, etc.

PROPERTY, LOCKERS, AND EQUIPMENT

It is the policy of the Board to hold students responsible for any loss of or damage to the property of the school under the jurisdiction of the Board when the loss or damage occurs through the 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. 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. Students are warned not to bring large sums of money or valuables to school, liability for these items remains with the student.

Students use desks, tables, cubbies/lockers and other equipment. These items are the property of the school, loaned to students for their convenience during the school year, and should be kept in good order and not abused.

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 school board 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, 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.

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 psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, the District 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

The District prohibits the covert recording of classroom activities. The recording of teachers or students in class is inherently disruptive to the educational process. 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. The District strives to provide religious accommodations to students in an equitable and appropriate way in accordance with District policies and corresponding guidelines.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The school district recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as, but not limited to, Martin Luther King Day, Veterans Day, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving and Presidents' Day are encouraged. The district reminds students, faculty and administration of the variety of religious beliefs, and all are urged to be conscious of and respect the sensitivities of others.

Activities related to a religious holiday or theme will be planned to ensure that the activity is not devotional, and that students of all faiths can join without feeling that they are betraying their own beliefs. Therefore,

1. school and class plays shall not be overly religious, and church-like scenery will be avoided;
2. religious music shall not entirely dominate the selection of music; and
3. program notes and illustrations shall not be religious or sectarian.

Students shall be given the option to be excused from participating in those parts of a program or curriculum involving a religious theme which conflicts with their own religious beliefs. If a parent or student has any questions regarding the use of religious music, artwork and/or symbols in a particular course/activity, the Building Principal should be contacted.

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. Nonparticipants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

[Policy 5131.911](#)

School climate means the quality and character of school life based on patterns of students' parents' and guardians' and school employees' experiences of school life, including, but not limited to, norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.

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

Each school in the District will develop and implement 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 and develop a school security and safety plan based upon the standards developed by DESPP.

The District has developed, 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.

SECURITY CAMERAS

Video equipment is used to enhance the safety and security of all individuals. It is used to monitor student behavior on campus and on school buses. The principal or his/her designee will review the recordings as needed. These recordings may be used to support disciplinary actions. Recordings shall be treated as protected student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Any student, staff member, or visitor to the school is prohibited from tampering with or damaging the school's video surveillance equipment.

SERVICE ANIMALS

The Board of Education, in compliance with state and federal laws, allows service animals to accompany persons with disabilities on the District campus. A service animal is usually a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability. This does not include animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, companionship, or therapeutic benefits, or to act as a crime deterrent.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The district 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. Sexual harassment, whether verbal or physical, includes, but is not limited to the following: (Give examples which are age appropriate.) Any student who believes they have been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately to the Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, 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. The administration will take action to investigate the allegations.

The district will notify the parents of all students involved in sexual harassment by student(s) 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, Dr. Jeanine Rose.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The District believes children's social and emotional development are essential underpinnings/foundations to school readiness and academic success. Therefore, the District's educational program has included social and emotional learning and development to support the learning of skills needed to prepare students for careers, college and life. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically. The key characteristics of the SEL program include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The district provides special programs such as but not limited to intervention/enrichment, bilingual, special education and more.

The District utilizes the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process which combines systematic assessment, decision-making and a multi-tiered delivery model to improve educational and behavioral outcomes for all students. Academic and behavioral support and targeted interventions will be provided for students who are not making progress at expected levels in the general curriculum. When students are experiencing difficulty with academics or behavior, every effort is made to provide support to help the child succeed within the regular classroom setting through the MTSS process.

For students in need of Special Education programs, a planning and placement team (PPT) is designed to provide communication and decision-making at the school level concerning the effective use of available resources. The team is also responsible for follow-up and periodic review of all students presently in Special Education and special services programs.

Any child identified as possibly needing special education and/or related services must be referred to a special education Planning & Placement Team for evaluation (PPT). The PPT will determine whether special education services are required. Parents must give their consent before any evaluation can be done or any services can begin. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP), based upon the diagnostic findings of the evaluation study will be developed by

the PPT, with parental involvement. Parents will be informed regarding the use of scientific, research-based interventions. Parents have the right to have the school paraprofessional assigned to their child, if any, attend and participate in PPT meetings. Parents, as required by law, will be provided information at PPT meetings about their right to have advisors and paraprofessionals attend PPT meetings.

A school must offer an IEP that is “reasonably calculated to enable a child to make appropriate progress in light of the child’s circumstances.” Every child should have the chance to meet challenging objectives.

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. If the outcome of the conference with the principal is not satisfactory, a conference with the Superintendent or designee can be requested.. A student and/or parent with a complaint regarding possible discrimination on the basis of gender should contact the 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 Director of Pupil Services.

STUDENT DATA PRIVACY

Connecticut legislation, PA 16-189, (C.G.S. 10-234bb (a)) An Act Concerning Student Data Privacy, as amended by PA 17-200 and PA 18-125, restricts how student information may be used by (1) entities that contract to provide educational software and electronic storage of student records (“contractors”) and (2) operators of websites, online services or mobile applications (i.e., apps). Not later than five (5) business days after executing a contract with such contractors, the contract will be posted on the District’s website. The notice will include a brief description of the content and the purpose of the contract and will state what student information, student records or student-generated content may be collected as a result of the contract. Student information will be deleted by operators of websites, online services, or mobile apps upon student, parent, guardian or board of education request. Such operators may not create student profiles for use in targeted advertising and for purposes unrelated to school. Parents and students will be notified of data breaches. Students and parents/guardians will be notified not later than two business days upon notice of a breach of security by a contractor to the Board of Education.

STUDENT INVOLVED/LED CONFERENCES

Caregivers are encouraged to partner with the school to ensure their child’s educational successes. Student involved/led conferences will be held in the Fall and student led conferences will be held in the Spring. Caregivers are always welcome to arrange individual meetings at other times of the year.

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 or students who have withdrawn. 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 requester has the right to a hearing. If the records are not amended as a

result of the hearing, the requester 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.

-Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of post-secondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures and pay the copying charge; or (4) when the district is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and the parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days after the issuance of this handbook. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade levels, photograph, e-mail address, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended.

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.

The District may release to the Parent Teacher Organization the names, school designated contact information, grade levels of students **unless the District is informed by September 15** of the school year that designation of such directory information has been refused as to a particular student provided such information is to be used by the PT0 for its own school activities or school business.

The District, when a student moves to a new school system or charter school, will send the student's records to the new district or charter school within ten business days of receiving written notice of the move from the new district. Unless the parents/guardians of the student authorize the record transfer in writing, the sending District is required to send a notice when the records are sent to the new district.

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 HIPAA Privacy Officer is the Superintendent.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

School 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 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.

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/caregiver's written consent.

Student Success Planning

A student success plan for each student enrolled in grades six through twelve shall be created. Such student success plan shall include a student's career and academic choices in grades six to twelve, inclusive. Such plans shall provide evidence of career exploration in each grade including, but not limited to, careers in manufacturing. In creating the student success plan, consideration must be given to careers and academic choices in computer science, science, technology, engineering and mathematics. When possible, the student success plan should be created in collaboration with each student and the student's parent or guardian. The Student Success Plan (SSP) is an individualized student driven plan developed to address every student's needs and interests to help the student stay connected in school and to achieve postsecondary educational and career goals

Trauma Informed Schools

The District believes when students are healthy, safe, supported, engaged and challenged, they are then able to learn to the best of their ability. Schools are trauma-sensitive in the implementation of policies to help children feel safe in order for them to learn. Policies, practices and the school culture will be sensitive to the needs of traumatized individuals. A

flexible framework provides universal supports, is sensitive to students' unique needs. Emphasis will be placed on building supporting relationships.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Students are required to maintain high standards of behavior when being taught by a substitute teacher. Substitute teachers must be given the cooperation, courtesy and respect of all students. Misbehavior for a substitute teacher will result in teacher and office disciplinary action.

SURVEYS/STUDENT PRIVACY

Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sex attitudes or behaviors;
4. illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;
7. income; or
8. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents.

In addition, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party that is to be administered by a school to a student, prior to its use. Parents will be notified at least two weeks in advance of any survey that will be given to their children.

The District will not collect, disclose or use personal information gathered from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information or providing it to others for that purpose.

TEACHER AND PARAEDUCATOR 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.

TECHNOLOGY USE

Guidelines have been established for the use of the Internet. Student violations of the guidelines can result in the termination of access privileges and in disciplinary actions. It is the policy of the Board of Education that all students

must sign an acceptable use policy which indicates that a student agrees to use the Internet exclusively for educational purposes. Each contract must also include a signature from the student's parent/guardian.

TESTING

All students in grades 3 through 8 shall annually take Smarter Balanced statewide summative assessments in language arts and mathematics. Students in grades 5 and 8 shall annually take the Next Generation statewide summative assessments in science. Special education students participate in mastery testing programs except in the rare case when participation in an alternate assessment is detrimental to the student's IEP. The mastery examination test is one of the measures to be used to determine if students have met the identified standards. All English learners are required to participate in all content areas of the state summative assessment.

TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES

All district 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.

TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS

Students withdrawing from school must notify the main office one week in advance of their last day. At that time, they will be given forms for their parents to complete. Included will be a formal written statement of withdrawal and release of records form.

On their last day of attendance, a form that must be signed by each of the students' teachers. This form will indicate their grade at the time of withdrawal and that all materials have been returned. Records cannot be forwarded until all materials have been returned.

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.

Students will be notified of their bus stop and times for pick-up and drop-off via the webpage www.nceschool.org prior to the start of school. Students and parents are asked to wait safely at their bus stop.

Parents should park in the designated area at each school. Cars should not be parked in undesignated areas which include on the grass, in fire lanes, on the curb, etc. at any time.

Parents who choose to drive their children to school and drop them off should drive into the designated drop-off areas with their vehicles, remain in the vehicle, and drop off their child. Students may be dropped off starting at 8:30. Students in grades Pre-k-2 should be dropped off at The Canaan Child Care Center entrance. Students in grades 5-8 should be dropped off at the side entrance by the music room. Students in grades 3 & 4 should be dropped off on the sidewalk between the daycare and the front entrance.

Students who arrive between 8 and 8:30 may be dropped off at the front of the school and go to the cafeteria until 8:30.

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.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES

All questions and concerns regarding school transportation safety are to be made to the Transportation Coordinator, Michelle Christian. A written record of all complaints will be maintained and an investigation of the allegations will take place.

Bus Routes will be printed in the Lakeville Journal and also posted [here](#) on our school website.

VISITORS

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit the school. All visitors must first sign in to the main office with their driver's license. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time shall be permitted only with the principal's approval. Such visits shall not be permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. All visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct. Disruptive behavior or uncivil discourse will not be permitted. Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds.

WELLNESS

[Click here for full Wellness policy.](#)

Student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, is promoted through the District'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, in addition to time in the elementary school day for supervised recess.

All students enrolled in elementary school shall have included in the regular school day, time devoted to physical exercise, of not less than 20 minutes in total. This requirement may be altered by a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) for a child requiring special education and related services or if the board of education permits an additional amount of time.

This daily period of physical activity for elementary school students can be a combination of planned physical education classes, recess, and/or teacher-directed classroom activities.

Students may not be required by school employees to engage in physical activity as a form of discipline during the school day. This restriction does not apply to brief periods of respite/time-outs, referrals to a building administrator, or for safety reasons. Students in elementary school may not be denied participating in recess or in other sustained opportunities for physical activity during classroom learning as a form of discipline. Loss of recess or other physically active learning opportunities may be permitted on an administratively approved case-by-case basis.

School Celebrations

Food-based celebrations during the school day (birthday and holiday parties) should strive to meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards. [Click here for recommendations.](#) Food should also not be used as a reward for good student behavior.



North Canaan Elementary School

Record of Parent Annual Notice, 2025-2026



Dear Families:

Welcome to a new school year! This handbook is up-to-date, newly aligned with all elementary schools in Region One, and contains the latest information regarding our school. It is important that you and your child or children read and review its contents, and understand your rights under state statute. Please let me know if you have any questions. I ask that all families sign the bottom of this page and return it to your child's teacher to indicate that you have read and reviewed it as a family. If you have multiple children in your family, you may sign one form. Include the names of all of your children and return it to school through the folder of one of your children.

Thank you so very much,

Beth Johnson

Principal

I have read and do understand the
2025-2026 North Canaan Elementary School Student Handbook.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Please print your name.

Please print the name of your child.

Please print the name of your child.

Please print the name of your child.

Please print the name of your child.