

District-wide

# NLPS'

**EMPLOYEE**

**HANDBOOK**



---

Talent and Human Resources Department

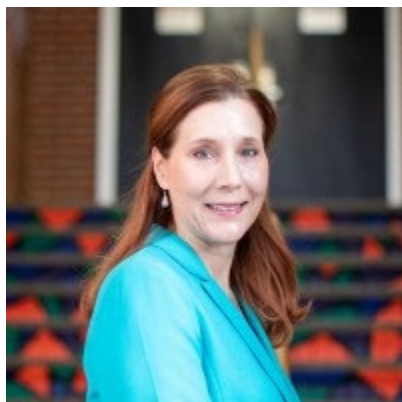
NEW LONDON BOARD OF EDUCATION 134 WILLIAMS STREET NEW LONDON, CT 06320

---

This page intentionally left blank.



## Welcome To New London Public Schools



Welcome to New London Public Schools! We are thrilled to have you a part of our team of dedicated teachers, leaders, and support staff who are committed to fostering a positive and dynamic learning environment.

As a member of our district, you play a crucial role in shaping the future of our students and in upholding the values that define our school community. This handbook is designed to provide you with the essential information, resources, and guidelines you need to succeed in your role and feel supported as you embark on the exciting professional journey with us.

We look forward to working together to make a lasting impact on our students' lives. You were selected to join the New London Board of Education because we believe you have those incredible personal and professional qualities that we look for in our employees. Our school district's reputation is based on the hard work and dedication of employees like you. We are proud and pleased to have you a part of the New London Whaler family!

Again, welcome to the New London Public Schools!

Sincerely,

Dr. Cynthia Ritchie  
Superintendent of Schools

## Notice and Disclaimer

This handbook is designed to inform employees of the New London Board of Education about working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting your employment. You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of this handbook. It describes many of your responsibilities as an employee and outlines the programs developed by New London Board of Education. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive to both the professional and personal growth of our employees and in the educational interests of our students.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. This handbook is intended for information and guidance; it is not an employment contract and is not intended to create contractual obligations of any kind, either with respect to the employment relationship itself or to any policies or benefits described herein. As the New London Board of Education evolves, to retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, the need may arise to change policies described in this Handbook. The New London Board of Education therefore reserves the right to change, revise, or eliminate any of the policies and/or benefits described in this handbook in its sole and absolute discretion. Employees will, of course, be notified of such changes as they occur. The only recognized deviations from the stated policies are those authorized and signed by the Board of Education and/or the Superintendent. Should any questions arise regarding a policy, a complete listing of school policies can be obtained by referencing our district webpage ([www.newlondon.org](http://www.newlondon.org)).

Absent any statute, employment, or collective bargaining agreement to the contrary, the employment relationship between the New London Board of Education and its employees is employment at will. Under this relationship, neither the employee nor the New London Board of Education is bound to continue the employment relationship if either chooses, at its will, to end the relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without notice.

Where there is a conflict between the provisions of this handbook and any employment contract or collective bargaining agreement, the terms of the employment contract or collective bargaining agreement will prevail. Where there is conflict between this handbook or school policies and updates to State and/or Federal legislation, law shall prevail.

**Each employee is responsible for the contents of this document and for acting within the parameters of the Board's policies.**

# Contents

Welcome To New London Public Schools.....	1
Notice and Disclaimer .....	2
About Us.....	5
Our Vision.....	5
Mission Statement .....	5
District Strategic Plan.....	6
<b>SECTION 1 – HIRING .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Equal Opportunity Employer .....	7
Job Postings.....	7
Appointment to a Position.....	8
Records Check and Fingerprinting .....	8
<b>SECTION 2 – EMPLOYMENT .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Probationary Period .....	9
Personnel Records .....	9
Payroll .....	10
Time & Attendance .....	11
Staff Absences.....	11
Work Schedules.....	12
Office/School Closings .....	13
Dress Code and Personal Appearance .....	14
Job Descriptions .....	15
Employee Photographs and IDs .....	15
Staff Evaluations.....	15
<b>SECTION 3 – BENEFITS / WELLNESS .....</b>	<b>15</b>
Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Long-Term Disability .....	16
Pension Plan.....	16
Personal, Vacation and Sick Days.....	16
Jury Duty .....	16
Work Related Injuries .....	16
FMLA Leaves .....	16
<b>SECTION 4– EMPLOYMENT SEPARATIONS .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Retirements.....	18
Voluntary Resignations .....	18

Staff Discipline and Termination.....	18
Exit survey .....	18
Return of Property .....	18
<b>SECTION 5– EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND DISTRICT STANDARDS OF CONDUCT .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Standards of Conduct.....	19
District Communication .....	21
Workplace Bullying (Congenial and Healthy Workplace).....	22
Reporting of Workplace Harassment.....	23
Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Free Workplace.....	24
Acceptable Use of the Computer Network.....	25
Internet Safety .....	28
Conflict of Interest .....	29
Personal Appliances .....	29
<b>SECTION 6– PURCHASING PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Purchase Requisition.....	30
Purchase Approvals.....	30
<b>SECTION 7– EMPLOYEE POLICIES AND IMPORTANT NOTIFICATIONS .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Confidentiality of Information.....	30
Notice Regarding Electronic Monitoring .....	30
Employee Responsibility and Use of the District’s Computer Systems .....	31
Pest Management/Pesticide Application on School Property.....	31
Staff Responsibilities to Students.....	32
Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect.....	32
Sex Discrimination and Harassment Personnel .....	33
Title IX Coordinators .....	34
Equal Employment Opportunity – Certified/Non-Certified.....	35
Nondiscrimination.....	36
Mandatory Trainings.....	37
Annual Policy Notification.....	38
Labor Law Compliance .....	39
<b>RECEIPT &amp; ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK .....</b>	<b>40</b>

## About Us

New London Public Schools is home to over 3,100 amazing and diverse (PreK-12) students in an urban center on the shoreline of Southeastern, CT. NLPS staff experience the personal reward of making a difference in the lives of New London's students as we collectively aim to support their academic, social-emotional and technical skillset development to prepare them for college, careers and beyond. New London has received statewide attention and garnered the support of the CT State Department of Education for its many educational and innovative initiatives, as it continues its focus on high academic outcomes and seeks to transform to become Connecticut's first and only all-magnet school district in the state.

New London attracts students from 37 surrounding Connecticut towns to join in learning aligned to three thematic pathways: International Education, STEM and Arts. The STEM and Arts Pathways provide cohesive programming for students K-12. Both our middle and high schools are part of the highly competitive Connecticut State Department of Education's Commissioner's Network program. In SY23-24 the district was graced with 5 national awards for its amazing programs and schools!

Most professional educators want to teach in a great school where they can exercise their creativity and passion for teaching and learning in an environment where they are valued and where their continuous growth and development is always supported. Under its vision, mission and goals outlined in its improvement plan, New London Public Schools aims to be "United In Excellence", offering a unique opportunity to work in an exciting and supportive school system, focused on the development of the whole child through a team approach to success.



## Our Vision

United In Excellence

## Mission Statement

To educate and graduate students who specialize in one of the three themed Magnet pathways: International Education, STEM, and Visual & Performing Arts, who are well versed in the academic knowledge and practical experiences necessary to exceed beyond high school; who are critical thinkers and innovators; who are courageous and self-reliant; and who challenge the status quo while enriching their community, country, and global society.

## District Strategic Plan

The New London Public Schools' District Strategic Plan information can be found on our district webpage.

### **The District Strategic Plan focuses on the following four areas:**

#### **1. Student Achievement**

If we design and implement rigorous, research-based instruction and interventions aligned with a viable standards-based curriculum and aligned assessments, then our students will achieve at higher levels.

#### **2. Climate and Culture**

If we are intentional and tireless in our pursuit of supporting students' and staff members' social- emotional development, where diversity is celebrated as a strength and collaboration, leadership and relationships are valued as essential to all we do, then we will create a culture and climate of excellence.

#### **3. Engagement and Empowerment:**

If we promote welcoming environments, implement effective two-way communications, systems, provide a variety of continuous engagement and empowerment activities, and highlight how learning occurs everywhere, there will be a shared responsibility of ownership for ensuring students' success among school, family and community.

#### **4. Operations, Systems, and Structures**

If we strengthen and align district operations and systems with the goal of increasing fidelity, coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness, then we will improve outcomes for our students.

#### **5. Recruiting, Retaining, and Recognizing Excellence**

If we work to develop and strengthen the talent of a diverse workforce and recognize positive efforts, then we will grow our collective capacity to better meet the needs of our students and families.

In addition to the District's Strategic Plan, each school/department sets their own annual goals aligned to the strategic focus areas. All staff are responsible for becoming familiar with this plan.





## SECTION 1 – HIRING

### Equal Opportunity Employer

New London Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and it adheres to all federal, state, and local laws and regulations related to equal employment opportunity. The Board is firmly committed to equal employment and advancement opportunities for all present employees as well as for applicants in all phases of the employment process (recruitment, hiring, assignment, conditions of employment, compensation, benefits, training, promotion, transfer, discipline and termination). In accordance with applicable law, the Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, veteran status, or gender identity or expression, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law. This policy is based on the understanding that the applicant can handle the job requirements. Employment decisions will be based on merit, qualifications and abilities.

It is the policy of the New London Board of Education that any form of discrimination or harassment based on race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, veteran status, or gender identity or expression, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law is prohibited, whether by students, Board employees or third parties subject to the control of the Board. The Board's prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressly extends to academic, nonacademic, and extracurricular activities, including athletics. It is also the policy of the Board of Education to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any discrimination based on protected characteristics such as race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), veteran status, or gender identity or expression.

(Reference NLPS BOE Policy Nos. [4111.1](#) and [4112.112](#))

Further, the Board prohibits any form of retaliation or adverse employment action against any employee who exercises rights pursuant to any federal, state, or local law pertaining to equal employment opportunities.

### Job Postings

Job openings may be posted internally and externally within our schools, on our district webpage, and on other job listing sites depending on the position posted and in accordance with collective bargaining agreements.

#### **Application Process**

All applicants are required to fully complete the appropriate New London Board of Education application materials to be considered as a candidate.

#### **Interviews**

An interview committee, consisting of two to eight trained staff members, will conduct interviews to ensure unbiased and fair evaluations. Depending on the position, interviews may include multiple activities to assess the candidate's practical experience. After the interview, the committee will determine which candidates will continue as finalists. Candidates moving forward will be contacted by phone. All other candidates will receive notifications through the applicant tracking system portal.

### Appointment to a Position

Appointment to a position is made after a candidate has verbally accepted a contract offer. Within a week or sooner after the candidate has accepted, the Superintendent of Schools will issue a letter and contract of employment for the candidate to sign and return, thus ensuring that the candidate has accepted the offer. Placement on the salary schedule is made at this time; however, final placement is based on verification of prior years of experience and receipt of official transcripts. Prior years of service are credited in accordance with the New London Education Association Contract. In general, all years teaching in public schools in the United States as well as private schools in Connecticut are given full credit. The position must be half-time or greater to count as a year of service. Partial years count if the teacher has worked more than half of a school year. The New London Public Schools does not negotiate placement on the salary schedule.

### Records Check and Fingerprinting

To create a safe and orderly environment for students, all prospective employees are required to be fingerprinted. If the results of an individual's fingerprint/background check are returned, with evidence of a criminal record, in accordance with Connecticut law, each applicant must state, in writing, whether he or she has ever been convicted of a crime or whether criminal charges are pending against him or her at the time of application.

If charges are pending, the applicant must state the charges and the court in which such charges are pending. Furthermore, all offers of employment will be conditional upon the successful outcome of a criminal record check and fingerprinting in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes section 10-221d. In addition, any person applying for employment shall submit to a record check of the Department of Children and Families Child Abuse and Neglect Registry before the person may be hired.

Candidates recommended for employment, to include any student or individual over 18 years old, must complete their fingerprints in the Human Resources Department prior to being placed in a position within the district. The Human Resources Department will schedule the candidate to complete the fingerprinting process. District students employed by the school system are exempted from this requirement, however, school district students that are employed within the district shall be subject to a 'record review', by administration and approval by the district's Human Resource Department. **If an applicant or employee is charged with a crime after the initial background check, that person is expected to notify the Executive Director of Talent and Human Resources immediately.**

### **Case-by-Case Evaluation**

Decisions regarding the impact of disclosed criminal charges or convictions on an applicant's or employee's status will be made on an individual basis. Each situation will be evaluated considering factors such as the nature of the offense, its relevance to the position, and other pertinent circumstances.

### **Falsification or Omission**

The falsification or omission of any information on a job application or during a job interview—including information about criminal convictions or pending criminal charges—will result in disqualification from employment consideration or termination of employment. Any individual placed in a school under a public assistance employment program shall also submit to the criminal check if such individuals will have direct contact with students, including volunteers. School nurses and nurse practitioners appointed by the Board or under contract with the Board shall also submit to a criminal history check pursuant to C.G.S. 29-17a. Student teachers placed in District schools as part of completing preparation requirements for reissuance of an educator certificate shall also be required to undergo the same criminal background checks already required for school employees.

(Reference NLPS BOE Policy Nos. [4112.4](#), [4112.5](#), [4112.51](#), and [4112.52](#))

### **Substitute Teacher Information**

New London Public Schools works in partnership with Kelly Educational Services for most substitute teacher positions. The district may employ hybrid substitutes at each building.

## **SECTION 2 – EMPLOYMENT**

The New London Board of Education is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States. The New London Board of Education does not unlawfully discriminate based on citizenship or national origin. In compliance with the Immigration reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility.

### **Probationary Period**

All non-certified employees must complete a probationary period as defined by the individual's bargaining unit contract. Current bargaining unit contracts are available on the District's website, [www.newlondon.org/humanresources](http://www.newlondon.org/humanresources). Teachers should refer to Connecticut General Statute 10-151 for information regarding the statutory probationary period. Unaffiliated staff are subject to a 90 workday probationary period.

### **Personnel Records**

The Board of Education maintains personnel records for all current employees, containing information essential for good personnel administration. These records are kept exclusively in the

Human Resources Department. The Superintendent or designee will notify an employee in writing if a request for disclosure of their personnel file is made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

(Reference NLPS BOE Policy No. [4112.6](#))

## Payroll

### **Pay Date Schedule**

A schedule has been developed to comply with legal and union contract requirements. Pay dates are available upon request from the Business Office.

Hourly Employees - If you are paid hourly, please note the following:

- Paychecks cannot be issued without a completed and approved timesheet.
- Timesheets must be submitted in accordance with the pay schedule timeline that is available from the business office. Time is submitted electronically through the Kronos Workforce Ready Time & Attendance system (or timesheets if needed) after your last punch-out of the pay period.

### **Distribution of Paychecks**

Employees are required to receive paychecks through direct deposit. All new direct deposit requests may take at least two payroll periods for processing.

### **Payroll Information Changes**

It may become necessary from time-to-time to change personal information (i.e., new address, change in Federal or State withholding, dependent additions/deletions to medical coverage, etc.). This document required to do this can be found in the All-Staff General folder; District forms; and is titled Name or Address Change located there or by contacting the Business Office at X3190.

### **Pay Deductions**

The law requires that the New London Board of Education make certain deductions from every employee's compensation. Among these are applicable Federal and State income taxes. The employer must also deduct Medicare and/or Social Security taxes on each employee's earnings up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security "wage base." All deductions require signed authorization. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement may also be required to have deductions for dues memberships where applicable.

### **Final Paychecks**

Due to the pay schedule for employees who receive annualized pay, there may be times when employees are paid for days they may have not yet worked. This may impact the calculation of an employee's final paycheck upon separation from the district. Vacation time is credited for the full year at the beginning of the year. Upon separation, vacation time earned is prorated to be calculated on actual dates of employment, this also may impact the final paycheck. If you need assistance with understanding this on understanding how your final pay is impacted, please contact the business office.

## **Exempt and Non-Exempt Employees**

### **Exempt Employees**

Certain employees, based on the nature of their duties, are exempt from certain wage and hour laws.

### **Non-Exempt Employees**

Non-exempt hourly employees are not permitted to work more than their regularly scheduled hours unless approved by their immediate administrative supervisor.

Non-exempt salaried employees must work all their scheduled hours to receive their full regular pay. They may request to use accrued paid time off to make up for shortfalls in hours worked, with advance approval from their supervisor. Use of accrued paid time off cannot increase an employee's weekly hours above their total scheduled hours, unless allowed by a collective bargaining unit contract.

### **Complaint and Correction Procedure on Payroll Issues**

Every precaution is taken to ensure that employees are paid correctly, and promptly on the scheduled payday. Furthermore, it is our policy to comply with the salary basis requirements of State and Federal law. Wages are calculated from the employee's approved time and attendance records. If you have any questions concerning why deductions were made from your paycheck or how they were calculated, please check with the Business Office.

## **Time & Attendance**

To promote a safe and productive work environment, the New London Public Schools expect employees to be reliable and punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and lateness are disruptive and place a burden on other employees, management, and in many cases students. Therefore, the New London Public Schools does not recognize an "acceptable" number of absences or tardiness, and either of these practices may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment.

It is imperative that all employees of the school district be at work, on-time, every scheduled workday. Employees contribute to achieving the school district's mission, educating children. The success of the school district depends upon each employee doing what is expected, including maintaining an acceptable attendance record.

All hourly employees are required to punch in and out using the Kronos Workforce Ready Time & Attendance system. Time clocks are in every building. Time sheets are processed electronically and should be submitted after the last punch out of the pay period. All time-off requests and additional hours beyond a normal work week, must be pre-approved (except in emergencies) and entered on the timesheet in the field provided.

## **Staff Absences**

A "Time Off Request" must be submitted as soon as possible in advance of an anticipated lateness or absence for all work missed by any employee, even if a substitute is not required. This request

can be made through the Kronos Workforce Ready Time & Attendance program, or for teachers, by logging any absence into the Kelly Services AESOP portal.

If the absence is unexpected, notice must be given no later than the start of the workday. If your direct supervisor is unavailable, please leave a message on voice mail concerning the reason for your absence, as well as a telephone number where you may be reached. In addition, please contact the department assistant or the receptionist. Every effort to reach a live person must be made.

**Any time off request requires the documented approval of your supervisor for it to be paid.**

### **Teacher Absences and Substitute Teacher Information**

In the event you are going to be absent and will need a substitute to cover your teaching assignment, please follow the steps below:

Go to <https://kelly.aesoponline.com> Click on KASS login  
Enter your ID and PIN  
Click Sign In and complete functions Create an absence  
Enter the absence information Click SAVE

**You must also report the absence in the Kronos Time & Attendance System.**

Go to <https://time.newlondon.org>  
Log in with your NLPS credentials  
Select "Time Off Request" and enter reason "family illness", "Illness", etc.

## **Work Schedules**

Work schedules are developed based on many factors including school/office hours, budgetary restrictions, student/classroom needs, etc. Work hours/days are determined by the employee's Supervisor and/or contract provisions.

### **Overtime**

When operating requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, non-exempt employees may be requested to work overtime. All overtime work must receive the supervisor's prior authorization.

Overtime compensation is paid to all non-exempt employees in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement, if any, and with federal and state wage and hour restrictions. Overtime pay is based upon actual hours worked. Time off for sick leave, vacation leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations, unless an individual contract or collective bargaining agreement specifies otherwise.

### **Calendar**

The annual calendar for the academic year (July 1st to June 30th) is available by visiting the district website. School/staff hours for each school are shown on the website.

### **Staff Work Hours:**

The Central Office's normal hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (except on holidays). Summer hours are published at the end of June.

- **Administrators** are expected to be present in their buildings prior to the entry of students and until all students have boarded the buses at the end of the school day and have cleared the school.
- **Certified Educators / Teachers** are expected to be present in their buildings according to the expectations listed in the Teacher Contract, to include wrap-a-round time.
- **Secretaries** are expected to be present in their buildings according to the expectations listed in their contract.
- **Paraeducators, Tutors** and other educational support staff are expected to be present in their buildings according to the expectations of their direct supervisor.
- **Custodians** are expected to be present in their buildings according to the expectations of their direct supervisor.
- **Food Service personnel** are expected to be present in their buildings according to the expectations of their direct supervisor.

### **Office/School Closings**

Occasionally, severe, inclement weather conditions may warrant the closing of the school district. During severe, inclement weather conditions, if the New London Public Schools close buildings, it will be posted on the local radio and television stations. In addition, the district utilizes the School Messenger Calling system which notifies employees and parents via phone and email. It is important that employees notify the district of any changes in contact information (home phone, cell phone, email, etc.) to ensure that each employee is contacted. Send any changes or additional information to the Human Resources Office.

In cases where a closing is not authorized by the New London Public Schools, employees who fail to report for work or who choose to leave work early, will not be paid for the time off. However, absent any statutory, employment, or collective bargaining agreement to the contrary, employees may request use of either available vacation personal leave time.

### **10- Month Staff:**

When school is closed for students due to snow, 10-month staff will not report to work. The missed time will be made up when the school calendar is extended at the end of the school year. Secretaries will follow their contract regarding snow days, early dismissals, and delayed openings.

### **12-Month Staff:**

When school is closed for students, 12-Month staff will report to work at 9:30 a.m., unless otherwise notified by the Superintendent. Staff electing not to come into work will be charged a vacation day. All 12-month staff will notify their direct supervisor by 9:00 a.m. if they elect not to come to work and are requesting leave time.

### **School Delays and Closings**

School delays are posted as above. We utilize a standard 2-hour delay. Custodians report to work as directed by their supervisor.

### **Summer Work Hours**

All 12-month employees are expected to report to work for their regular hours throughout the summer. Summer work hours begin after the student year is over. Twelve-month employees are given an opportunity to choose “summer hours” or maintain the standard year-round work hours of Central Office, from 8:00 a.m. -4:00p.m. Summer hours options will be published on or before June 15<sup>th</sup> of each year and will be based upon the needs of the district.

Employees will decide which choice works best for them and will notify their supervisor of their choice prior to the last day of the student year. Custodians are the only group that has hours set for them throughout the summer. Custodians will receive their summer work hours from their supervisor prior to the start of the summer workdays. Employees are invited to utilize vacation days and/or hourly time off if they need to be out of district.

## **Dress Code and Personal Appearance**

As a professional organization, Board employees must act, dress, and work in a professional manner that communicates the importance of our mission at school. Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the image that New London Public Schools present to the community. Employees should always appear neat and professional and are expected to dress appropriately according to the requirements of their positions. Employees should always be aware that we are modeling appropriate dress for our students as detailed in the student dress code. All employees must wear their identification badges during their workday. Custodians should refer to their established dress code. If an administrator believes that an employee is not meeting the expectation of professional dress, he or she may address the issue with the employee individually and ask that the employee conform to the professional standard of dress.

To ensure that New London Public Schools employees project a professional appearance and support an atmosphere where learning is the focus for our students, please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. **Appropriate Attire:** Clothing should be clean, well-maintained, and suitable for a professional setting. Items such as short, transparent, excessively soiled, or excessively ripped clothing are not appropriate.



2. **Modesty and Professionalism:** Please avoid wearing miniskirts, short-shorts, halter tops, spaghetti strap tops, strapless tops, or any clothing that exposes the midriff, cleavage, or undergarments. Clothing should be professional and not overly revealing.
3. **Safety and Respect:** Clothing that disrupts the educational process, poses a safety or health risk, or violates legal statutes is not permitted. This includes apparel with provocative symbols, offensive language, or references to alcohol, drugs, violence, or any form of discrimination.

Consult the Human Resource Office and/or Superintendent if you have questions concerning appropriate attire. (Reference [Policy 4118.23](#))

## Job Descriptions

Job descriptions have been developed for every position in the district giving a general outline of physical responsibilities, essential functions and job qualifications. Contact the Human Resources Office for a copy of the job description for your position.

## Employee Photographs and IDs

Every employee will be furnished a photo ID badge which must always be worn and visible. Employees requiring replacement badges should contact the Technology Department.

## Staff Evaluations

All employees are expected to perform their duties competently. To assist employees in achieving performance levels consistent with their capabilities, all staff will receive an annual evaluation, subject to the terms of any applicable collective bargaining agreement. This evaluation will be provided by each employee's direct supervisor. Teachers and administrators will receive regular feedback throughout the school year according to the district's approved Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plans (legislative requirement). All staff will be evaluated through an electronic platform that will house annual evaluations.

## Concerns, Issues, Conflict Resolution

From time to time, issues arise within the course of employment that may need to be addressed in a systematic way. Bargaining unit agreements establish procedures for dealing with personnel issues, disciplinary actions/terminations. Please refer to pages 21-23 of the Handbook as well as to Collective Bargaining Agreements/Contracts, if applicable. Please contact the Human Resources office, at any time, to report concerns.

## SECTION 3 – BENEFITS / WELLNESS

A variety of benefits are available to individuals who qualify according to the eligibility

requirements that may apply to such benefits. A list of benefits and qualifying criteria are generally included in bargaining unit agreements or individual letters of employment.

### Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Long-Term Disability

Plans provided are in accordance with collective bargaining agreements or individual employee contracts and are available from the Benefits & Human Resources Coordinator. Every employee must make an appointment to enroll or opt to waive insurance.

### Pension Plan

Eligible employees are required to contribute to the New London City Pension Plan. Details and information can be obtained in the Business Office.

### Personal, Vacation and Sick Days

Please consult your collective bargaining agreement, job classification terms or individual employee contract for information regarding usage of these days. Some days need prior approval by your direct supervisor.

### Jury Duty

The New London Board of Education encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving Jury Duty when required.

### Work Related Injuries

An employee who is injured while performing job-related duties may be entitled to Workers' Compensation benefits. Certain steps must be taken to substantiate the potential claim.

1. Report the injury to your Supervisor/Principal immediately after an occurrence.
2. Complete the school's injury report and give the completed report to the school secretary.
3. Seek immediate medical treatment at the initial care center designated by your employer. A network of approved medical providers is available online for your immediate access by using the appropriate [Search Provider link](#)
4. Follow the medical provider's advice and keep your supervisor apprised of your work status.
5. When released to return to work, please provide your supervisor with supporting medical documentation.

### FMLA Leaves

The New London Board of Education will provide leave to eligible employees consistent with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). Eligible employees are entitled to up to 12 work weeks of unpaid family and medical leave in a 12-month period. The Board will continue to provide health benefits on the same terms an eligible employee enjoyed prior to commencement of FMLA leave. In addition, the Board will restore the employee to the same or an equivalent position at the conclusion of the leave, taking account of specific circumstances and in accordance with Board policy.

FMLA leave, which is an unpaid leave, typically runs concurrent with any accrued paid time off leave an eligible employee has available under a collective bargaining agreement and or New London Board of Education Policy. FMLA leave may also run concurrent with absences due to Workers' Compensation injuries or illnesses. In complying with the FMLA, the district will adhere to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act as well as other applicable federal and state laws.

### **Eligibility**

An employee seeking the FMLA benefit must contact the Human Resources Department to receive a full explanation of FMLA as it pertains to their individual circumstance, guidance and the forms that must be submitted to receive this benefit.

### **Notice**

When the FMLA leave is foreseeable, the employee must notify the district in writing of his or her request for leave at least 30 days prior to the date when the leave is to begin. Failure to give notice may result in the leave beginning thirty days after notice was received. If the leave is not foreseeable, the employee must give notice as early as is practical but no later than one to two workdays after learning that leave will be necessary. A spouse or family member may give the notice if the employee is unable to personally give notice. When the employee requests medical leave, the employee must make reasonable attempts to schedule treatment so as not to disrupt the district's operations.

### **Certification**

The district shall require the employee to provide certification pertaining to the reason for the FMLA request from a health care provider containing specific information required under the law. If there is a question concerning the validity of such certification a second, and, if necessary, a third opinion can be required both at the expense of the district. The district reserves the right to seek clarification and/or authentication of any medical certification form an employee submits.

### **Restoration**

An employee's right to return to the same or an equivalent position is contingent upon the employee's continued ability to perform all the essential functions of the position and has maintained the necessary certifications, where applicable.

### **Failure to Return**

The district is entitled to recover health care premiums paid during the leave if the employee fails to return from leave. However, recovery cannot occur if the employee fails to return because of the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition or due to circumstances beyond the control of the employee. ([Reference Policy 4152.6](#))

## **SECTION 4– EMPLOYMENT SEPARATIONS**

## Retirements

Employees who are retiring should notify the Superintendent in writing at their earliest convenience, but at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of their retirement. Certified Teachers and Certified Administrators may qualify for certain additional incentive payments as per collective bargaining contracts. These payments have separate advance notice requirements beyond 30 days. Please refer to the current collective bargaining contract to confirm these terms.

All CT State Certified professional personnel are participants in the Connecticut State Teachers' Retirement System. The Board's policy on retirement, therefore, shall be guided by state law.

## Voluntary Resignations

### **Certified Educators**

It is recommended that employees notify the Superintendent and Human Resources Department in writing by May 1<sup>st</sup> if they intend to resign at the end of the current school year.

Under normal circumstances, the staff member will provide a thirty (30) day notification prior to the effective date of resignation. However, if the staff member resigns during the month of August, the thirty (30) day notification begins with the first day of student attendance. Teachers that are held under this provision for up to 30 days will receive their pay in arrears rather than pursuant to the regular contractual pay schedule, to allow for the potential of the teacher being released before the end of a complete pay cycle.

### **Non-Certified Staff**

It is recommended that non-certified and unaffiliated staff members notify their direct supervisor and the Human Resources Department in writing at least two weeks prior to their intended last day of employment with the district.

## Staff Discipline and Termination

The New London Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to take appropriate steps to ensure that all staff of the New London Public Schools are performing their duties in a manner which he or she believes is in the best interests of the New London Public Schools. To that end, the Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools, or designee, to discipline staff whom he or she considers not to be performing in the best interests of the district, up to and including suspension with or without pay, subject to applicable laws and contractual provisions.

## Exit survey

All employees are encouraged to complete an online exit interview survey or request to meet with Human Resources for an exit interview to provide constructive feedback.

## Return of Property

Employees are responsible for all property, materials or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. All employees must return all keys, swipe badges, identification

cards, computers and all other school-owned property prior to or on their last day of employment.

All property must be returned by employees to their supervisor upon separation from employment with New London Public Schools.



## **SECTION 5– EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND DISTRICT STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

All employees and certified staff should refer to Series 4000 – Personnel Policies which are located on the district website. Furthermore, school administrators are expected to comply with the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for School Administrators, as outlined in the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, Section 10-145d-400b. Similarly, teachers are expected to comply with the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers, as outlined in the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, Section 10-145d-400a.

### **Standards of Conduct**

All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner in the performance of their duties and as a role model to students at school and outside of school. The Board of Education recognizes that school children are often influenced by the conduct displayed by teachers and other members of the school’s staff. The Board expects that staff will strive to set the kind of example for students that will serve them well in their own conduct and behavior and contribute toward and appropriate school atmosphere.

Employees are expected to report for work appropriately dressed, on time, and fully prepared to perform their duties in a timely and efficient manner, and to refrain from inappropriate conduct. Every employee is expected to deal effectively with students, parents and other staff members, both superior and subordinate.

If an employee is charged with a crime after the initial background check, that person is expected to notify the Executive Director of Human Resources immediately and no later than 12 hours after the incident.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are a few examples of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or discharge from employment.

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.

- Sleeping or preparing to sleep during work hours.
- Falsification of time keeping records.
- Working under the influence of alcohol or controlled or illegal drugs.
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty or while operating New London Public Schools owned vehicles or equipment.
- Misappropriation of school funds or other assets.
- Fighting, threatening violence, or disorderly conduct on Board property or at a school-sponsored event or activity, including sporting events.
- Behavior or conduct that disrupts the workplace.
- Serious or continued violation of safety standards.
- Unauthorized use, possession, or storage of firearms, dangerous weapons, explosives, lethal materials, or other potentially dangerous items on school premises or at school-sponsored events or activities, including sporting events, regardless of any lawful license or certification for possession elsewhere.
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of New London Public Schools owned property.
- Misuse or unauthorized use of Board property, such as Board vehicles.
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.
- Failure to report dishonest behavior by others.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment.
- Excessive tardiness, absenteeism, or any absence without notice.
- Unauthorized disclosure or improper use of confidential or related material or information.
- Conduct that is in violation of a published Board policy.
- Action that is or can reasonably be expected to be seriously detrimental to the Board or its reputation.
- Socializing with students, on social media sites that are not connected to educational programming approved by the district. Staff are welcome to befriend students online *after* they graduate and are no longer students.
- Undermining the reputation of the district, or any fellow employee, or any student on any social media site, unless protected by law.
- There is a zero-tolerance policy for DCF substantiations for district employees.
- There is a zero-tolerance policy for sexual relationships between two consulting adults within the school building or on school grounds, at any time.

The personal life of an employee will be the concern and warrant the attention of the Board only as it may directly affect the employee's fitness to perform the job, his or her fitness to be placed in a position of trust with children, the property of the district, or constitute a conflict of interest, in accordance with the law.

Staff are reminded that all district emails and cell phones are subject to search at any time. They are to be used only for the professional business of the district. ([Reference Policy 4118.4](#) and

## [Policy 4118.6\)](#)

Staff are reminded that their personal cell phones, emails, etc., may be subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) review, as well as subject to subpoenas IF an employee chooses to conduct Board of Education business utilizing their personal phone. Staff are reminded to conduct all professional business utilizing district-assigned technology.

## District Communication

All communications between the district and the newspaper or media will flow through the Superintendent's Office. If staff are contacted by the media, they should contact the Manager of Executive Support Services and/or the Superintendent of Schools to receive guidance.

### **Fund Raising/Advertising and Promotion**

The New London Board of Education recognizes that schools should 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. Board [Policy 1111.2](#) details the circumstances in which fund raising, advertising and/or promotion activities are approved and the protocols for such. Additionally, Board [Policy 3281](#) – School Fund Raisers – details the requirements for volunteer organizations who intend to raise funds benefiting students within the New London Public Schools.

### **Staff/Student Non-Fraternization**

Adults who have contact with children and adolescents through school activities have the responsibility not to betray or misuse their privileged position. Students develop a special trust in school staff by virtue of the school system's authority and the key role the schools play in their lives. Adults must never take advantage of students' vulnerability or of their confidence that adults in school will behave appropriately in relationships with them.

It is the policy of the Board of Education to prohibit any sexual relationship, contact or sexually nuanced behavior or communication (verbal or non-verbal) between a staff member and a student, while the student is enrolled in the school system. The prohibition extends to students of the opposite sex or the same sex as the staff member and applies regardless of whether the student or the staff member is the initiator of the behavior and whether the student welcomes or reciprocates the attention. ([Reference Policy 4118.24](#))

### **Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in The Workplace**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain a working environment free from harassment, insults or intimidation on the basis of an employee's sex and free from discrimination based on sex. Verbal or physical conduct by a supervisor or co-worker relating to an employee's sex which has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, unreasonably interfering with the employee's work performance, or adversely affecting the employee's employment opportunities is prohibited. ([Reference Policy 4112.112](#))

Although not an exhaustive list, the following are examples of the type of conduct prohibited by the policy against sexual harassment:

1. Unwelcome sexual advances from a co-worker or supervisor, such as unwanted hugs, touches, or kisses;
2. Unwelcome attention of a sexual nature, such as degrading, suggestive or lewd remarks or noises;
3. Dirty jokes, derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons or drawings;
4. The threat or suggestion that continued employment advancement, assignment or earnings depend on whether the employee will submit to or tolerate harassment;
5. Circulating, showing, or exchanging emails, text messages, digital images or websites of a sexual nature;
6. Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.

It is the policy of New London Public Schools to encourage victims of sexual discrimination or sexual harassment to promptly report such claims. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints. Any infraction of this policy by supervisors or co-workers should be reported immediately to the Executive Director of Talent and Human Resources and/or any Title IX Coordinator in accordance with the district's sex discrimination and sexual harassment grievance procedure. If the Title IX Coordinator is the subject of the complaint, the complaint should be submitted to the Superintendent, who shall investigate or appoint a designee to do so.

Retaliation against any employee for complaining about sex discrimination or sexual harassment is prohibited under this policy and illegal under state and federal law. Violations of this policy are not permitted and may result in discipline up to and including discharge from employment. Staff who engage in sex discrimination or sexual harassment may also be subject to civil and criminal penalties. Complaints will be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken when allegations are verified.

Confidentiality will be maintained by all persons involved in the investigation to the extent possible and reprisals or retaliation that occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of sex discrimination or sexual harassment will result in disciplinary action against the retaliator.

[Report Form for Complaints \(last page of the policy\)](#)

### Workplace Bullying (Congenial and Healthy Workplace)

The district believes in promoting a healthy, positive workplace climate so that every individual can contribute fully to the educational community. Every person has the right to dignity at work. The rights and responsibilities apply to all employees, parents, and all who utilize or visit District facilities.

The Board requires all its employees to treat all other employees, as well as students, with dignity and respect. Building principals and supervisory staff need to be sensitive to signs of stress among



staff. During periods of high stress, staff may act in an unprofessional manner. Unprofessional behavior must be dealt with and not ignored. Further, rudeness will not be tolerated among the staff.

### **Consequences of Bullying in the Workplace**

The Board of Education does not condone bullying in the workplace, and such behavior may lead to discipline. The Board desires to provide a workplace that is free from violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior.

## **Reporting of Workplace Harassment**

As soon as an individual feels that he or she has been subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, gender identity or expression, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by state or federal law, he or she should make a written complaint using the forms available on the District website to the Superintendent, or his or her designee. The individual and any respondent, if applicable, will be provided a copy of the Board's policy and regulation and made aware of his or her rights.

### **The complaint should state the:**

1. Name of the complainant,
2. Date of the complaint,
3. Date(s) of the alleged harassment/discrimination,
4. Name(s) of the harasser(s) or discriminator(s),
5. Location where such harassment/discrimination occurred,
6. Names of any witness(es) to the harassment/discrimination,
7. Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment/discrimination; and proposed remedy.

Any individual who makes an oral complaint of harassment or discrimination will be provided a copy of this regulation and will be requested to make a written complaint pursuant to the above procedure. If an individual is unable to make a written complaint, the staff member receiving the oral complaint will either reduce the complaint to writing or assist the individual with completing the written complaint form.

[Report Form for Complaints \(last page of the policy\)](#)

**All complaints received by staff members are to be forwarded immediately to the Executive Director of Talent and Human Resources or their designee.**

Upon receipt of a complaint alleging harassment or discrimination under this complaint procedure, the Executive Director of Talent and Human Resources or their designee shall promptly investigate the complaint. Confidentiality will be maintained by all persons involved in the investigation, to the extent possible, as determined by the investigator.

At times, incidents of workplace bullying by and between staff can be handled effectively in an informal manner, however, should still be reported to HR. If an incident occurs that is offensive, it may be sufficient to explain clearly to the offender that the behavior is unacceptable. If the circumstances are too difficult or embarrassing for an individual, support may be sought from another colleague, a contact person, staff representative or an administrator. A complainant may decide, for whatever reason, to bypass the informal procedure and proceed to the filling of a written complaint to the Superintendent or their designee.

For an individual to allege a policy violation, to call it bullying according to this policy's standard, the targeted individual must be able to demonstrate that due to the alleged bullying activity that they have experienced negative consequences which are affecting their ability to perform their job. It is the intent of this policy that such issues are identified early by the targeted individual, a co-worker or colleague, and the issue is resolved at the earliest possible stage.

### **Related Consideration**

Bullying must not be confused with the non-abusive exercise of management rights to assign tasks, coach, and reprimand or take disciplinary actions against employees. Any administrator, supervisor, or individual in a position of leadership to whom a complaint is reported (verbally or in writing) must take appropriate action according to internal procedures. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

Freedom from retaliation is protected under all non-discrimination or harassment policies. Retaliation is a separate offense from the original claim of bullying. Protected individuals include complainants, or anyone who testifies, assists or participates in any manner in an investigation or proceeding, internal or external, pertaining to the allegation of bullying.

## **Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Free Workplace**

Employees violating the alcohol, drug and tobacco policy (including vaping and vaping products) may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Alcohol and Drugs**

In accordance with state and federal law, the Board of Education is required to provide written explanation of the consequences of violating the Board's policy which prohibits the unlawful manufacture, possession, use, dispensing, or distribution of an illegal drug, controlled substance, or alcohol on school premises or as part of any of the school activities.

"Controlled drugs" are those drugs which contain any quantity of a substance which has been designated as subject to federal narcotic laws, or which has been designated as a depressant or stimulant drug pursuant to federal food and drug laws, or which has been designated by the public health council and Commissioner of Consumer Protection pursuant to Section 19-451 as having a stimulant, depressant or hallucinogenic effect upon the higher functions of the central nervous system and as having a tendency to promote abuse or psychological or physiological dependence, or both. Controlled drugs are classifiable as amphetamine-type, barbiturate-type, cannabis-type, cocaine-type, hallucinogenic, morphine-type and other stimulant and depressant

drugs. Specifically excluded from controlled drugs are alcohol, nicotine and caffeine.

An employee must report any conviction under a criminal drug statute to the Superintendent or their designee within five (5) days after the conviction. The New London Public Schools will notify any agency awarding a grant to the New London Public Schools of such conviction, within ten (10) days thereafter.

Members of the staff shall report any suspected violation of these standards of conduct directly to the Human Resource Office, and in accordance with the investigative procedures of that department, immediately investigate the allegation.

### **District Action for Violation of Alcohol and Drug Policy**

These procedures should be followed if an employee of the district is found to have violated the alcohol and drug policy. ([Reference Policy 4118.232/4218.232](#))

#### **Employees suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.**

- A. If an employee appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, he or she shall be taken to the nurse and shall be treated as a person who is ill. The Superintendent and the Director of Human Resources shall be notified by the supervisor. In case of emergency or if there is a clear and present danger to the employee's health, he or she will be transferred immediately to the hospital.
- B. Consistent with local, state and federal law, employees found to be in possession of, using or distributing illicit drugs or alcohol on school premises may be subject to termination of employment and prosecution.
- C. Information about drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation and re-entry programs will be made available to employees, and the completion of an appropriate rehabilitation program will be required as a condition of continued employment.

### **Acceptable Use of the Computer Network**

#### **Employee Use of the District's Computer Systems and Electronic Communications**

Computers, tablets, smartphones, computer networks, Internet access, and e-mail are effective and important technological resources in today's work environment. The Board of Education has provided computers, local area, and wireless networks that allow for Internet access and an email system (referred to collectively as "NLPS Network"), to enhance both the educational opportunities for our students and the business operations of the district. These computer systems are business tools. As such, their use is encouraged to communicate with others, share information, and conduct educational research. Per the New London Board of Education policy 4118.4, personal use is to be incidental only.

The New London Public Schools has and will continue to comply with the requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), as codified at 47 U.S.C. 254(h) and (l). The district is committed to assuring the safe conduct of all students while online and has a comprehensive

policy about the proper use of our technological resources. At the beginning of each school year, students and staff are made aware of the district's Acceptable Use Policy (*see NLPS Policy 4118.4*). Staff members are expected to understand and enforce the Student Acceptable Use Policy in their area. All state, federal and local laws and district policies and guidelines should be followed. It is the district's intent to preserve network bandwidth and improve network response times by limiting Internet access to education and work-related sites.

[\(Reference Policy 4118.4\)](#)

### **Scope**

The Board expects that employees learn to use the available technological resources that will assist them in the performance of their job responsibilities. As needed, employees shall receive professional development in the appropriate use of these resources.

Employees shall be responsible for the appropriate use of technology and shall use the district's technological resources for purposes related to their employment. Computer files and electronic communications, including email and voice mail, are not private. Technological resources shall not be used to transmit confidential information about students, employees, or district operations without authority.

### **Use of Telephones**

Telephones may be provided to employees to conduct school/district business. Personal long-distance calls may not be made on District telephones. The use of cell phones for personal calls and/or messaging during instructional time/contact with students is prohibited.

Secretaries will take messages for staff during instructional time. Employees are responsible for returning calls to parents and caregivers daily. In cases of emergency, personal messages may be taken for an employee.

### **NLPS Network**

The NLPS Network includes wired and wireless computers and peripheral equipment, files and storage, e-mail and Internet. The district reserves the right to prioritize the use of, and access to, the network.

All use of the NLPS Network must support education, research, or business operations and be consistent with the mission of the district.

### **Review of System Use**

It is important for all users of the systems to understand that the New London Public Schools, as the owner of the systems, intends to review their use to ensure that only appropriate district related work and messages are being performed and transmitted. The New London Public Schools intends to review the use of the systems in a limited fashion but will do so as needed to maximize utilization of the systems for business purposes and according to appropriate protocols that may apply in different divisions or departments.

This review will be performed in a fashion that will permit the New London Public Schools to obtain an adequate sampling of system uses and messages, on an ongoing basis, to confirm that the systems are functioning properly, and without misuse. Such sampling will also allow the New London Public Schools to continually reassess the utility of the systems, and whenever appropriate, make such changes to the systems as deemed fit. Thus, the administrative review process by the New London Public Schools should serve to increase the value of the systems to the New London Public Schools, our employees and students, on an ongoing basis.

### **Examples of Specific Prohibited Uses**

Unacceptable network use by district staff includes but is not limited to:

- Accessing, uploading, downloading, storage and distribution of any personal files, including offensive, obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit material;
- Downloading, installation, and use of games, audio files, video files or other applications (including shareware or freeware) without permission or approval from New London IT Department;
- Personal gain, commercial solicitation and compensation of any kind;
- Support or opposition for ballot measures, candidates and any other political activity;
- Hacking, cracking, vandalizing, the introduction of viruses, worms, Trojan horses, time bombs and changes to hardware, software, and monitoring tools;
- Using another person's account password, folder, work, or files;
- The use of profanity, abusive, impolite, or inappropriate language;
- Harassing phone calls, voice mails, e-mails, and use of social media in violation of the social media policy;
- Use of social media that interferes with the work of the school district, creates a hostile work environment, harms the goodwill and reputation of the school district, or violates the law, Board policy, and/or school rules;
- E-mail messages addressed to all employees or large groups of employees without the prior approval of the sender's Department Head; and
- Personal use (non NLPS business use) of district resources (hardware, software, or systems) at any time.

### **Personal Use Prohibited**

In order to prevent abusive use of the systems, the New London Public Schools will review their use and any personal use will be restricted to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, in general and to avoid the possibility of observation of personal uses or monitoring of private personal messages, you should not engage in such uses or send such messages. This means that all users of the systems should restrict themselves to appropriate, business-related uses only.

### **No Expectation of Privacy**

The district provides the network system, e-mail and Internet access as a tool for education, research, and business in support of the district's mission. The district reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review and store, without prior notice, information about the content and

usage of:

- The NLPS Network;
- User files and disk space utilization;
- User applications and bandwidth utilization;
- User document files, folders and electronic communications;
- E-mail;
- Internet access; and
- Any and all information transmitted or received in connection with network and e-mail use.

No staff user should have any expectation of privacy when using the district's network. The district reserves the right to disclose any electronic message to law enforcement officials or third parties as appropriate. As part of monitoring and reviewing, the district will retain the capacity to bypass any individual password of a student or other user. The system's security aspects, such as personal passwords and the message delete function for e-mail, can be bypassed for these purposes. The district's ability to monitor and review is not restricted or neutralized by these devices. The monitor and review process also includes oversight of Internet site access and of document downloading and printing.

### **Employee Acknowledgment Required**

Each employee authorized to access the school district's computers, networks and Internet services is required to sign an acknowledgment form stating that they have read Policy 4118.4 and these regulations. The acknowledgment form will be retained in the employee's personnel file. ([Reference Policy 4118.4](#))

## **Internet Safety**

Each district computer with Internet access shall have a filtering device that blocks entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic or harmful or inappropriate for students, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or his or her designee shall enforce the use of such filtering devices. An administrator, supervisor, or other authorized person may disable the filtering device for bona fide research or other lawful purpose, provided the person receives prior permission from the Superintendent or designee.

### **Social Networking**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media or personal online accounts under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges, for example, that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily, the use of social media by employees, including employees' use of personal online

accounts, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from social media use that:

1. interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district;
2. is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications for students and staff;
3. creates a hostile work environment for students and staff;
4. breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees or students; or
5. violates the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

Staff will not “befriend” students on social networking sites.

Staff will not post pictures of NLPS students on their own personal social media sites.

[\(Reference Policy 4118.51\)](#)

## Conflict of Interest

Employees have an obligation as New London Public Schools employees to avoid actual or potential conflicts of interest.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is able to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of that employee’s affiliation with New London Public Schools. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

If an employee has any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts or leases, he or she is required to disclose to the Chief Financial Officer of the New London Public Schools, as soon as possible, the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in an entity with which the New London Public Schools does business, but also when an employee or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the New London Public Schools.

## Personal Appliances

Personal appliances in offices and/or classrooms are restricted. Staff lounges and main offices will be equipped with all the tools and appliances needed for comfort and work effectiveness. The District’s budget for energy costs cannot sustain running personal appliances. Additionally, the Fire Marshall agrees that central locations for appliances are the safest.

## **SECTION 6– PURCHASING PROCEDURES**

The district utilizes the purchase order method for placing orders.

### **Purchase Requisition**

It is imperative that a purchase requisition be submitted and approved to an actual purchase order before an order for goods or services is given. Emergency purchases which need to be made before a purchase order can be approved but require prior authorization from the Chief Financial Officer.

### **Purchase Approvals**

Purchase orders are not official until signed by the Director of Business and Finance. Employees are not authorized to enter into any contract on behalf of the district/school. All contracts must be approved and signed by the Superintendent of Schools or the Executive Director of Finance.

[\(Reference Policy 3320\)](#)

## **SECTION 7– EMPLOYEE POLICIES AND IMPORTANT NOTIFICATIONS**

A complete set of published policies, regulations, and notifications are available on the district website [www.newlondon.org](http://www.newlondon.org) and upon request at the Board of Education Office. (See [Board of Education Policies](#))

### **Confidentiality of Information**

Employees are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communications concerning students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential. Electronic transfer of student data should be encrypted or shared via a document that is housed on the Office 365 OneDrive with appropriate internal NLPS staff only. Attaching documents that contain student data that includes identifiers such as gender, race, IDEA status, test scores, etc. should never be downloaded and only be used via the OneDrive.

### **Notice Regarding Electronic Monitoring**

In accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 31-48d, the Board of Education hereby gives notice to all its employees of the potential use of electronic monitoring in its workplace. While the Board may not actually engage in the use of electronic monitoring, it reserves the right to do so as the Board and/or the Administration deem appropriate in their discretion, consistent with the provisions set forth in this Notice.

“Electronic monitoring,” as defined by Connecticut General Statutes Section 31-48d, means the collection of information on the Board’s premises concerning employees’ activities or communications, by any means other than direct observation of the employees. Electronic monitoring includes the use of a computer, telephone, wire, radio, camera, electromagnetic,



photoelectronic or photo-optical systems. The law does not cover the collection of information for security purposes in any common areas of the Board's premises which are open to the public, or (B) which is prohibited under other state or federal law.

The following specific types of electronic monitoring may be used by the Board in its workplaces:

1. Monitoring of e-mail and other components of the Board's computer systems, including monitoring of electronic devices such as PDAs, Smartphones, and mobile or handheld devices that access the computer systems, for compliance with the Board's policies and regulations concerning use of such systems.
2. Video and/or audio surveillance within school buildings (other than in restrooms, locker rooms, lounges and other areas designed for the health or personal comfort of employees or for the safeguarding of their possessions), on school grounds and on school buses and other vehicles providing transportation to students and/or employees of the school system.
3. Monitoring employee usage of the school district's telephone systems.

The law also provides that, where electronic monitoring may produce evidence of misconduct, the Board may use electronic monitoring without any prior notice when the Board has reasonable grounds to believe employees are engaged in conduct that: (i) violates the law, (ii) violates the legal rights of the Board or other employees, or (iii) creates a hostile work environment.

### Employee Responsibility and Use of the District's Computer Systems

The employee shall be responsible for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the school unit related to violations of policy 4118.4 and/or these regulations. The school district assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by employees including but not limited to credit card charges, subscriptions, long distance telephone charges, equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use of its computers such as copyright violations. ([Reference Policy 4118.4](#))

### Pest Management/Pesticide Application on School Property

The purpose of this policy is to define how the New London Board of Education (Board) will manage its control of structural and landscape pests and at the same time protect students, school district employees, and other individuals who visit/use school facilities and grounds from the hazards of pesticides. ([Reference Policy 3524.1](#))

The policy is based on the following beliefs:

1. Structural and landscape pests pose significant hazards to school district employees, students, other people, property and the environment.
2. Strategies for managing pest populations will be influenced by the pest species and the degree to which that population poses a threat to people, property or the environment.
3. Pesticides can pose hazards to school employees, students, other people, property and the environment.

The intent of this pest management program is to manage pests in order to:

1. Reduce any potential human health hazard and/or to protect against a significant threat to public safety;
2. Prevent loss or damage to school structures or property;
3. Prevent pests from spreading in the community or to plant and animal populations beyond the site;
4. Enhance the quality of life and to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for school employees, students, and other people coming into contact with school property.

### Staff Responsibilities to Students

Teachers, staff members; and volunteers who utilize school computers for instructional purposes with students have a duty of care to supervise such use. Teachers, staff members and volunteers are expected to be familiar with the school district's policies and rules concerning student computer and Internet use and to enforce them. When, in the course of their duties, employee volunteers become aware of student violations, they are expected to stop the activity and inform the building principal [or other appropriate administrator].

### Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

The New London Board of Education (Board) recognizes its legal and ethical obligations in the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. Any person applying for employment with the Board shall submit to a record check of the Department of Children and Families Child Abuse and Neglect Registry before the person may be hired. Mandated reporters include all school employees, specifically Superintendent, administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, guidance counselors, school paraeducators, coaches of intramural and interscholastic athletics, as well as licensed nurses, physicians, psychologists and social workers either employed by the Board or working in one of the District schools, or any other person who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in District schools. Such individual(s) who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused, neglected or placed in imminent risk of serious harm, is required to report such abuse and/or neglect or risk. ([Reference Policy 5141.4](#))

Furthermore, the Board of Education requires all personnel who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child, under the age of eighteen (18), has been abused, neglected, has had non-accidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of such injury, or is placed in imminent danger of serious harm to report such cases in accordance with the law, Board policy and administrative regulations.

A mandated reporter shall make an oral report, by telephone or in person, to the Commissioner of Children and Families or a law enforcement agency as soon as possible, but no later than twelve (12) hours after the reporter has reasonable cause to suspect the child has been abused or neglected. In addition, the mandated reporter shall inform the building principal or their designee that they will be making such a report. Not later than forty-eight hours of making the oral report, the mandated reporter shall file a written report with the Commissioner of Children and

Families or their designee.

The oral and written reports shall include, if known: (1) the names and addresses of the child and their parents/guardians; (2) the child's age; (3) the child's gender; (4) the nature and extent of the child's injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect; (5) the approximate date and time the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect occurred; (6) information concerning any previous injury or injuries to, or maltreatment or neglect of, the child or their siblings; (7) the circumstances in which the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect came to be known to the reporter; (8) the name of the person(s) suspected to be responsible for causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect; (9) the reasons such person or persons are suspected of causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect; (10) any information concerning any prior cases in which such person or persons have been suspected of causing an injury, maltreatment or neglect of a child; and (11) whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, provide shelter or otherwise assist the child.

If the report of abuse or neglect involves an employee of the district as the perpetrator, the district may conduct its own investigation into the allegation, provided that such investigation shall not interfere with or impede any investigation conducted by the Department of Children and Families or by a law enforcement agency. If the Superintendent of Schools places a staff member on administrative leave, suspension or termination due to suspected or substantiated claims of abuse, the Superintendent will notify the Commissioner of Education pursuant to Public Act 11-93.

The Board, recognizing its responsibilities to protect children and in compliance with its statutory obligations, shall provide in-service training regarding the requirements and obligations of mandated reporters. District employees shall also participate in training offered by the Department of Children and Families.

State law prohibits retaliation against a mandated reporter for fulfilling their obligations to report suspected child abuse or neglect. The Board shall not retaliate against any mandated reporter for their compliance with the law and Board policy pertaining to the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect.

In accordance with the mandates of the law and consistent with its philosophy, the Board in establishing this policy directs the Superintendent of Schools to develop and formalize the necessary rules and regulations to comply fully with the intent of the law.

## Sex Discrimination and Harassment Personnel

The Board of Education agrees to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Regulations promulgated pursuant thereto, the Board designates the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, as Compliance Officer. The Board shall, at least annually, notify all students, parents, employees and labor organizations with which it deals of the name, address and phone number of the Compliance Officer and the procedure for processing grievances. ([Reference Policy 4112.112](#))

Except as hereinafter noted, all complaints shall be addressed in writing to the Board designated

Compliance Officer and he or she shall be responsible for investigating all complaints. Upon investigation, the Compliance Officer shall effectuate any changes deemed necessary to eliminate any discriminatory practices and shall inform the complainant in writing of his or her actions within ten (10) days of receipt of such complaint.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the action of the Compliance Officer, within ten (10) days, the complainant may appeal the action of the Compliance Officer in writing to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing within fifteen (15) days of receipt of such written request and shall decide what, if any, remedies are necessary to eliminate the practices deemed discriminatory. The Superintendent shall notify the complainant in writing of its decision within ten (10) days after such a hearing.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the action of the Superintendent, the complainant may appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Board of Education under the same procedures used to appeal the Compliance Officer's decision to the Superintendent.

Employees who are represented by labor organizations recognized by this Board for the purposes of collective bargaining shall process all complaints of alleged Title IX violations through the grievance procedures set forth in the applicable collective bargaining contracts.

## Title IX Coordinators

### **Title IX Coordinator – Student Related Issues**

Ms. Carrie Rivera, Executive Director of School and Student Support Services  
Email: [riverac@newlondon.org](mailto:riverac@newlondon.org)  
Mail address: New London Public Schools  
3 Shaw's Cove, New London, CT 06320 Telephone: (860) 447-6000 ext. 6058

### **Title IX Coordinator –Non-Student Related Issues**

Ms. Christine Pemberton, Executive Director of Talent and HR  
Email: [PembertonC@newlondon.org](mailto:PembertonC@newlondon.org)  
Mail address: New London Public Schools  
3 Shaw's Cove, New London, CT 06320 Telephone: (860) 447-6000 ext. 6019

### **Title IX Coordinator – School Level**

#### **C.B. Jennings International Elementary Magnet**

Mr. Shawn Brown  
Telephone: 860-447-6050  
Email: [BrownSh@newlondon.org](mailto:BrownSh@newlondon.org)

#### **Nathan Hale Arts Magnet School**

Mr. Jason Foster  
Telephone: 860-447-6060

Email: [FosterJ@newlondon.org](mailto:FosterJ@newlondon.org)

**Winthrop STEM Elementary Magnet School**

Mr. Michael Podeszwa & Ms. Leah Champ Burdick

Telephone: 860-447- 6070

Email: [PodeszwaM@newlondon.org](mailto:PodeszwaM@newlondon.org) and [ChampBurdickL@newlondon.org](mailto:ChampBurdickL@newlondon.org)

**BDJ Multi-Magnet Middle School Campus**

Mr. Chris Vamvakides and Ms. Alicia Ross

Telephone: 860-437-6480

Email: [VamvakidesC@newlondon.org](mailto:VamvakidesC@newlondon.org) and [RossA@newlondon.org](mailto:RossA@newlondon.org)

**NLHS Multi-Magnet Campus**

Ms. Katherine Brodaski

Telephone: 860-437-6400

Email: [BrodaskiKJ@newlondon.org](mailto:BrodaskiKJ@newlondon.org)

[Link](#)



[Title IX Training Information](#)

As employees it's important for you to know that students and families are also encouraged to submit anonymous concerns through **Anonymous Alerts**, NLPS's anonymous reporting app. All reports are followed up by school and district personnel. **Please click here** to see Anonymous Alerts.

## Equal Employment Opportunity – Certified/Non-Certified

The New Board of Education is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, veteran status, genetic information, marital status or gender identity. This policy applies to recruitment, employment and subsequent placement, training, promotion, compensation, tenure and probation, and other agreements between the Board and other agencies, institutions, and companies who must be equal opportunity employers. All personnel policies and practices of the Board of Education will be in accord with equal employment opportunity practices as determined by state and federal legislation. A job description and required qualifications for a position to be filled will be made available to all applicants. ([Reference Policy 4111.1](#))

### Administrative Regulations Regarding Discrimination Complaints

It is the policy of the New London Board of Education that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of protected characteristics such as race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, veteran status or gender identity or expression is forbidden, whether by students, Board

employees or third parties subject to the control of the Board. Students, Board employees and third parties are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all members of the school community.

It is the express policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics such as race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, veteran status or gender identity or expression.

**Any employee also may file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (“OCR”):**

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office  
U.S. Department of Education 8th Floor 5 Post Office Square  
Boston, MA 02109- 3921  
(617) 289-0111  
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

**Employees may also file a complaint regarding employment discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:**

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission,  
Boston Area Office John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
475 Government Center  
Boston, MA 02203  
(800-669-4000)

**Employees may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:**

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities 450 Columbus Blvd.  
Hartford, CT 06103-1835  
(800-477-5737)

## Nondiscrimination

### **District Values**

The New London Board of Education, in compliance with federal and state law, affirms its policy of equal educational opportunity for all students and equal employment opportunity for all persons.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

In order to maintain a program of nondiscrimination practices that is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, the Board designates the Executive Director of Talent and Human Resources and Director of Special Services as the District’s Compliance Officer.

### **Nondiscrimination in Employment/Contract Practices**

It is the Board’s policy to provide all persons equal access to all categories of employment in this

District regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, disability or genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal laws. The District shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute disabilities, consistent with federal and state statutes and regulations. Employees and third parties who have been subject to discrimination are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the District's Compliance Officer.

All complaints of discrimination shall be investigated promptly. Corrective action must be taken when allegations are substantiated. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the District's legal and investigative obligations. Neither reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of discrimination. ([Reference Policy 0521](#))

[Report Form for Complaints \(last page of the policy\)](#)

## Mandatory Trainings

All employees are required to complete designated training courses as part of their employment. Certification of completion for each training will be documented and maintained in the employee's personnel file. Training schedules and requirements may vary for current and new staff. All assigned training must be completed by the specified deadlines. Below are links to several important mandatory trainings:

1. [Connecticut Mandated Reporter Training](#)
2. [Identification and Prevention of Adult Sexual Misconduct Training\\*](#)
3. [Human Trafficking\\*](#)

\*Staff must also be observant and vigilant in their recognition and reporting of grooming behaviors. All concerns must be reported immediately to their building's Title IX Coordinator. Additionally, students should know and understand these behaviors (appropriate to their grade/age) and know to whom these types of activities should be reported, e.g., Building Administrator, School Guidance Counselor, School Psychologist or Social Work, or another trusted adult. Student reports should be shared with the district's Title IX Coordinator.

The above 3 trainings must be taken through the DCF Mandated Reporter Training website for a certificate of completion to be issued. **These topics are highly sensitive.**

4. [Title IX](#)  
The U.S. Department of Education's new Title IX Final Regulations, effective August 1, 2024, strengthen protections against sex discrimination in federally funded educational programs. Schools are mandated to address and prevent sex-based harassment and discrimination, including sexual violence and issues related to gender identity. Complaints must be handled fairly and transparently by trained, unbiased decision-makers. The regulations also ensure clear communication of policies, protect privacy, and prohibit retaliation, while supporting students and

families. Additionally, all employees will be required to undergo annual training to ensure compliance and understanding of Title IX requirements.

5. CHRO Sexual Harassment Prevention Training\*

\*Under Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-54(15), as an employer, school districts are required to provide two hours of training and education concerning sexual harassment to all employees (all new employees)

6. FERPA: Confidentiality of Student Records

\*The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

7. Blood-Borne Pathogens Exposure Prevention\*

\*According to OSHA’s Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, individuals who are exposed to bloodborne pathogens within the workplace are required to attend bloodborne pathogen training.

Annual Policy Notification

Series	Policy #	Title
0000 - Missions-Goals-Objectives	0521	<a href="#">Nondiscrimination</a>
1000 - Community Relations	1110.1	<a href="#">Parent-Teacher Communication</a>
3000 - Business/Non-Instructional Operations	3231	<a href="#">IDEA Fiscal Compliance</a>
3000 - Business/Non-Instructional Operations	3516.12	<a href="#">Asbestos Control</a>
3000 - Business/Non-Instructional Operations	3513.1	<a href="#">Energy Conservation</a>
3000 - Business/Non-Instructional Operations	3524.1	<a href="#">Pest Management</a>
3000 - Business/Non-Instructional Operations	3542.43	<a href="#">Charging Policy - Food Service</a>
4000 - Personnel	4112.112	<a href="#">Title IX</a>
4000 - Personnel	4111	<a href="#">Hiring of Certified Staff</a>
4000 - Personnel	4112.61	<a href="#">Use and Disclosure of Employee Medical Info</a>
4000 - Personnel	4118.234 /5141.23 1	<a href="#">Prohibition on Rec. for Psychotropic Drugs</a>

For the complete list of annual policy notifications visit the website [Annual Policy Notice link](#)



**Workplace Discrimination is Illegal**

**Electronic Monitoring Notice**

**Sexual Harassment is Illegal Poster**

**Wage and Workplace Standards Division**

**Job Safety & Health Protection - State of CT**

**Equal Employment Opportunity is The Law Poster**

**Employee Rights: Employee Polygraph Protection Act**

**Employee Rights Under the Fair Labor Standards Act**

**Your Rights Under USERRA**



# Have A Great Year!

