

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Robert E. Fitch High School

101 Groton Long Point Road
Groton, CT 06340

2025 - 2026 Student Handbook



WHERE OUR STUDENTS **R.I.S.E**

FITCH ALMA MATER

HAIL TO THEE, OUR ALMA MATER,
MAY THY NAME OUR WATCHWORD BE.
EVEN THOUGH OUR WAYS MAY SEVER,
WE WILL ALWAYS THINK OF THEE.
WE HAVE CHEERED THY NAME IN VICT'RY
AS WE'VE SUNG THY NAME IN PRAISE.
MAY WE THEN IN LIFE'S HARD STRUGGLES,
STILL THY NAME IN VICT'RY RAISE.

MASCOT: FALCON

COLORS: SCARLET, GRAY & BLACK

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Groton Public Schools is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. It is the policy of the Groton Board of Education that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against under any program, including employment, on the basis of sexual orientation, race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, handicap, ancestry, physical or mental disability, or lack of proficiency in the English language.

Inquiries regarding Groton Public Schools' nondiscrimination policies should be directed to Anne Marie Mancini, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, at Groton Public Schools' Administrative Offices, 1300 Flanders Road, Mystic, CT 06355 or (860) 572-2175. Any person having inquiries concerning Groton Public Schools' compliance with Title IX or Section 504 should contact Denise Doolittle, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, at Groton Public Schools' Administrative Offices, 1300 Flanders Road, Mystic, CT 06355 or (860) 572-2150.

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APPENDIX

- Map of Fitch High School
- 2025-2026 School Calendar
- Student Handbook Acknowledgement and Agreement Form (paper)

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT

Robert E. Fitch High School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., as a non-governmental, nationally recognized organization whose affiliated institutions include elementary school through collegiate institutions offering post-graduate instruction.

Accreditation of an institution by the New England Association indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer review process. An accredited school or college is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation.

Accreditation by the New England Association is not partial but applies to the institution as a whole. As such, it is not a guarantee of the quality of every course of program offered, or the competence of individual graduates. Rather, it provides reasonable assurance about the quality of opportunities available to students who attend the institution.

Inquiries regarding the status of an institution's accreditation by the New England Association should be directed to the administrative staff of the school or college. Individuals may also contact the Association.

CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

Our mission at Robert E. Fitch High School is to educate our students to become outstanding global citizens equipped with 21st century learning skills. The faculty and staff collaborate with home and community to promote academic excellence, personal wellness, and social awareness. We guide students into deeper cognitive awareness and increased levels of understanding, and we encourage our students to use their individual talents to their fullest potential. Our graduates are informed, responsible adults who respect diversity and value life-long learning.

VISION OF THE FITCH GRADUATE

Robert E. Fitch High School excels as a diverse learning community that challenges all learners to live our motto: achieve more, believe more, and care more. In addition to our motto, we have created the "Vision of the Fitch Graduate" to guide our learning expectations. The learning expectations within the vision of the graduate are anchored to a growth model; we meet the students where they are and we support them as they RISE. The ultimate expectation is for our students to become lifelong learners. We model and strongly support our students to be Resilient Individuals, Innovative Learners, Socially Aware Citizens, and Engaged Communicators.



The Vision of the Graduate Learning Expectation

Resilient Individual

The Fitch graduate demonstrates continuous commitment to personal growth and wellness by independently accepting challenges, engaging in hard work, and developing resilience to thrive as an individual.

Innovative Learner

The Fitch graduate demonstrates continuous commitment to intellectual growth in critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and knowledge across the disciplines.

Socially Aware Citizen

The Fitch graduate demonstrates continuous commitment to cultural understanding and interaction by actively promoting social awareness, civic responsibility, and dedication to the local and global community.

Engaged Communicator

The Fitch graduate demonstrates continuous commitment to effective and purposeful communication that exhibits open-mindedness, respectful collaboration, empathetic listening, and a clear, comprehensive presentation of ideas.

COMMUNICATION

A child’s educational success is a partnership shared by school and family, including all those who play an important role in the child’s well-being. Student achievement increases when families are active in the learning process. Educators recognize and acknowledge the family’s role as the primary facilitator of their children’s education. Families are welcome in all Groton schools. Their support and assistance are actively sought in their child’s social, emotional, and academic development.

Fitch High School encourages parents to take every opportunity to foster positive dialogue with faculty and staff. In the event that a question or concern arises, parents are encouraged to contact faculty through email or telephone. Telephone contact information is provided below. In addition, all employees of the Groton School District may be contacted by email using their first initial and full last name prior to “@groton.k12.ct.us” (example: jsmith@groton.k12.ct.us). *Parents are asked if they need to contact their child during the school day to phone the student’s administrator’s secretary and the student will be notified and may call from the administrator’s office. Calls to students during class time are **not permitted**.*

FITCH HIGH SCHOOL TELEPHONE EXTENSIONS

Main Number (for the Operator, press “0” at the automated response – if busy, leave a message by pressing “310”)	860-449-7200	Chorus Director	860-449-7252
Absence Reporting/Attendance Diane Strong, Attendance Secretary	860-449-7200 Ext. 22221	Custodians	860-449-7244
Mr. Brown, Principal	860-449-7215 phone 860-449-7217 fax	Library/Media Center	860-449-7258 phone 860-449-7255 fax
Mrs. McKenna, Assistant Principal	860-449-7204 phone 860-449-7217 fax	Band Director	860-449-7248
Mr. Diskin, Assistant Principal	860-449-7268 phone 860-449-7217 fax	Kitchen	860-449-7249
Ms. Hodge, Assistant Principal	860-449-7224 phone 860-449-7277 fax	New Beginnings Alternative School	860-449-7264
Mr. Romano, Athletic Director	860-449-7214 Phone 860-449-7217 Fax	Nurse’s Office	860-449-7211 Phone 860-449-7217 Fax
Officer Bousquet, SRO	860-449-7200 Ext. 4407	School-Based Health Center	860-446-9543
Athletics Department	860-449-7219	College and Career Center	860-449-7241
School Counseling Department	860-449-7261 phone 860-449-7273 fax	Social Worker	860-449-7200 Ext. 3229 Ext. 3241

Bell Schedules

<p><u>Regular Day Bell Schedule</u></p> <p><u>Regular Day Bell Schedule (75 Minute Blocks)</u></p> <p>First Bell 7:25 Second Bell 7:33</p> <p>Periods 1A, 1B 7:40 - 9:00 Periods 2A, 2B 9:05 - 10:20 CTL/Advisory 10:25 - 11:05 Periods 3A, 3B 11:10 - 12:55 Lunch A 11:10 - 11:40 Lunch B 11:50 - 12:20 Lunch C 12:25 - 12:55 Periods 4A, 4B 1:00 - 2:20</p> <p><u>Early Dismissal Bell Schedule (3 Lunch Waves)</u></p> <p>First Bell 7:25 Second Bell 7:33</p> <p>Periods 1A, 1B 7:40 - 8:35 Periods 2A, 2B 8:40 - 9:35 Periods 3A, 3B 9:40 - 10:35 Periods 4A, 4B 10:40 - 12:07</p> <p>Lunch A 10:40 - 11:10 Lunch B 11:08 - 11:38 Lunch C 11:37 - 12:07</p>	<p><u>Delayed Opening Bell Schedule (2 hour delay)</u></p> <p>First Bell 9:25 Second Bell 9:33</p> <p>Periods 1A, 1B 9:40 - 10:38 Periods 2A, 2B 10:43 - 11:41 Periods 3A, 3B 11:46 - 1:17</p> <p>Lunch A 11:46 - 12:16 Lunch B 12:16 - 12:46 Lunch C 12:47 - 1:17</p> <p>Periods 4A, 4B 1:22 - 2:20</p> <p><u>Delayed Opening Bell Schedule (3-hour delay)</u></p> <p>First Bell 10:25 Second Bell 10:33</p> <p>Periods 1A, 1B 10:40 - 11:18 Periods 2A, 2B 11:23 - 12:01 Periods 3A, 3B 12:06 - 1:38</p> <p>Lunch A 12:06 - 12:36 Lunch B 12:37 - 1:07 Lunch C 1:08 - 1:38</p> <p>Periods 4A, 4B 1:43 - 2:20</p>
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ATTENDANCE

Attendance - *Attendance is expected

The Groton Board of Education recognizes Connecticut General Statutes §10-184 which requires parents to cause their children to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. Learning experiences that occur in the classroom are highly meaningful and essential components of the learning process. The loss of time from class takes away from the opportunity for instructional interaction. Good attendance is a major contributor to academic success. Students should not be absent from school without the parents' knowledge and consent. To be considered on time to class, all students need to be in their designated class by 7:40 a.m. Verification of absences should be communicated by telephone, email, or in writing by the parent or guardian. Automated calls will be made twice a day to inform parents of absences from class/school.

Excused Absences

- Illness or injury
- Death in the family
- A religious obligation
- A court appearance
- A school-sponsored activity
- A college visitation
- Participation in an educational program organized and sponsored by a recognized institution of learning
- An emergency deemed legitimate by the building principal
- A suspension from school

Make-Up Work for Excused Absences

All work due or missed during an excused absence may be made up. Any work missed (assigned) during an excused absence will be the student's responsibility to make up within five days. Note: Homebound instruction is available for students if ten days of consecutive excused absences are expected with medical recommendation.

Participation in School Activities/Absences

Students who are absent from school will not be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletic contests, athletic practices, extracurricular activities, or other school-sponsored activities on the days they are absent from school. Students must be in attendance for three blocks and CTL to participate in extracurricular activities, dance, etc.

Attendance Requirements for Course Credit

- Credit for full credit for year-long courses will be withheld when a student exceeds 10 class absences (5 for semester-long courses) in the class for excused/unexcused absences.
- Absences for approved school-sponsored activities will not count toward the total class absences.
- Credit withheld due to excessive absences will not affect grades given for course work, and will be awarded and recorded as earned. However, credit towards graduation may not be awarded. Students have opportunities to earn credit for attendance during the appeal process.
- Parents will be notified in writing when a student has missed 4 or more days.
- Parents will be notified in writing when a student has missed 10 or more days of school in a month.
- Parents will be notified in writing when earning attendance credit is at risk.
- Students may appeal, in writing, for a waiver when credit is withheld for excessive absences.

Family Vacations/Travel

Families are asked to plan trips and vacations during school vacation periods to ensure that students gain fully from the classroom experience. Unless prior approval is granted, absences from school due to family travel and vacations are considered unexcused absences. It is important to remember that even excused absences count toward Attendance Policy limits. If a student will be absent from school, parents/guardians are asked to send a note to the Attendance Secretary, and request class assignments through the School Counselor 10 school days in advance of the trip. Work missed must be turned in immediately upon return to class; no student will be allowed to make up work after the trip.

TARDY POLICY & PROCEDURES

Tardiness to School

All students arriving late to school, after 7:45 a.m., will be considered late and must report to the Tardy Kiosk before reporting to their first assigned class. Parents or guardians are requested to send in a signed note explaining why their student was tardy. These notes will be accepted the morning of the tardiness or the following morning only. Repeated tardiness to school will be reviewed by administration and disciplinary actions may be taken. The following disciplinary actions will be taken for students who are tardy to their first class of the day.

- **1st Unexcused Tardy Referral: (6 tardies), parent.guardian will be contacted by Attendance Office**
- **ALL Subsequent Unexcused Tardy Referrals: students will receive 1 hour and ½ detention. Parent contact and potential meeting with the administrator to make a plan for arriving at school on time.**

Lateness to Class/Class-Cutting

Students who are absent from class without the prior approval of an appropriate school official shall be determined to have “cut” the class. Students will be subject to disciplinary action (see Code of Conduct), with no chance to make up for the missed work.

- Students are expected to be on time for all classes
- Failure to show for classroom detentions will result in an office referral
- Unexcused tardies of more **than 30 minutes** to any class will be considered a “cut.”
- Students are expected to plan their morning routine so as to arrive at school on time.

Procedures for Reporting Absences

Parents/Guardians call the school attendance secretary at **449-7200** ext. **22221** between 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. to report the absence. An email to the attendance Secretary is also acceptable. A note must be submitted to the attendance secretary upon return from the absence.

Re-admittance Notes

It is important that notes contain the following information to eliminate confusion and errors:

- 1) The student’s full name.
- 2) The reason for absence.
- 3) The date of absence and class blocks missed if partial day.
- 4) A parent or guardian signature with daytime phone number.

Late Admittance Privilege

Seniors who do not have a period 1 class **MUST** arrive at school in time to report to their 2nd period. All students are expected to be on time for their period 2 class or assigned attendance location. Failure to report to a period 2 location will be considered a class cut.

12th grade students leaving school grounds during an unassigned period:

Seniors may leave school after their last class of the day once they fill out and file a permanent early dismissal form. These forms may be obtained from the main office or the attendance secretary and **MUST** be returned to the attendance secretary when completed.

Early Dismissals

Students requesting early dismissal must provide a signed note from a parent/guardian to the Attendance Secretary upon arrival to school. For unexpected early dismissals, parents may call the Attendance Secretary during the day; a note from parent/guardian should be given to the Attendance Secretary the following day. Students who return to school from an appointment must report to the Attendance Secretary prior to returning to classes.

Truancy

State law defines any student who accumulates 4 unexcused absences in any month or 10 unexcused absences in any school year as “truant.” Any student who accumulates 20 or more unexcused absences is defined as a “habitual truant.” Refer to the Groton Board of Education Policies under “Truancy” on page 38 for detailed information.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Visitors to School

We are using the Raptor Visitor Management System to strengthen our program of campus safety for students and faculty. The safety of our students is our highest priority and the Raptor visitor management system allows us to quickly identify those that may present a danger to our students. Students are not allowed to have visitors in school during normal school hours except when granted special permission from a school administrator who has been given one full day’s notice. Once permission has been granted all visitors must enter the school using the doors at the main lobby.

Visitor Access to Building

All doors are locked at all times. Visitors are expected to enter through the front doors. Visitors requesting entrance must ring the buzzer on the school’s PA/Camera. Once the request for access has been validated, the Safety Officer will unlock the doors. For safety reasons and to ensure a secure learning environment, visitors that do not have a scheduled appointment may be denied entry to the building.

Upon entering a district building, visitors will be asked to present an ID such as a Driver’s License, which can either be scanned or manually entered into the raptor system. If a parent/guardian or contractor does not have a US government-issued ID, the school staff member can use any form of identification and manually enter the person’s name into the Raptor system. The Raptor system will check to ensure that registered sexual offenders are not entering our school campuses without our knowledge. The Raptor system checks the visitor's name and date of birth for comparison with a national database of registered sex offenders. The registered sex offender database is the only official database checked by the Raptor system. No other data from the ID is gathered or recorded and the information is not shared with any outside agency. Once entry is approved, Raptor will issue a badge that identifies the visitor, the date, and the purpose of his/her visit. All visitors must report to their specified destination. When the visit is complete, all visitors must report to the security desk to receive their I.D. and exit the building via the front doors. *Visitor badge may not be required for those who visit our schools simply to drop off an item in the office or pick up paperwork.*

School Resource Officer (SRO)

The School Resource Officer is a sworn law enforcement officer who provides a wide array of services at Fitch High School. Although the SROs duties can vary considerably, the most typical roles of the SRO are safety expert, law enforcer, problem solver, liaison to community resources, and educator. Most importantly, the SRO is a mentor to our student population.

School Safety Officers

The School Safety Officers patrols buildings and grounds, responds to emergencies and performs related duties designed to promote and ensure a safe and secure school learning environment.

Video Surveillance

The Board of Education, having carefully weighed and balanced the rights of privacy of students and staff against the district’s duty to maintain order and discipline, finds that it is appropriate to provide for the use of video camera surveillance in its transportation vehicles and on school grounds. Video surveillance shall only be used to promote the order, safety, and security of students, staff and property.

Drills

Please be aware that the school will conduct different drills in the interest of school safety. These include fire drills, lock down drills, and random locker searches that may include bringing into school the canine unit overseen by the Groton Town Police. These drills are conducted with the Groton Town Police department and are considered a preventive effort at school safety. Students who are noncompliant during these procedures will be subjected to the disciplinary code of conduct and appropriate consequences.

Emergency Evacuation

Scheduled fire drills are held periodically. Students should remain under the supervision of the classroom teacher where they are present at the time of the alarm for the duration of the drill. Teachers will take attendance to be sure all students are accountable.

IMPORTANT GENERAL INFORMATION

Electronic Communication Device(s) Expectations: Includes cellphones, other personal devices, earbuds, smart watches

To minimize the disruption to learning by communication devices, students will be only allowed to use cell phones in the cafeteria and in the media center during lunch. Seniors will also be allowed to use their electronic devices while on their unassigned period in the media center. Should a student be found to be inappropriately using an electronic communication device(s), the following disciplinary action will be followed by administration.

- **For the 1st and 2nd offense, the office will confiscate the device(s) for the remainder of the school day, the parent/guardian will be notified and will need to pick up the device, the student will receive a 3 hour detention and will lose privileges for a week.**
- **For subsequent offenses, the student will receive Saturday detention (4 hours) and lose privileges for 4 weeks. Communication with guardians will include collaborative efforts to teach students appropriate use of personal communication devices.**

Use of Earbuds/Sound Devices

Earbuds may be used in the classroom when the teacher has given permission and it should contribute to the learning process in a positive manner. Students must request permission from the teacher prior to use of any listening device. Use of all speakers in the building is prohibited. **Communication with guardians will include collaborative efforts to teach students appropriate use of personal communication devices.**

Change of Address/Phone Number/Guardian/Marital Status

The School Counseling Office should be notified of any change of address, phone numbers, parent/guardian name, marriage, etc. so that school records may be updated. Current daytime phone numbers to reach parents/guardians are extremely important in the event of a student emergency. It is necessary that the school maintain current records for the safety and welfare of students.

Accountabilities

Students are accountable for all books, uniforms, equipment, and school property issued or loaned to them during each semester. Any lost or damaged items are the responsibility of the student. **Any lost or damaged items must be paid for by the student to the Financial Secretary.** All students with accountabilities must

clear them prior to the start of extracurricular activities for each season. **Items are to be returned to the main office and accountability will be cleared.**

Stolen Items

Parents are to be reminded that Fitch High School is not responsible for any stolen items. Students should be mindful of what they bring to school. If an item is stolen, students should report it to the School Resource Officer.

Transportation

Bus Code of Conduct - Bus transportation to and from school is a privilege available to all students. The bus is an extension of the school, and it is expected that proper behavior will prevail. The driver is in FULL charge on the bus, and instructions given are to be obeyed. For the comfort and safety of all, students should abide by the following:

- Be on time. Buses must meet a schedule.
- Respect personal property while waiting at a bus stop.
- As the bus approaches, form a single line. Do not move toward the bus until it stops.
- Enter the bus in an orderly manner and take a seat.
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Quiet conversation is encouraged. Do not distract the driver by loud talking or shouting.
- Appropriate language must be used at all times.
- Do not offend pedestrians or passengers in other vehicles by shouting out of windows or making obscene gestures.
- Nothing is to be thrown or tossed within the bus or out of the bus.
- Carrying of weapons or any object that may be used as a weapon on the bus is prohibited by State Law.
- Do not bring cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, matches or lighters on the bus.
- Get on and off at a regular stop (See below for requesting an alternative bus stop).
- Students who deface the bus will be held responsible for its repair. Report any damage immediately to the driver.

The privilege of riding the bus may be suspended for students who violate the established code of conduct. Any student who loses the privilege due to misconduct is still required to attend school.

Transportation Phone Numbers for Parents - Bus routes for the school year are published in the local newspaper in late August. Questions about or problems with bus routes or bus drivers should be directed to the Transportation Coordinator in the Administration Office at 860-572-2136, or the Business Manager at 860-572-2130. Principals at the school should also be notified of problems. The bus company, Student Transportation of America, may be called if buses are not arriving at designated times or places at 860-448-0006.

- **Bus notes and passes to take an alternate bus**

All students are assigned a designated bus based on their home address. Should a student request to ride an undesignated bus, a signed note must be written by the parent/guardian and provided to the School Counseling Secretaries, before 9:30am. A bus pass will only be granted after confirmation from the parent and administration approval. See pass to the right.

- **After School Bus Transportation** - The main purpose of the PM transportation is for athletes, students involved in extracurricular activities, educational purposes (1 to 1 with teacher, Falcon Academy) and other school approved activities.

Late buses will run as follows:

4:15 late bus Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

5:30 late bus Monday through Friday

- **Student Driving/Parking** - A student with a valid driver's license is permitted to drive to school. Student parking is permitted ONLY in areas designated as "Student Parking." Students will be required to pay a \$10 parking fee for the year and submit a parking permit form. Any student who finds it necessary to return to the parking area during the school day must obtain permission and a pass from

their Administrator, and sign in and out at the School Safety Officer desk. At the close of the school day, students who drive to school will wait until all buses have left before departing in an orderly manner. No cutting between buses is allowed; the speed limit on school grounds is 15 mph. Failure to observe these rules will result in the suspension of parking privileges. Students can lose privileges to drive to school for parking violations such as parking in an unassigned area and reckless driving on campus. 1st offense – warning, 2nd offense – one-week loss of driving privilege and parent conference with an administrator. Reckless driving posing potential harm to students will require referral to police with possible suspension, and/or revoking of driving to school privileges up to a 1 calendar year.

School Calendar

The State of Connecticut requires that schools be open to students for at least 180 days each year. The Board of Education approves the school schedule, and copies are distributed to students the first day of school. Copies are also available in the Main Office and are printed in the appendix of the Student Handbook. The calendar is subject to change based upon the number of school days canceled during the year due to inclement weather or other emergencies.

School Delays, Cancellations, and Early Dismissals

As long as phone numbers are up to date and accurate, families will be contacted automatically by phone on delays, cancellations and/or early dismissals. Whenever school is canceled, delayed (3 hrs.), or dismissed early due to severe weather or other emergencies, you will be notified by our superintendent through school messenger. All information can also be found on our Groton Home Page: <https://www.grotonschools.org/fitch>

Cafeteria

A wide variety of choices are available for lunch, from “a la carte” items to hot lunch and salads. Students may purchase breakfast goods between 7:25-7:35 A.M. No food, trays, dishes or silverware may be taken from the cafeteria, and students are expected to leave the area they occupied in a clean condition, and return any items to designated areas. Students are allowed outside in designated areas only during lunch waves. **Students who leave their trays and/or debris will be subject to disciplinary action.**

Confiscated Items

Any item confiscated from a student, i.e. electronic device, hat, sports equipment, etc. will be sent to an Administrator's Office.

Daily Announcements

Students can obtain information about clubs, drama, athletics and many other activities by watching/listening to the daily announcements, as well as announcements at the end of the day.

Digital Learning Opportunities and Expectations

Fitch High School is committed to creating a digital learning environment that aids students in developing the skills they need for success. Use of digital tools is a privilege, and all students must abide by the Groton Board of Education’s Appropriate Use Policy outlined within this handbook.

Use of GPS technology resources (computers, mobile devices, software, online tools, email, network, etc.) is expected to be ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of the district’s mission and educational objectives.

- **One-to-One Chromebook Initiative** - In support of our Fitch High School mission, the school has adopted a one-to-one Chromebook initiative. All Fitch students have the option of receiving a school issued Chromebook. The 1-1 Chromebook initiative supports Fitch’s mission by:
 - Providing instruction in and practice with online learning tools which prepare students for college and career.
 - Promoting the digital literacy skills which are required for life success and life-long learning.

- Allowing more opportunities for real world learning experiences through the use of the Internet for access to resources, primary sources, and community engagement experiences.
 - Fostering home collaboration through the use of Schoology which allows for assignments, rubrics, and class activities to be viewed by students and their parents and accessible anywhere and anytime.
 - Personalizing instruction by differentiating product, process, and assessment through the use of Schoology
 - Maintaining and increasing rigorous instruction through the use of digital tools.
 - Increasing student engagement, student responsibility, and student learning time through the use of Schoology.
- **Chromebook Loan Program** - Students may opt into the Chromebook Loan program by submitting the loan agreement form which can be found on the FHS website under Student Life. Loan terms and conditions are also outlined in this handbook in the appendix section.
 - **Use of Personal Devices** - Personal electronic devices may be brought to and used in the school for educational and instructional purposes only. Use of personal devices at school is a privilege. Accordingly, students who engage in the use of personal devices at school during the school day for non-educational purposes or who otherwise violate Board policy or state or federal law in such use may be subject to modification to or loss of the privilege, and/or be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion in accordance state and federal laws and applicable district policies.
 - **Google Apps for Education/School Email Accounts** - Students are issued a Google App for Education account, which includes email for academic purposes. Students should not have any expectation of privacy in the use of these accounts. Digital storage used for school purposes will be treated as extensions of the physical school space in terms of privacy. All communications and information accessible via a network should be assumed to be public.
 - **Student Privileges** - Students are advised that e-mail and/or Internet correspondence is not privileged or confidential. From time to time, communications may be monitored by the administration to assure that Internet use is in support of school district goals.
 - *Student Users* have the privilege to send e-mail according to the Groton Public Schools Appropriate Use Policy. They also have the responsibility to control their language so it is not offensive or embarrassing to the school district, and to abide by all **Student Responsibilities** and rules of network etiquette.
 - **Student Responsibilities**
 - The use of a student account must be in support of their education in the Groton Public Schools and consistent with the educational objectives of the Groton Public Schools District.
 - While exercising their privileges to use the Internet as an educational resource, they shall also monitor and accept the responsibility for all material received.
 - *Student Users:*
 - are responsible for preventing all pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network from entering the school via the Internet, and to report all violations.
 - are responsible for all mail received.
 - are responsible to make only those contacts leading to educational purposes.
 - may not knowingly receive electronic mail containing pornographic materials, inappropriate information, or text-encoded files that are potentially dangerous to the integrity of the hardware on school premises.
 - must report all inappropriate materials (solicited or unsolicited) to a staff member.
 - *Student User may not:*

- erase, modify, rename or make unusable anyone else's files or programs. All files and programs on the computer belong to someone.
 - copy, change, or transfer any software provided by the school, faculty, or another student without permission from the originator.
 - copy copyrighted software owned by the Groton Public Schools. It is generally illegal to copy any software which has a copyright. The use of illegally copied software is considered a criminal offense and is subject to criminal prosecution.
 - intentionally introduce a computer virus.
 - deliberately use the computer to annoy or harass others. For example, making accessible any obscene, abusive, or threatening messages is not allowed.
 - intentionally damage the system, damage information not belonging to you, misuse system sources, or allow others to misuse system sources.
 - tamper with equipment.
 - use the network for financial or commercial gain.
 - use the network for wasteful or frivolous purposes such as playing network games.
- **Misuse of Privileges and Consequences** - Student users are held responsible for their actions and activities. Unacceptable use of the network will result in the suspension of all their privileges. Reinstatement of privileges will be made at the discretion of the supervisory staff.

Dress Code: DRESS FOR SUCCESS!

Dress Code Philosophy and Values

- All students should have the right to dress comfortably and express themselves in school through a selection of clothing, hairstyles, jewelry, and accessories that represent and affirm their identities.
- Student dress codes should support equitable educational access and should not reinforce gender or cultural stereotypes or reinforce marginalization or oppression of any group.

Dress Code Goals

- Maintain a safe learning environment that is responsive to the specific needs of different classroom environments (e.g. protective clothing in lab settings, athletic attire in PE classes, etc)
- Ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, body type/size, personal style, household income, or disability.
- Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing or accessories that may make it difficult to identify them, interfere with the operation of the school, disrupt the educational process, interfere with the rights or personal space of others, or contribute to a hostile or unwelcoming atmosphere.

Dress Code Expectations (“Must/May Not Wear”)

Basic Principle:

- Clothes must be worn in such a way that all students are covered with material that is not see-through
- Students must wear clothing that securely covers the sternum, groin, and rear end (buttocks),
- Students' clothing should support a school culture where all students feel comfortable, safe and respected

Students Must Wear:

- Shirt/top that is secure with fabric on the front, back, and on the sides under the arms, and must cover the belly button.

- Bottoms are secure (pants, sweatpants, shorts, skirt, dress, and/or leggings), extend to the leg and must be worn to the waist. This includes buttoning/securing the top of any skirts/shorts/pants with a button, zipper, or snap.
- Students must wear foot apparel in school at all times.
- Shoes that are secure- Some courses may require specialized attire (such as uniforms, safety equipment for lab classes, and required attire and sneakers for PE classes).

Students May Not Wear:

- Headgear. Headgear required for hair should be worn above the hairline and should not cover the entire head, with the exception of that worn for religious reasons.
- Pajamas, blankets, slippers or sunglasses.
- Violent language/images or gang signifiers.
- Images, logos or language depicting any illegal activity, including use of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol
- Hate speech, profanity, or pornography.
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment for others.
- Visible underwear (visible waistbands or straps on undergarments worn under other clothing are not a violation).
- Bathing suits, except as required for PE classes and sports.
- Bodysuits.
- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance or as required PPE).
- Any gang related clothing, signs, insignia, etc.
- Any item that violates the basic principles above.

Dress Code Enforcement

The primary responsibility for the dress and grooming of a student rests with the student and their parents/guardians, and all students are expected to understand and adhere to the dress code. At school, dress code expectations will be enforced consistently and fairly by school staff regardless of the student's gender, race, or other identifying characteristics.

Enforcement guidelines:

- Enforcement of the dress code should not lead to removal from class or loss of class time unless the issue creates a safety concern or violates the dress code non-violence/non-discrimination expectations.
- School staff should address dress code concerns in as private a manner and setting as possible.
- No student should be disproportionately affected by dress code enforcement because of gender, race, body size, or body maturity.
- Students should not be publicly shamed or forced to display their body in front of others (students, parents, staff) in the course of dress code enforcement.
- Students violating the dress code will have three options to address the situation:
 1. Put on their own alternative clothing, if they have it available at school
 2. Borrow alternative clothing from a peer or the school for the day
 3. Have a parent bring alternative clothing for the student to wear

*Final decisions regarding inappropriate clothing rest with the administration. Exceptions can be made in specific situations by an Administrator. If feasible, all inappropriate attire must be removed or the student will be sent home. Second and subsequent offenses will be dealt with disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.

Athletics/After-School Activities

Students are expected to follow the dress code while at after-school activities sponsored by the school. The Athletic Director, Student-Athletic Advisory Committee members, coaches, and school administration will work together to develop a sports-specific set of acceptable dress expectations for athletic teams to use during

conditioning, practice, and competition situations. These guidelines should generally reflect the schoolwide dress code while making accommodations for comfort, safety, and the varied nature of each individual sport.

Library/Media Center

The Media Center will be open from Monday – Friday from 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. The Media Center is the location for Falcon Academy, Chromebooks, Online Learning, and Virtual High School (VHS). While students use the media center, it is expected they follow all media center expectations to maintain a clean, quiet, learning environment.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of the school and may be opened and searched by school officials when necessary. It is recommended that valuables not be left in school lockers, as the school is not responsible for stolen items.

Lost and Found

In the event of loss of valuables (such as jewelry, money, wallets, etc.) students should check in the Main Office or at the Receptionist’s desk. Textbooks may be turned in to the Financial Secretary in the Main Office.

All other articles (such as clothing, book bags, etc.) may be found in a large box located in the Custodial Hallway near the Cafeteria. Articles found by students may be turned in to any school employee for appropriate handling.

Senior Privileges

Seniors who have a free (unassigned) block may utilize this time period in the following ways:

- Report to the Media Center
- Attend a student-teacher conference
- Report to the College/Career Center
- Report to the Cafeteria

A student is required to report to that area of choice at the beginning of the block, and remain there until the block is over. Any senior who is unassigned and is found in other than a senior-designated area without a teacher or counselor pass, may have senior privileges rescinded. **Final Exam Exemptions** may be acquired by recommendation of teachers to the Principal for those students who maintain an “A” average. Final approval of exemption is made by the Administration, based on student discipline or attendance. Seniors are required to have permission slips on file for coming in late and leaving early, specifically for first and fourth blocks of the day. Seniors who have their first block class “unassigned” who wish to arrive at the start of the second block class must have a permission slip on file in the Dean’s Office. Please note **all seniors are required to attend CTL block.**

Graduation Ceremony Guidelines

Participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege and not a right. All students are required to abide by the following guidelines to exercise their privilege to participate:

1. Students must meet all requirements for graduation. Please see p. 11 for these requirements.
2. Students must agree to follow dress code requirements established by the Graduation Committee.

Students must attend all graduation rehearsals and agree to be cooperative for all rehearsals and senior activities during the last week of school.

Students may lose their privilege to participate in the graduation ceremony for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure to abide to the guidelines listed above.
2. Violation of the drug/alcohol and dangerous instrument policy during senior year.
3. Expulsion from school during senior year.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Student Records and Access

All pupil records are the confidential property of the school. Information in a student's file is collected only for legitimate educational purposes and includes academic progress, test data, grades, behavioral information, and correspondences of a relevant educational nature.

Parents, legal guardians, and students of legal age (18 or over) are entitled to copies of the records. These individuals may review records in the presence of the Principal or a designee. Otherwise, these records can only be shared with other agencies or professional persons outside the school system with written permission of the parent, legal guardian, or student (if of legal age).

Release of Directory Information

Directory information is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone number, age, place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous school attended. If you do not wish to have this information released, you must notify your son's/daughter's school counselor in writing.

Textbooks

All textbooks are loaned to pupils by the Groton Public Schools. Students are responsible for returning their books at the end of the semester/year in good condition to the teacher who issued the book. The cost of damaged or lost books must be paid to the Financial Secretary at a price determined by the Administration.

Withdrawal from School

Any student withdrawing from FHS is required to check out of each assigned class by completing an "Official Check-Out Sheet" provided by the School Counseling Office. The form is to be presented to each teacher and office listed to obtain appropriate signatures to confirm final grades, as well as satisfactory condition of all returned school property and/or settlement of any accountabilities. The completed form must be returned to the School Counseling office prior to release of transcripts or response to employers.

Working Papers

Students who need working papers may obtain these by taking their "promise of a job certificate" and a birth certificate/baptismal record/driver's license/military ID to the FHS main office from 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM.

Curriculum

Courses are offered in the subject areas of English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, Physical Education, Art, Music, Business, Health and Life skills, and Technology Education. Courses are identified as IB/AP, honors and college preparatory. Courses are weighted according to their level of difficulty. Students select courses based upon their future goals, interest, abilities, and needs. A full range of special education and ancillary services are available.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation from Groton Public Schools implies (1) that students have satisfactorily completed the prescribed courses of study for the several grade levels in accordance with their respective abilities to achieve, (2) that they have satisfactorily passed any examinations and satisfactorily demonstrated the District's performance standards established by the faculty and approved by the Groton Board of Education (Board), and (3) that they have fulfilled the legally mandated number and distribution of credits. Graduation shall not be held until 180 days and 900 hours of actual school work are completed. The adopted school calendar shall indicate a graduation date which is no earlier than the 185th day. This date may be modified after April 1 in any school year in

conformity with applicable statute. To qualify for a diploma from Fitch High School, the following requirements must be met: All students in grades nine through eleven must be enrolled in a minimum of 8 credits per year. All twelfth-grade students must be enrolled in a minimum of 6 credits. All students must pass the graduation requirements listed below to receive a diploma from Fitch High School. Early graduation for seniors who have met all of their graduation requirements must be approved by the Superintendent and building Principal.

Class of 2023, 2024 & 2025: Total Credits Required for Graduation: 26

All students must meet the following requirements:

Humanities:

4 years of English (Language and Literature)	4 credits
3 years of Social Studies (Individuals and Societies) *(Must include Civics and US History)	3 credits
1 year of World Language (Language Acquisition)	1 credit
Other Humanities Credits (Including English (Language and literature), 10 credits Social Studies (Individuals and Societies), Art (Visual Arts), Music (Performing Arts), & World Language (Language acquisition)	2 credits
Humanities Total	10 credits
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics:	
4 years of sciences	4 credits
4 years of Mathematics	4 credits
1 additional STEM credits	<u>1 credit</u>
(Including Math, Science, Technology Business & Vocational Arts)	9 credits
Physical Education & Wellness	1 credit
Health & Safety Education	1 credit
Mastery-based diploma assessment	<u>1 credit</u>
	3 credits
Electives	4 credits

TOTAL: **26 Required Credits**

Class of 2026 & Beyond: Total Credits Required for Graduation: 27

All students must meet the following requirements:

4 years of English (Language and Literature)	4 credits
3 years of Social Studies (Individuals and Societies) *(Must include Civics and US History)	3 credits
2 years of World Language (Language Acquisition)	2 credit
Other Humanities Credits (Including English (Language and literature), 10 credits Social Studies (Individuals and Societies), Art (Visual Arts), Music (Performing Arts), & World Language (Language acquisition)	2 credits
Humanities Total	11 credits
Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics:	
4 years of sciences	4 credits
4 years of Mathematics	4 credits
1 additional STEM credits	<u>1 credit</u>

(Including Math, Science, Technology Business & Vocational Arts)	9 credits
Physical Education & Wellness	1 credit
Health & Safety Education 1 credit	1 credit
Completion of the MYP Personal Project	<u>1 credit</u>
	3 credits
Electives	4 credits

TOTAL: **27 Required Credits**

Elective Categories

- Academic Electives – English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, World Language
- Applied Arts Electives – Business, Computer Science, Health & Life Skills, Technology Education
- Fine Arts Electives – Art, Music, Theater

Course Load Requirements

Fitch High School is on an A/B block schedule. All students in grades 9, 10 and 11 are required to take 8 classes. Seniors must take a minimum of 6 classes.

Promotion Requirements

Students are promoted from one grade level to another based on the number of credits they earn each year. Students who fail to receive enough credits to be promoted will remain in the same grade level for the next year. By attending summer school and/or taking extra courses the following year, a student may be able to earn enough credits to rejoin his/her class.

Credit by high school grade:

Class of 2023, 2024, 2025:

Twenty-six (26) credits are required for graduation. Students are promoted to the next grade according to the following accumulation of credits:

Grade 9 to Grade 10 6 credits

Grade 10 to Grade 11 12 credits

Grade 11 to Grade 12 18 credits

Class of 2026 and beyond:

Twenty-seven (27) credits are required for graduation. Students are promoted to the next higher grade according to the following accumulation of credits:

Grade 9 to Grade 10 7 credits

Grade 10 to Grade 11 13 credits

Grade 11 to Grade 12 19 credits

Students’ grade classification depends upon their actual earned credit status, not on the number of years they have been in high school. The Board will provide adequate student support and remedial services for all students. These services include, but are not limited to, alternate means for students to complete any of the high school graduation requirements previously listed if such students are unable to satisfactorily complete any of the required courses or exams. Such student support and remedial services shall include, but not be limited to, (1) retaking courses in summer school or in an approved online credit recovery course; or (2) enrolling in a class offered at a constituent unit of the state system of higher education.

Groton Public School’s graduation requirements apply to all students, including students requiring Special Education Services except when the Planning and Placement Team exercises the right to adjust the standards of performance on an individual basis. Performance standards for students participating in a functional, life skills curriculum will be based on the student’s IEP goals and objectives.

Credits

At Fitch High School, a credit is defined as a class of block time, per year, equivalent to 200 minutes per week. One-half credit is given for courses that complete work in one semester. A student shall be excused from the physical education requirement upon presentation of a certificate from a physician or advanced practice registered nurse indicating that participation in physical education is medically contraindicated because of such student's physical condition. In such a case, and by determination of the building Principal, the credit for physical education may be fulfilled by an online course or elective equivalent. Students may also be waived from the world language requirement and/or Capstone (MYP Personal Project) credit through the decision of an IEP or 504 team. The credit will then be required to be fulfilled by an equivalent elective in this case. Only courses taken in grades nine through twelve, inclusive, and that are in accordance with the state-wide subject matter content standards, adopted by the State Board of Education shall satisfy this graduation requirement except that a student may be granted credit (1) toward meeting the high school graduation requirements upon the successful demonstration of mastery of the subject matter content described in this section achieved through education experiences and opportunities that provide flexible and multiple pathways to learning, including cross curricular graduation requirements, career and technical education, virtual learning, work-based learning, high school courses taken during middle school (with the appropriate forms completed), dual enrollment and early college courses, internships and student designed independent studies or (2) for the successful completion of coursework at an institution accredited by the Department of Higher Education or regionally accredited. One three credit semester course, or its equivalent shall equal one high school credit.

Note: Fitch High School students desiring to take for credit toward meeting the high school graduation requirements, a course at another educational institution or an on-line course must receive prior approval from the Fitch High School Principal.

Students at the middle school can receive high school credit for core courses taken at either the high school or at the middle school that have been designated by the Board for high school credit.

A credit shall consist of not less than the equivalent of 200 minutes per week during the school year except for a credit or part of a credit toward high school graduation earned (1) at an institution accredited by the State Board of Education or regionally accredited, or (2) through on-line course work through an approved provider (such as APEX or Virtual High School).

Independent Study

Independent Study will be considered a senior elective and cannot take the place of a graduation requirement. Some students may need or wish to pursue a subject for which Fitch High School offers no equivalent course. Students considering Independent Study are urged to consult their teachers and school counselors. All requests for Independent Study must be submitted to the department chairperson, who will make a recommendation to the Principal. The Principal will make final determination on all requests. The Independent Study will be in addition to the required course load for students. Independent Study programs must be in a subject not offered at Fitch High School. Such courses must constitute a minimum of 90 hours of work for ½ unit of credit, or 180 hours of work for 1 unit of credit.

Local College Credit

Any student may elect to take a course at a local college to supplement their high school program. All courses must have prior approval.

Three Rivers College Credit Program

Fitch High School, in partnership with Three Rivers Community College, provides the opportunity for students to receive college credit through courses offered at the high school. These credits may be accepted at other colleges and universities. See your school counselor for more information. Students must apply for these credits.

The University of Connecticut Early College Experience

Fitch High School offers a senior level English course, AP UConn English 12, in conjunction with the University of Connecticut which allows a student to earn University credits while in high school. Students taking this class should be prepared to successfully complete an Advanced Placement exam. AP courses are offered in other course areas also, which help to prepare students to successfully complete Advanced Placement exams for college credit at most accredited colleges.

Connecticut Scholars Program

Along with other area high schools, two Fitch seniors are eligible to take a class free of charge at Connecticut College. Students apply for the opportunity through the School Counseling Department while choosing their senior classes. There are rigorous academic guidelines for acceptance to this program.

Student Success Plan

Working with faculty and guidance counselors, students shall create their personal success plan, beginning in grade 6 and ending in grade 12. Student success plans shall include a students' career and academic choices in grades six to twelve, inclusive. The student success plans will include time designated during advisory periods and selected curriculum on software such as Naviance.

Assessment Plan

Students are required to take the Connecticut SAT School Day and Next Generation Science Standards Assessment, or a designated equivalent, during their junior year.

International Baccalaureate (IB) and Diploma

The District offers the opportunity for all students to participate in the International Baccalaureate Program (IB). Students can enroll either in individual IB Courses, or, in the full International Baccalaureate Diploma Program to be eligible for the IB Diploma. To earn the diploma, students must successfully complete assessments for six core subjects in addition to Theory of Knowledge. Additionally, students must write an extended essay of 3000-4000 words on a topic of their choosing. Students must also complete a Creativity, Action, and Service project and report. Students who complete all requirements will receive an additional IB diploma.

Middle Years Program (MYP) and Requirements

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) offers all students in grades sixth through tenth the opportunity to share a common learning experience. MYP is an instructional framework, not a curriculum. All schools use the curriculum and state standards established by the Board. In the classroom, MYP shifts the instructional focus from the teacher to the student. Inquiry drives unit explorations, and students are required to reflect on their learning and connect teacher support and feedback to their own learning goals and growth.

MYP Personal Project Graduation Requirement (Class of 2026 and beyond)

Students are required to complete a personal project with an emphasis on personal exploration and to demonstrate their knowledge of the approaches to teaching and learning skills by the end of their tenth grade year. Students will be introduced to the Personal Project and its components in their ninth grade year. Students entering Groton Public Schools after the second semester of their tenth-grade year must complete the Personal Project or a school assigned Reflective Project to meet the graduation requirement.

Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy

The Board, using criteria established by the State Board of Education, may affix the "Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy" to a diploma awarded to a student who has achieved a high level of proficiency in English and one or more foreign languages. "Foreign language" means a world language other than English. The Board shall include on such a student's transcript and diploma a designation that the student received the "Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy."

Awards of High School Diplomas

Students who complete all graduation requirements shall receive a diploma at the June commencement. Individuals also may fulfill graduation requirements by the satisfactory completion of the following:

1. Successful completion of a summer course or summer courses comparable as determined by the Principal to the subject(s) in which the student was deficient.
2. Honorable discharge from the United States Armed Forces after a minimum of ninety days of active service during World War II for individuals who withdrew from school to join the Armed Forces and for veterans of the Korean Hostilities and for veterans of the Vietnam Era.
3. Honorable discharge from the United States Armed Forces for individuals who left high school prior to graduation and did not receive a diploma as a consequence of such service.
4. Withdrawal from high school prior to graduation to work on a job that assisted the war effort during World War II, December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946, not receiving a diploma as a consequence of such work and has been a resident of Connecticut for at least fifty (50) consecutive years.
5. A student who is under expulsion from Fitch High School but has satisfactorily completed all of the graduation requirements shall receive a diploma. However, that student shall not attend the commencement ceremony.

Recommended Course of Study for College-Bound Students

Entrance requirements for different colleges vary; however, there are certain basic requirements upon which colleges generally agree. All colleges appear to be increasing their admissions requirements. Following are recommendations to college-bound students. The selection will provide a thorough and adequate preparation for college. The student must select courses of appropriate level of difficulty.

Course	Years of Study	Course	Years of Study
English	4	Science	4
Social Studies	3-4	World Languages	2-4
Mathematics	4	Voc. Ed./Art/Music	1

Typical Entrance Requirements at Colleges

➤ **Liberal Arts**

Highly Competitive College

English	4
History	3-4
Mathematics	4
Science (lab)	4
World Languages	3-4

Typical Liberal Arts College

English	4
History	3-4
Mathematics	4
Science (lab)	4
World Languages	2-3

➤ **2-Year Technical Institutes & Colleges**

English	4
History	3
Mathematics	4
Science	4

Report Cards/Monitoring Student Progress

Starting with the 2019-2020 school year, report cards will no longer be mailed home. The school year is divided into two semesters; each semester is divided into two quarters. At the end of each quarter, final grades can be viewed on PowerSchool. Parents are encouraged to view student progress on Power School throughout the year. Additionally, parents can contact teachers, school counselors, or administrators when they have a question about their student's performance.

Examination Information

- Students need not be in attendance if not taking a final exam.
- No lunch will be served on testing days.
- Buses will run a special schedule on testing days, leaving at 12:10 p.m.
- No tardy slips will be issued from the office. Absences will be reported to the office during the exam period.
- Students must arrive in time for their exams, remain in the classroom for the entire 120 minutes, and leave only after their last exam for the day is over. A student leaving before the last exam of the day is over will have cut and will not be allowed a makeup.
- Students arriving early for the second exam period will report directly to the cafeteria, and will stay out of all other units during the times when exams are in progress. Students are not allowed in parking lots during exams.
- Students are allowed to go to lockers only before and after exams, and are not allowed in hallways during exams except in an emergency.
- Arrangements for makeup exams for excused absences must be initiated by the student. A note from the parent/guardian indicating the reason for absence must be provided to receive approval from a principal to make up exams; an approval for makeup will be generated, and the student will make arrangements for the makeup exam at the convenience of the teacher involved.

Honor Roll/High Honors

A list of students earning honors is compiled in the School Counseling Department each quarter, which is provided to the local media for publication. Students' weighted GPA will be used for the determination of honor roll.

Honor Cords

At the end of senior year, students are awarded honor cords for high academic achievement in the respective departments. The criteria for receiving honor cords are as follows:

1. In Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, English and Music – students must have completed at least 4 courses and received an A- or better in each course.
2. In World Languages, Technology, Art, Business, Health and Culinary Arts – students must have completed at least 3 courses and received an A- or better in each course.
3. In Physical Education – students must have completed at least 4 courses and received an A- or better in each course. Students must pass the “Challenge Criteria” of the Connecticut Physical Fitness Mastery Test.
4. In Nursing - students must have received an A- or better in Diversified Health Occupations and Honors Nursing.
5. In the Seal of Bi-literacy – students who have demonstrated proficiency in one or more World Languages and English.

Weighting of Grades

Based on category, grades are assigned different point values which are used in the computation of class rank. The scale of point values assigned for grades received in courses of various difficulty levels is as follows:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F	
22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	8	0	AP/IB
19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	6	0	Category I
16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	4	0	Category II

Weighting of Grades (Beginning with the class of 2021 and beyond)

Grade	AP/ECE/IB	Honors/Accelerated	Academic/CP/All Other Courses
A+	5.33	4.83	4.33
A	5.00	4.50	4.00
A-	4.67	4.17	3.67
B+	4.33	3.83	3.33
B	4.00	3.50	3.00
B-	3.67	3.17	2.67
C+	3.33	2.83	2.33
C	3.00	2.50	2.00
C-	2.67	2.17	1.67
D+	2.33	1.83	1.33
D	2.00	1.50	1.00
D-	1.67	1.17	0.67
F	0.00	0.00	0.00

Rank in class is calculated by all classes taken.

Academic Letters and Chevrons

Academic letters are awarded each year at the Awards Ceremony to sophomores, juniors, and seniors who attain high academic standing. To earn an academic letter, the student must have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.9 or higher. To earn an academic chevron, the student must have earned an academic letter. The student must have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.9 or higher.

Academic and Service Awards

Each year, Awards Programs are held to present academic and service awards. Letters will be sent home inviting all award winners & their families to the ceremony. Departmental awards are nominated by teachers and determined by department.

Adult Education

Students participating in the Credit Diploma Program (CDP) earn credits by completing courses in all core academic subjects and receive a Groton Public Schools Night School Division diploma upon completion. The program also offers the opportunity to earn a Connecticut high school diploma (GED), classes in adult basic education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESOL), and Citizenship preparation.

The adult education program is open to all adults residing within the boundaries of Groton Public Schools who are 17 years old or older and have not completed high school. The program is located at West Side Middle School, 250 Brandegee Avenue, Groton. Classes are on Mondays, Wednesday, and Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. For more information, call 860-441-2152.

PLANNING FOR COLLEGE

College Admissions Testing

Most colleges require students to take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or American College Testing Program (ACT) in the fall of their senior year or the spring of their junior year. In addition, some of the highly competitive private colleges will require students to take the Achievement Test, now called SAT Subject Tests, in areas such as mathematics, science, or world languages. In some cases, a high score on an achievement test will allow a student to be placed in a higher level class in college. Students should read the college bulletins for

colleges of interest to determine tests required for admission. Preliminary SAT's are administered to freshmen, sophomores and juniors in the fall.

A Calendar for College Bound Students

October – PSAT: 9th, 10th, and 11th graders

April – School Day SAT: 11th graders

May – AP (Advanced Placement) Tests and IB Tests

College Application Process and Timeline

Freshman parents and students are encouraged to visit school counselors and the College and Career Resource Center in the Media Center. Sophomore students and parents should plan to attend College Night Programs held at our school, review college bulletins, view college videos, and visit college campuses. Juniors need to begin choosing and visiting colleges. Students should continually review the Scholarship File located in the School Counseling Office. Financial Aid information is available in both the College and Career Resource Center and the School Counseling Office. A Financial Aid Night is held to help parents complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

Colleges and Career Resource Center

The Fitch High School College and Career Center is located in the School Counseling Office. The College and Career Center is a resource that is available to all Fitch students to explore career interests, research colleges, and learn about scholarships.

The College and Career Center hosts a variety of visits from college, military, and workforce representatives. The purpose of these sessions is to help Fitch students explore and plan for postsecondary opportunities. Students are encouraged to attend these sessions, which are advertised through Naviance and on the morning announcements. For students interested in exploring the Naviance Program, the College/ Career Center has a number of computers for students to utilize.

ATHLETICS

It is very important for all students involved in athletics to view the Athletic Handbook for awareness of expectations, guidelines, and code of conduct. Please access the online handbook via the link below.

[**Athletic Handbook**](#)

MUSIC ORGANIZATIONS

Students receive credit for the following musical organizations which are held during the school day:

Marching Band

Members participate in music festivals, parades, assemblies, football games, public concerts, and various functions as invited. Rehearsals are held during the school day, as well as in the evenings during the fall semester.

Honors Chamber Choir

This course is open to juniors and seniors interested in serious choral singing by audition. The choir performs various types of music from madrigals to swing. It participates in numerous public concerts at school and in the community. Rehearsals take place during the school day, as well as requiring additional evening hours.

Concert Chorus

This course is open to all students with a serious interest in choral singing regardless of ability; no audition is required. This group meets during a regular class period and participates in various public concerts and music festivals.

Indoor Color Guard

This course is open to all students interested in performing at exhibitions and competitions involving modern dance, as well as utilization of color guard equipment such as flags, rifles, and sabers.

Concert and Honors Jazz Band

Selected student musicians rehearse during the school day to prepare for concerts and assembly programs.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND CLUBS

Fitch High School offers a wide range of extracurricular activities that provide opportunities for every student to develop individual interest and abilities. *All active clubs and activities are updated and posted on the FHS website.*

Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities (Including Athletics)

Students must be:

- In attendance in school for a minimum of three blocks and CTL on the day of an activity.
- Taking at least six credits of classes per semester.
- Passing at least 5 credits at the end of the last marking period as of the official day grades are issued; for fall activities, students must have earned 5 credits from the previous school year.

Organization and Club Leadership

Selection as a leader within a student organization or club is both an honor and a privilege. Student leaders have the obligation to set an example in these highly visible leadership roles. They will recognize that their position of leadership brings with it heightened expectations in the areas of conduct, self-discipline, integrity, and responsibilities. Club leaders will actively promote these same standards among the members. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in loss of the leadership role and/or disciplinary action under the direction of the principal or principal designee.

Class Officers/Organization

Each class elects a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer yearly. The class officers meet with faculty advisors to plan social functions for their class. Each class participates in Spirit competitions during Spirit Week. Fundraising is often done to build a treasury that can partially defray the expenses of the class trip, the prom, and graduation week activities through dances, talent shows, etc.

Forming a New Club

Students interested in forming a new club must first locate a faculty member interested in acting as an advisor for the club. That faculty member will then present the request with appropriate background information to Administration for review and subsequent approval/denial.

National Honor Society

The NHS is composed of members selected from the junior and senior classes by a 5-person council after input from the entire faculty.

Student 2 Student

Peer helpers provide assistance to students new to Fitch by giving them tours of the building, helping them find their classes, giving them information about school activities and, in general, being a friend when they first come to our school.

Student Council

The student council is the student governing body, whose aim is to further the best interests of the school by working with the faculty and administration in planning student activities. A faculty member serves as an advisor to the Council. A representative is elected to serve on the Council, along with the vice-president of each class. Meetings are held weekly after school, and all students are welcome to attend. Types of events typically sponsored by the Student Council include dances, food drive, blood drives, a Halloween haunted house, spirit week, and many other school spirit events.

PARENT AND SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS

Invitation to Parents

All parents are encouraged to be involved in the education of their young adult students. Recent polls of high school students overwhelmingly show that students want their parents to be more involved in their education.

Athletic Boosters Club

Parents of students involved in athletic programs work together to help plan and organize the many athletic banquets, provide many awards and honors to students, and donate their funds to purchase equipment beyond the school budget. Revenue is generated through concession stand fundraising at home athletic events where parent volunteers are always welcome.

Band/Choral Boosters

Parents of students involved in the bands and choruses work together to support the many opportunities available to students.

The Groton Board of Education

Consists of nine elected citizens who donate their time to the town for a period of four years; half of the members are up for election every other year. Through close interaction with the superintendent and staff, the Board guides philosophical and curriculum policy for the school system, and develops and approves the school budget. Meetings are regularly scheduled in the local paper, posted at the Town Hall and the School Administration Building on Flanders Road, as well as Channel 19. All Board meetings are open to the public. The public, parents and students are encouraged to attend and be involved. Citizens may speak to the Board during the "Comments from Citizens" portion of the meeting, as well as submit items for the Board's consideration by asking a Board member to place it on the agenda in advance. For further information, contact the Administrative Office at 860-572-2100.

HEALTH PROGRAM

Nurse

The nurse is available from 7:25 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. for any personal or medical concerns. When necessary, students will be referred to the School-Based Health Center or the Social Worker to address related problems. Students must obtain a pass from a classroom teacher to visit the nurse; students are accepted between classes only in emergency situations. Students must report directly to the Nurse's Office, and must sign in and out.

Student Immunization

The Groton Board of Education, in accordance with the Connecticut General Statute (Section 10-204A), requires that the required immunizations be documented by submission of a record at the time of registration.

Immunization record or proof of immunity to certain diseases must be confirmed in writing by a physician or by lab confirmation. Parents or guardians may check the specifics of the required immunizations by contacting their child's pediatrician, the school nurse, or the school nurse supervisor at 860-444-1111.

According to Connecticut State Statute (Public Act 80-449; An Act Concerning School Health), all students are required to have a health assessment and mandated immunizations prior to public school enrollment.

Military students who do not have proof of an updated physical examination and/or immunization records upon registering for school will have 30 school days from the first day the student attends school to submit all necessary documentation to the school nurse. Military students will be subject to exclusion from school if the health requirements are not met within the 30 school day grace period.

Medical exemptions must be accompanied by a physician's note and a religious exemption must be accompanied by a written statement from the parent/guardian. Each medical record will be reviewed by school nursing staff and verification will be made as to compliance with State Statute. This information will be transferred to a permanent health record and should be kept current by notifying the school nurse when your child receives updated immunizations and physical examinations.

Medications in School

A physician's written order, and authorization of a parent/guardian (form available from the nurse) must be presented to the nurse for any medication (this includes all over-the-counter medications) to be administered in school. No medications may be self-administered on school grounds, except for prior approved emergency medications. Parents must bring to the nurse the original pharmacy container, properly labeled with the original prescription date, name of doctor and patient, name and strength of medication, and directions for administration. No more than a three-month supply of medication can be kept at the school at one time. Medication orders are to be renewed once each school year, and any unused medication shall be picked up by the parent/guardian at termination of the doctor's order, or at the end of the school year.

School Based Health Center (SBHC)

The SBHC is staffed by a nurse practitioner, mental health professional, and a consulting physician. They are available during school hours to assist students with personal health needs such as mental health, counseling, physical health assessments and screening preventive and diagnostic treatment, referrals to school and community services, minor treatment of illnesses and injuries, immunizations, and dental and dermatological assessments. **Parents must complete a parent permission form** and other required information prior to a student's receipt of service. Students must request a pass from a classroom teacher to visit the SBHC; their telephone number is 860-446-9543.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES

Special Education Instruction: The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) ensures that students meet the eligibility requirements of the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and state regulations. It is also through the PPT process that the district ensures that all students with disabilities aged 3 through 21 who require special education and related services, who have not graduated with a regular high school diploma, receive a free and appropriate public education. The district develops a written plan for each student requiring special education and related services. This plan is called an Individualized Education

Program (IEP). An IEP is developed, implemented, maintained, reviewed, revised, and evaluated for all students served by our district.

The district ensures that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are nondisabled. However, the district provides a continuum of programming options for students to the extent necessary in order to implement the IEP. Each student requiring special education and related services is educated in the school that he or she would attend if he or she did not require special education and related services, unless the IEP requires another placement.

Related Services:

Social work and psychological services are provided by certified school psychologists and certified school social workers who provide a range of services including support for all students and consultation and collaboration with educators, professionals and parents. School social workers and school psychologists work collaboratively with teachers and administrators to help create safe and supportive school environments, empower teachers to understand and respond to students' social and emotional needs, develop and monitor academic and behavioral interventions to enable students to attain educational goals and personal-social well-being, and coordinate community services, outside providers and agency involvement to prevent problems, enhance independence and promote optimal learning.

School psychologists conduct individual assessments to provide information that is helpful in determining a student's eligibility for special education and related services and in the development of individual academic and behavioral programs which maximize the student's achievement and educational success.

Speech and language services are provided by certified speech and language pathologists to students who exhibit speech-language impairments that adversely affect educational performance in accordance with the IEP. Speech and language pathologists participate in the development and monitoring of alternative procedures and programs in general education which may be explored and implemented, where appropriate, before a child is referred to special education. When concerns about a child's communication development continue despite the implementation of alternative interventions, speech and language pathologists conduct individual assessments to provide information that is helpful in determining a child's eligibility for speech and language services as special education or a related service.

Physical and occupational therapy are provided in accordance with the student's IEP.

Special education transportation is provided as a related service in accordance with the student's IEP.

Homebound instruction is provided for students who receive special education and related services when recommended by the PPT in accordance with the student's IEP. Homebound instruction is also provided for any student for whom a physician has certified, in writing, that the student's medical condition will cause an absence of at least three weeks' duration. Instruction typically begins no later than two weeks from the first day of absence.

Transition Bill of Rights

A student with an individualized education program (IEP) has certain rights under both federal and state laws. This *Transition Bill of Rights* for parents of students receiving special education will help parents and students understand a student's rights related to getting an education and other important issues regarding the transition to life after high school. School districts will provide this document annually at a planning and placement team (PPT) meeting to all parents, guardians, and surrogate parents of students who are receiving special education services in grades 6-12 as well as to students who are 18 years of age or older.

Students, parents, guardians, and surrogate parents are important members of the PPT. Parents, guardians, surrogate parents, and students 18 years of age or older have the right to receive a copy of *Procedural Safeguards in Special Education* which explains the rights and responsibilities in the federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These procedural safeguards are provided at least annually at a PPT meeting

by each school district. This publication describes a student's right to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) through specialized instruction and related services in a student's IEP.

Students with an IEP have a right to:

1. Receive secondary transition services through their IEP starting at least at age 16, or younger if desired and recommended by the student's PPT.
 2. Receive appropriate individualized education services through the end of the school year in which they turn 21 OR until graduation with a regular high school diploma. The school year is defined as July 1 through June 30. This decision is typically recommended by a student's PPT.
 3. Attend all PPT meetings, including those related to transition planning, to represent their education/training, employment, and independent living interests, preferences, and strengths.
 4. Assist in the development of their IEP with accommodations and modifications designed to meet their unique needs.
 5. Develop realistic and specific post-school outcome goal statements (PSOGS) that are measurable, based on their individualized needs and interests, and reviewed annually as part of their IEP.
 6. Receive secondary transition services and related supports to help them prepare to meet their post-school goals in postsecondary education/training AND employment and independent living skills if appropriate.
 7. Assist in developing annual goals and objectives to include, but not be limited to, those areas in the *Connecticut CORE Transition Skills*, such as health care, transportation, self-determination, and social skills.
 8. Identify, explore, and connect with outside agencies as appropriate, including, but not limited to, the following adult service agencies:
 - Department of Developmental Services (DDS),
 - Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS),
 - Department of Public Health (DPH),
 - Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), which includes the Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) and Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) (see *Easing into Secondary Transition*).
 9. Be informed on or before their 17th birthday that all parental rights will transition to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18. Under Connecticut law, students may notify the school district (in writing) that their parents, guardian, or surrogate parent shall continue to have the right to make educational decisions with the students when they turn 18.
 10. Request consideration for receiving transition-only services between the ages of 18 and 21 if all transition goals and objectives have not been met during their previous years in high school. The following conditions are required:
 - a. Students have met all academic requirements for graduation.
 - b. PPT makes the recommendation for transition-only services that must be reviewed at least annually.
 - c. Transition-only services must be a coordinated set of individualized activities but do not need to be a specialized "program."
 - d. Transition-only services must provide students with the opportunity to spend at least 80 percent of their time with nondisabled peers.
 - e. Students are entitled to participate in graduation activities upon completion of academic requirements or at the conclusion of transition-only services - this is a decision to be made by the student, parents, and/or guardians or surrogate and the PPT.
 - f. If students participate in transition-only services, the date on their diploma or certificate will be the date that they exit high school (either aging out at 21 or with a diploma or certificate.)
- In addition, the following should also be considered:
- g. Transition-only services are typically discussed during the senior year of high school.

- h. Transition-only services are not needed for graduation, but may include academic, vocational, and independent living activities that will help students meet their post-school goals.
 - i. Transition-only services should be based in the local community to the greatest extent possible in order to prepare students for life after high school.
11. Actively participate in the development and revision of their Student Success Plans, which are required for all students in grades 6-12 to address career, academic, and social/emotional/behavioral skills to prepare for life after high school.
 12. Receive, along with their parents, guardians, and surrogate parent, transition resources and other information regarding IEPs developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) and their school such as:
 - *Assistive Technology and Postsecondary Transition*
 - *Building A Bridge: A Transition Manual for Students*
 - *Connecticut CORE Transition Skills*
 - *Connecticut IEP Transition Planning Checklist*
 - *Easing into Secondary Transition: A Comprehensive Guide to Resources and Services in CT*
 - *Transition Assessment Resource Manual*
 - *Stepping Forward: A Self-Advocacy Guide for Middle and High School Students*
 - *Student Success Plan Crosswalk*
 - *Technology & Transition: Resource Guide to Creating and Sustaining and AT (Assistive Technology) Team at the High School Level*

If students have questions or have a problem asserting any of these rights, they should first speak to their teacher, school case manager, school counselor, and parent/guardian or surrogate parent. If additional help is needed, students (or their parents, guardians, or surrogate parent) have the right to file a complaint, ask for mediation and, if needed, ask for an impartial due process hearing by contacting the CSDE Due Process Unit at (860) 713-6943. For more information, download a copy of the publication *A Parent's Guide to Special Education* or obtain a copy from the school.

For additional help with transition or special education, call the CSDE at (860) 713-6910 or visit <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/specialeducation>. For assistance in understanding the provisions of the IDEA, call Connecticut's federally designated Parent Training and Information Center, the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) at 800-445-2722, email cpac@cpacinc.org, or visit <http://www.cpacinc.org/>.

Early Intervention Prior to Referral to Special Education

Before school personnel refer a student to a Planning and Placement Team (PPT), alternative strategies and programs in general education are explored and where appropriate, implemented. Despite additional supports, a small number of children still may not make adequate progress in developing targeted skills. They may cause a family or a teacher to suspect that a child may have a disability, prompting a request for an evaluation to determine whether a child may require special education.

The Scientific Research-Based Intervention or SRBI process, involves providing students with high-quality instruction and interventions that are matched to student needs, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying data to inform education decisions. SRBI is a multi-tiered, layered instructional approach that aims to prevent learning impediments and behavioral problems first, and then brings increasingly intense interventions to students who continue to experience difficulty. The primary goal of SRBI is improving academic and behavioral outcomes for all students by eliminating discrepancies between actual and expected performances. Instructional decisions are made by school-based teams and focused on determining the extent to which the student is responding to the interventions based on a review of data that is collected over time.

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION GOALS AND POLICIES

Appropriate Use of Technology - (Policy #6141.321)

Groton Public Schools (GPS) provides its students and staff access to a multitude of technology resources with the understanding that these resources provide opportunities to enhance learning and improve communication within our community and with the global community. The advantages of having access to these resources are far greater than the potential difficulties they may bring. However, with the privilege of access comes personal responsibility to use the resources appropriately.

The district's policies are intended to promote the most effective, safe, productive, instructionally sound and honest uses of networked information and communication tools. Students' use of technology at school shall be for educational purposes only. The district makes a good faith effort to protect its students from exposure to Internet materials that are harmful or explicit by maintaining a system of Internet content filtering devices and software controls that meet federal standards established in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). The district also educates students and staff on responsible use of technology including Internet resources and communication tools.

Digital Citizenship

As it supports students to develop the citizenship skills necessary to function in society, Groton Public Schools understands its responsibility to help students develop digital citizenship skills, as the Internet and electronic communication has become ubiquitous in the 21st century. Digital citizenship skills enable students to use information and technology in safe, legal, and responsible ways. Administrators, teachers, and staff are expected to model good digital citizenship skills for students in the same manner they model all expected behaviors. Students will receive instruction on the concepts and skills involved in digital citizenship.

A responsible digital citizen is one who:

Respects One's Self:

- Users show respect for themselves by understanding online behavior is a reflection and representation of oneself. They select online names that are appropriate, consider the information and images posted online as public expressions of themselves, and do not post personal information.

Respects Others:

- Users show respect for others online. They refrain from using technology to bully, tease, insult, inflame, harass or discriminate and in general, disrespect others. They do not visit sites that are degrading, pornographic, racist or otherwise inappropriate in the school setting. They do not violate others' access to material or others' files, online spaces, or material and never borrow, use or misappropriate another's identity, online password/or another's work product.

Protects One's Self:

- Users protect themselves by not posting any information including images that may put them at risk. They do not post personal details or contact information or otherwise share private information. They report any attacks or inappropriate behavior directed at them or other abuse. They protect passwords, accounts and resources.

Protects Others:

- Users protect others online by not putting others at risk and taking care to not offend others. They report abuse and do not create, forward or disseminate in any manner inappropriate materials, images or communications. Users do not visit degrading, pornographic, racist or other inappropriate sites.

Respects Intellectual Property:

- Users understand online resources are the creation of others. They request permission to use resources as necessary, suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc. and abide by fair use rules.

Protects Intellectual Property:

- Users adhere to copyright laws and agreements. They seek permission to use the software and media others produce. They act with integrity when dealing with licensed music, software and other media.

Responsibilities

- The user is responsible for all of his/her actions and activities involving technology, including personal portable technology. Examples of user responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:
 - Keeping all school accounts and passwords confidential.
 - Logging on school technology with your own user identification and password.
 - Logging off when leaving the computer.
 - Using the computers or other technology with teacher permission and supervision.
 - Taking precautions to prevent viruses.
 - Using permissible personal technology only for educational purposes and in designated areas and at designated times.

Unacceptable Use

- Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to the following:
 - Using the instructional network or Internet access for commercial business, political or religious advocacy purposes, solicitation or illegal activities of any kind.
 - Access or dissemination of obscene or pornographic material.
 - Sending material critical of or which may be offensive or objectionable to others, or using the network or Internet to threaten or harass others.
 - Engaging in cyber bullying
 - Harassing network users, infiltrating computing systems and/or damaging software components.
 - Making any unauthorized entry to or alteration of any document, either paper or electronic, not created by the user.
 - Sharing one's account with anyone or leaving an account open or unattended.
 - Disclosing personal information about oneself or another student.
 - Subscribing to online services without approval of district staff.
 - Deliberately misusing the network and its peripherals.
 - Installing software.
 - Intentionally bypassing the network filters.
 - Tampering with the hardware or software or system configuration.
 - Accessing executables from external sources.

Regulations

The Board of Education directs the Superintendent or his designee to develop accompanying regulations to provide specific guidance for students in their use of district technology and personal technology including the use of social media both in and outside of school as well as guidance for staff in their use of technology with students. This guidance shall address staff responsibilities to educate students about appropriate and safe online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms as well as cyberbullying awareness and response.

Consequences for Violation

The Superintendent will set forth in the regulations consequences for violation of this policy, its regulations and other unacceptable use of technology. Such consequences may include revocation of privileges, disciplinary

action up to and including suspension or expulsion from school, and/or legal action. The Groton Board of Education reserves the right to cooperate with law enforcement officers in investigations related to illegal activities conducted by students in their use of technology.

Dangerous Instruments - (Policy #5131.7)

The Board of Education, concerned for the safety and welfare of all students and school personnel in school and at school-sponsored activities, prohibits carrying of a dangerous instrument on, or introducing a dangerous instrument onto, school grounds or at school-sponsored events or on any school vehicle.

Possession and/or use of any such dangerous instrument by a student shall result in an expulsion hearing, as required under Board of Education policy 5114.

Off-School Misconduct - (Policy #5131.8)

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct, even if such misconduct occurs off school property and during non-school time.

Such discipline may result whether, 1) the incident was initiated in the school or on school grounds, or 2) even if the incident occurred or was initiated off school grounds and non-school time; if after the occurrence there was a reasonable likelihood that return of the student would contribute to a disruptive effect on the school education or its process by threatening:

1. The school's orderly operations;
2. The safety of the school property; or
3. The safety and welfare of the persons who work or study there.

Examples of the type of such off-school misconduct that may result in such discipline include, but not limited to:

1. Use, possession, sale, or distribution of dangerous weapons;
2. Use, possession, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs; or
3. Violent conduct, where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood of threatening the health, safety or welfare of school property, individuals thereon, and/or the educational process.

For example, if it is determined that a student's use, possession, or sale of drugs in the community has a reasonable likelihood of endangering the safety of students or employees because of the possibility of such sales in the school; or if violent conduct in the community presents a reasonable likelihood of repeating itself in the school environment, or if any similar type of misconduct in the community has a reasonable likelihood of being continued or repeated in school or of bringing retaliation or revenge into the school for such off-school misconduct, the Board may impose discipline up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco - (Policy #5131.6)

It is the policy of the schools to take appropriate action in the handling of incidents in the schools involving the possession, sale, and/or use of behavior affecting substances. These substances shall include but not be limited to alcohol and controlled substances as defined by the Penal Code of the State of Connecticut and inhalable substances (including gases, solvents, butane propane, adhesives).

In the event that the student is under the influence of a drug or alcohol, or engaged in the illegal activity of possessing or selling drugs and/or alcohol, he/she will be suspended/expelled from school in accordance with Policy 5114.

Personal privacy rights of students shall be protected as provided by law.

School properties may be inspected by school authorities in the interest of maintenance, health and safety. Inspections for the location of drugs, narcotics, liquor, weapons, poisons and missing properties are matters relating to health and safety and may be regarded as reasonable purposes for inspection by school personnel (cf.5145.12 – Search and Seizure).

The Board is also concerned that other substances, not listed as “controlled substances,” such as contained in common household items and inhalants, if purposely and inappropriately, can also have a stimulant, depressant or hallucinogenic effect on students. Inappropriate use, possession, sale, or distribution of these non-controlled substances will result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and/or expulsion. Further, grade level appropriate education pertaining to proper use of these materials and the danger of abuse shall be presented.

Smoking and/or possession of tobacco products by students are prohibited in school buildings, on school grounds, at school activities and on school buses at all times.

Homework - (Policy #6154)

The Groton Board of Education, acknowledging the research evidence indicating a positive correlation between homework and student performance and achievement, supports regular homework assignments of students. Homework assignments should:

- Be related to classroom instruction;
- Be age and developmentally appropriate;
- Provide reinforcement and enrichment of classroom instruction which can be independently completed by the student;
- Emphasize critical thinking, problem-solving and written expression;
- Emphasize quality over quantity;
- Be reviewed/assessed once submitted;
- Contribute to the evaluation of the student’s performance.

Sexual Harassment Policy for Adults and Students - (Policy #4118.112)

The Groton Public Schools do not permit or condone sexual harassment of employees or students. If individuals or parents suspect that they or any students may be a victim of sexual harassment, they should contact the District Title IX Compliance Officer, Ms. Denise Doolittle, (860) 572-2150 immediately. This policy, in its entirety, can be obtained from the building principal.

Attendance - (Policy #5113)

The Groton Board of Education recognizes that regular attendance in school is fundamental to a child’s achievement. Instructional experiences that occur in school are meaningful and essential components of the learning process. Time lost from class is irretrievable. It shall be the policy of the Groton Public Schools to encourage regular, daily attendance by all students.

Connecticut State Board of Education policy states that, *“A student is considered to be “in attendance” if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., a field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent.”* According to this policy, a student who is not “in attendance” is considered absent.

In order to identify those students who are chronically absent and at risk of becoming truant and to provide clear guidance to school districts for complying with truancy laws and reporting student truancy statistics, the State Board of Education has adopted the following definitions and guidance regarding student absences:

Disciplinary Absences – Absences that are the result of school or District-level disciplinary action (e.g., out-of-school suspension and expulsion) are excluded from State-level accounting and will not be counted against the student for the purpose of this policy.

Excused Absences – A student’s absence from school shall be considered excused if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within ten (10) school days of the student’s return to school, or the absence is in accordance with section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes (exclusion for medical reasons), and student’s absence meets the following criteria:

- A. For absences one through nine (1-9), a student’s absences from school are considered excused when the student’s parent/guardian approves such absence, regardless of the reason, and submits appropriate documentation; and
- B. For the tenth and subsequent absences, a student’s absences are considered excused for the following reasons:
 - 1. Student illness (Note: all student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional for the absence to be excused, regardless of the length of the absence);
 - 2. Student’s observance of a religious holiday;
 - 3. Death in the student’s family or other emergency beyond the control of the student’s family;
 - 4. Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required);
 - 5. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a school district other than Groton (no parental documentation is required for this reason); and
 - 6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by the Principal, or his/her designee, per the guidance in this policy.

Unexcused Absences – A student’s absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless it meets the definition of an excused absence (including the documentation requirements) or the absence was a disciplinary absence.

Note that the State Board of Education’s policy only considers a student absent when he/she misses half or more of the normal school day. A student missing less than half the school day will be considered tardy; student tardiness shall be dealt with at the school building level.

Documentation of Student Absences

The State Board of Education requires careful and thorough documentation of all student absences. Parent or guardian notes and other documentation are central to determining whether a student’s absence is excused or unexcused. While a written note from a parent or guardian will likely be the most common form of documentation, other methods of reporting a student’s absence are acceptable, such as a parent/guardian making a report in person to the designated school staff member, through an online system with controlled access, or via video chat. Email and texting do not meet the State’s security requirements; however, e-mail may be used to deliver a scanned image of a note.

The school staff must be certain that the student’s parent/guardian was the one providing the information regarding the student’s absence in order for it to be excused should the absence meet all the applicable criteria specified herein.

School staff must receive or generate documentation for each instance of absence, which is one or more consecutive school days absent. Schools should only accept notes covering a series of absences for non-consecutive school days if the absences share a common cause.

Once a student has accrued a total of none (9) absences, including both excused and unexcused, additional documentation (besides the note from the student’s parent/guardian) is required in order for absences resulting from illness or mandated court appearances to be excused:

- A. Students missing school for mandated court appearances must provide additional documentation such as a policy summons, a subpoena, a notice to appear, or a signed note from a court official.

- B. For absences resulting from illness, students must either provide a signed note from a medical professional who has evaluated the student confirming the absence and giving an expected return date or have the school nurse verify the student's absence with the medical professional treating the student. Families who lack health insurance and/or those with limited means may find it challenging to meet this requirement to obtain a note from a licensed medical professional. In these cases, school nurses can evaluate the ill student, either in person or over the telephone, and, where appropriate, provide the required documentation for an excused absence.

For parents/guardians who are not proficient in reading and writing English, the schools shall make efforts to help these parents report their child's absences, including accepting notes in languages other than English. For parents who are not proficient in writing in any language, schools should verbally inform them of the attendance requirements and that they may report a student's absence in person at the school.

Absences for Emergency Situations

For the purposes of the definition of excused absences, emergencies are generally significant events that are outside of the control of the student's family. They are normally short absences consisting of a few days at most. The only required documentation is a parental note clearly explaining the emergency situation that results in the student's absence. Examples of emergencies include, but are not limited to:

- Family member who is very ill and close to dying;
- Student's home is lost to fire or eviction;
- Family's home being quarantined;
- Natural disaster;
- A student who is a parent and whose child needs to go to the hospital; or
- A family member's military deployment or return from deployment.

Absences for Extraordinary Educational Opportunities

From time to time, students may be presented with an exceptional opportunity for an experience of an educational nature. While these events may not be part of the student's normal schoolwork, they can provide an excellent chance to further their education. Students and their parents/guardians must understand that approval as an excused absence is made on a case-by-case basis, in consideration of a number of factors, and that opportunities approved for one student may not be approved for another. Under the specific criteria outline herein, the days devoted to these opportunities can count as excused absences:

- The opportunity must be education in nature and have a learning objective related to the student's coursework or plan of study;
- It must be an opportunity not ordinarily available to the student;
- It must be grade and developmentally appropriate; and
- The content of the experiences must be highly relevant to the student.

It is important that the school administration, the student, and the student's family all have a common understanding of the extraordinary educational opportunity that is being requested and approved. To that end, building-specific procedures implementing this policy shall include the following:

- All requests for approval of an exceptional educational opportunity as an excused absence must be submitted in writing prior to the event, bear the signature of the student and his/her parent or guardian, describe the learning objective of the opportunity, and detail how the objective is linked to the student's coursework or plan of study; include additional documentation as appropriate to support a full understanding of the opportunity.
- Approval of an exceptional educational opportunity as an excused absence should be in writing, detail any requirements placed upon the student as a condition of approval, include the specific days approved for the opportunity, and include the caveat that the school administration may withdraw its approval if

the opportunity is canceled or the student fails to meet the mutually-agreed-upon requirements of the approval.

Within ten (10) days after the end of the approved period for the extraordinary educational opportunity, the student must submit all required documentation as specified during the approval process, or the time away from school will be considered an unexcused absence.

Truancy

Connecticut State law defines a “truant” as a child age five to eighteen years, inclusive, who is enrolled in Groton Public Schools and has four (4) unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten (10) unexcused absences from school in any school year. Studies have shown that students who are truant are in danger of having significant difficulty in making the same academic progress as their peers who regularly attend school.

Within ten (10) school days after a student’s fourth (4th) unexcused absence in a month or tenth (10th) unexcused absence in a school year, the school administration shall hold a meeting with the parent/guardian of the student who has become truant, or with such other person having control of the truant student, to review and evaluate the reasons for the child being truant.

If the truant student’s parent/guardian, or other person having control of the truant student, fails to attend the required meeting or if such parent/guardian or other person otherwise fails to cooperate with the school administration in attempting to solve the truancy problem, the school administration will refer to recommendations from the Tiered Intervention document.

(See regulations and addendum.)

Investigating Student Absences

The Superintendent is authorized by the Board to designate one or more District employees to serve as an attendance officer for the purpose of investigating student absences. The role of an attendance officer is to gather/verify information so that school personnel may better understand the factors contributing to the student’s absenteeism. This may include a visit to the student’s residence.

When a principal believes that a student’s absences, excused or not, are having a negative impact on the student’s academic performance and that more information is needed regarding the factors behind the student’s absenteeism, the principal shall recommend to the Superintendent that an attendance officer be assigned to further investigate the situation. Only the Superintendent, or her/his designee, may authorize the use of an attendance office in Groton Public Schools.

Implementation

The Superintendent is responsible for the development of District-wide and building-specific procedures to implement the requirements of this policy. All elementary schools shall use a common procedure regarding student tardiness, absenteeism, and truancy. These procedures shall provide for:

- the clear expectation among students and their parents/guardians regarding the need for regular, consistent attendance at school;
- a uniform understanding among staff, students, and their parents/guardians of the requirements for excused absences;
- the potential of consequences for unexcused absences; and
- the possibility that a student may be required to receive remedial assistance even when all absences are excused but potentially have negatively impacted their education.

The Board requires that District and building-level procedures developed to implement this policy contain the following specific elements:

1. Annually at the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment during the school year, the school administration shall inform students and their parents/guardians of the school attendance requirements, the building-specific procedures regarding absenteeism, and obtain a phone number or other means of contacting the parents/guardians during the school day. This and all subsequent notifications regarding student absenteeism shall be made in such a manner as to be easily understood by both students and their parents/guardians (for example, using an alternative language when the primary language in the home is not English).
2. Each school shall monitor individual student absences; additionally, Fitch High School will track student absences for each class.
3. Whenever a child enrolled in grades Kindergarten to eight fails to report to school on a regularly schedule school day and no indication has been received by school personnel that the child's parent or other person having control of the child is aware of the pupil's absence, school personnel shall make a reasonable effort to contact the student's parents/guardians by telephone in regard to the student's absence. If school personnel are unable to reach the student's parents/guardians via telephone, then a letter will be sent to the student's home address requiring the parents/guardians to contact the school. The District and each school shall have procedures for coordinating services with and making referrals to community agencies providing child and family services. These organizations should be used to address, where appropriate, the student's personal or family issues that may be affecting his or her ability to attend school on a regular basis.
4. Student tardiness and unexcused absences may be used as factors in determining eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.
5. In an effort to prevent absenteeism from rising to the level that it affects a student's academic performance, building-level procedures implementing this policy shall include a tiered series of interventions designed to recognize the factors uniquely affecting a student's attendance and put in place various support actions that can have a positive effect on both their future attendance and academic performance.

Tardiness and Class Cutting

All students are expected to arrive at school on time and to attend all classes in which they are registered. Elementary students who arrive in class after the announced starting time of the school day shall be determined to be tardy. Middle school and high school students who arrive after the announced starting time shall be determined to be tardy. Students who absent themselves from class without the prior approval of an appropriate school official shall be determined to have "cut" the class. Tardiness and "cutting" of classes shall subject the student to disciplinary action.

Attendance Parameters for Excused or Combination of Excused and Unexcused Absences

Credit for a course shall be denied after 12 absences, unless reversed in an Appeals process. These absences include excused and unexcused absences, as outlined in the Student Handbook. Additionally, three tardies equal one absence, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Suspension/Expulsion - (Policy #5114)

All employees in the school system shall have an obligation to monitor the behavior of students and to report student misbehavior in accordance with the terms of the Groton Board of Education policy on Suspension/Expulsion. A complete description of the Board's policy is included with this student handbook.

See definitions of significant words and phrases in the sections of the policy within the Code of Conduct Definitions (Page #). Refer to the policy to fully understand the Expulsion/Suspension topic.

Note to students: If for any reason you are in possession of anything that you have a question about, discuss this with any adult in the school.

Suspension/Expulsion Policy Outline:

- Section I Definitions [provided in Code of Conduct Definitions – pg. 47]
- Section II Removal of students from class
- Section III In-school suspension of students; Reassignment
- Section IV Suspension of students
- Section V Expulsion of students
 - A. Procedure
 - B. Special Education
 - C. Student records, transfer and withdrawals
 - D. Readmission
- Section VI Standards governing suspension and expulsion
 - A. Statutorily required expulsion proceedings
 - B. Statutorily prohibited expulsion or out-of-school suspension of preschoolers and students in kindergarten through grade two with certain exceptions
 - C. Statutorily required expulsion for students in grades K through 2 who commit certain offenses
 - D. Statutorily required expulsion of preschoolers who possess a firearm
- Section VII Notice of disciplinary policies and action
- Section VIII Statutory modification
- Section IX Exclusion from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities

School Volunteers – (Policy #1212)

A child's educational success is a partnership shared by school and family, including all those who play an important role in the child's well-being. Student achievement increases when families are active in the learning process. Educators recognize and acknowledge the family's role as the primary facilitator of their children's education. Families are welcome in all Groton schools. Their support and assistance are actively sought in their child's social, emotional, and academic development. Please refer to the district Volunteer Policy, P1212. Parent involvement programs in our schools support and respect family responsibilities and diversity, as well as link parents to programs and resources within the community. All families will be provided opportunities for involvement. Family and school communications are two-way, regular, meaningful, and respectful. Effective communication requires that both the family and the school initiate contact and provide vital information about a child's strengths, challenges, and accomplishments.

Potassium Iodide Pills

In the event of an accident at any of the nearby nuclear reactors, it is possible that radioactive iodine will be released into the atmosphere. Radioactive iodine can be absorbed into the thyroid gland. Potassium iodide, also known by its chemical name "KI," is an over-the-counter drug that protects the thyroid gland from radioactive iodine. Your child's school has been stocked with enough KI pills for all staff and students. All students are asked to fill out a potassium iodide (KI) student medication authorization form. This form must be filled out only once for the time your child is enrolled in the Groton Public Schools. Prior to filling out the form, you may want to consult your physician especially if your child has a known allergy to iodine, has thyroid problems or has hypocomplementemic vasculitis. If a form has not been filled out and returned to the school, it should be ASAP. If you have filled out a form and wish to change your preference, please fill out a new form and indicate your preference either to have the pill administered to your child or not. The forms are available from the school nurse. In an emergency situation, the Governor and the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Health have the authority to order use of the pill. Failure to fill out and return the form will be taken as a positive permission to administer KI to your child under a Governor's Emergency Declaration. This procedure will remain in effect until rescinded by the State of Connecticut.

Breathalyzer Testing - (Policy #5145.124)

No student shall possess, use, be under the influence of, sell, or transfer any alcoholic beverage on school property, at any location of a school-sponsored activity, or en-route to and from school or a school-sponsored activity.

Violation of this policy shall constitute reason for disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion from school and suspension or dismissal from athletic teams.

At school or school-sponsored events, students will be randomly selected to take the breathalyzer test. When an administrator has reasonable suspicion that a student is under the influence of alcohol at school or a school-sponsored event, the student shall be given the option to take a Breathalyzer test. If screening results are negative, no action shall be taken. However, if the student tests positive or if the student declines to take the test when reasonable suspicion exists, he/she shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action as set out in the District's disciplinary policies.

Reasonable suspicion shall refer to any of the following:

1. Observed use or possession of alcohol;
2. Apparent physical state of impairment of motor functions;
3. Marked changes in personal behavior not attributable to other factors; or
4. Involvement in, or contribution to, an accident where the use of alcohol is reasonably suspected or student involvement in a pattern of repetitive accidents, whether or not they involve actual or potential injury.

Students who test positive on a confirmation alcohol test shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Safe School Climate

In accordance with Public Act 11-232, An Act Concerning the Strengthening of School Bullying Laws, the Groton Public Schools has developed a Safe School Climate Plan which is based on the National School Climate Standards. The plan, which is available on the district's website, presents a vision and framework for a positive and sustainable school climate through the implementation of the following standards:

1. The school community has a shared vision and plan for promoting, enhancing, and sustaining a positive school climate.
2. The school community sets policies specifically promoting:
 - a. The development and sustainability of social, emotional, ethical, civic, and intellectual skills, knowledge, dispositions and engagement; and
 - b. A comprehensive system to address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage students who have become disengaged.
3. The school community's practices are identified, prioritized, and supported to:
 - a. Promote the learning and positive social, emotional, ethical, and civic development of students.
 - b. Enhance engagement in teaching, learning, and school-wide activities.
 - c. Address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage those who have become disengaged.
 - d. Develop and sustain an appropriate operational infrastructure and capacity building mechanisms for meeting this standard.
4. The school community creates an environment where all members are welcomed, supported, and feel safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.
5. The school community develops meaningful and engaging practices, activities, and norms that promote social and civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice.

If you have questions about the District's Safe School Climate Plan, please contact Denise Doolittle, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, at (860) 572-2152. To speak to the Safe School Climate Specialist in your child's school, please contact the school directly.

Anti-Bullying - (Policy #5131.911)

The Groton Public Schools maintains a firm policy prohibiting bullying. Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyber bullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- a. Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
- b. Places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- c. Creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- d. Infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- e. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but is not limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Bullying may take many forms, such as but not limited to:

1. Physical violence and attacks;
2. Taunts, name-calling or put-downs or discriminatory slurs;
3. Targeting of a student based upon that person's actual or perceived "differentiating characteristics" such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, national or ethnic background, disability, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, or a student's association with a person or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics;
4. Threats and intimidation;
5. Extortion or stealing of money and possessions;
6. Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

The following standards shall be observed in dealing with observed bullying behavior:

1. Students are encouraged to report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators, on an anonymous basis, if necessary or appropriate.
2. Parents or guardians of students may file written reports of suspected bullying with the school principal.
3. Teachers and other school staff members who witness acts of bullying or receive student or parent reports of bullying are required to notify the school principal/designee immediately and in writing. This immediate communication must be accompanied by an acknowledgement that the principal/designee has received the information.
4. Principals or other designated school administrators shall investigate all written reports and review all anonymous reports of bullying, and report their findings to the Superintendent of Schools. Each such report shall include an intervention strategy where appropriate. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. An anonymous report may lead to a more thorough investigation.
5. The parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of any victims of bullying shall be notified of the bullying behavior, including a description of the response of school staff to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying. Both sets of parents/guardians will receive in writing an invitation to attend separate meetings to discuss intervention efforts. Documentation of invitations shall be maintained.
6. Appropriate corrective action shall be taken by school administrators to insure that bullying behavior does not continue and to prevent retaliation against any person who reports, or is the victim of such bullying, including disciplinary and/or counseling action where appropriate.

7. Each of the Groton Public Schools shall maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying and shall make such list available for public inspection.
8. Reasonable training will be made to all staff holding an educational certificate where there is not an evidence-based model approach.
9. If anyone feels appropriate action has not been taken, a written complaint can be filed with the Title IX Coordinator.

Physical Examinations - (Policy #5141.31)

- Sports Physicals - It is the policy of the Board of Education to require physicals for participation in sports. Physicals for participation in sports for athletes shall be required within thirteen months prior to the date the student is to participate in interscholastic sports. Documentation of this physical must be placed in the student's health record.

The Board of Education recommends that all physicals be performed by the student's own physician. If for some reason, this is not feasible, sports physicals can also be provided by our School Based Health Center physician. Please note that students must be signed up with SBH to receive this service.

- Mandated Physicals - It is the policy of the Board of Education to require periodic health assessments prior to kindergarten, sixth, and tenth grades, unless objected to in writing on religious grounds by the parents or guardian of the students (or by the student if age 18 or over). No record of such medical examination shall be open to public inspection.

Psychotropic Drug Use - (Policy #5141.231)

The Board of Education prohibits all school personnel from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. This shall not prohibit (nor require) a recommendation by the school's medical staff, including school nurses and/or the District's medical advisor, for evaluation by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, upon the consent of the student's parents or guardian, school personnel may consult with the medical practitioner regarding such use.

The refusal of a parent or other person having custody of a child to administer or consent to the administration of any psychotropic drug to the child shall, not, in and of itself, constitute grounds for referral to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) unless such refusal causes such child to be neglected or abused, as defined in C.G.S. §46b-120.

Pledge of Allegiance - (Policy #6115.4)

Each school within the district shall provide time each school day for students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Such recitation is voluntary. If, because of some personal philosophy or belief, a student has made the personal decision not to recite the Pledge, such student may choose to remain seated and silent. Students may wish to use this time to reflect on their philosophy, belief, or remember loved ones. In any event, all students must be courteous and respectful of the beliefs of others.

On-Campus Recruitment - (Policy # 5145.14)

The same directory information and on-campus recruiting opportunities will be made available to all recruiters. These shall include representatives of the armed forces of the United States of America and state armed services, and recruiters representing institutions of higher education.

Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 requires the release of the (student's names, addresses and phone listings) unless, after giving appropriate notice to parents/guardians and students 18 year of age or older, of their right to opt-out and to require, after such opt-out, written permission to release the information.

Lists of student names, addresses and phone listings may be distributed unless the parent/guardian of such student submits a written request that such information not be released without their prior written consent (see

regulation R 5145.14). A student, eighteen years of age or older, rather than his/her parent/guardian, may request in writing that such information not be released without his/her prior written permission. Parents and students must be notified of this new federal obligation and be provided an opportunity to object to the release of information.

The school administrator may make the determination of when the recruitment meetings are to take place and reserves the right to deny such meetings where the holding of such meetings will materially and substantially interfere with the proper and orderly operation of the school.

Any person or organization denied the rights accorded under this policy shall have the right to request a review of the decision by the Board of Education by filing a written request with the Superintendent of Schools.

Surveys of Students (Student Privacy) - (Policy #6162.51)

All requests to conduct surveys, analyses, or evaluations shall be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools for approval.

In this policy, “surveys, analyses, or evaluations” refer to methods of gathering data for research purposes.

No student shall be required as part of any program to submit to any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent;
- B. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family;
- C. Sex behavior or attitudes;
- D. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- E. Critical appraisals of others;
- F. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- G. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parents; or
- H. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program without the prior written consent of the student’s parent/guardian.) For the purpose of this policy, “instructional material” does not include academic tests or assessments.

All instructional materials, regardless of format, including teachers’ manuals, films, tapes or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation shall be available upon request for inspection by the student’s parent/guardian, or of the student, if he/she is 18 years of age or older. Academic tests and assessments are not included.

A parent may inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to a student.

The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for implementing any procedures necessary to protect the privacy of participating students and to provide parents with access to surveys within a reasonable time before administration or distribution.

Parents shall have the opportunity to exclude their children from participating in such surveys, analyses, or evaluations; requests to exclude students from surveys shall be submitted within 48 hours of the administration of the survey.

Insofar as practicable acknowledges that there may be circumstances in which a research request is made or is approved only after the school year has begun. When this occurs, the school unit should notify parents far

enough in advance for them to access surveys and related instructional materials and to exclude their children from participating, if desired.

Homeless Children and Youth - (Policy # 5118.1)

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act, reauthorized in January 2002, ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. Homeless children and youth are defined as (A) individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and (B) includes: (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement; (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; (iii) children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; (iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii); and unaccompanied youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and are living in the above circumstances.

Children and youth who meet the federal definition of homeless will be provided equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as other children and youth in the District. Homeless children and youth will also have access to educational programs and other services if needed, to enable them to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students in the District are held. Homeless children and youth will not be separated from the mainstream school environment nor will they be denied enrollment based on lack of proof of residency or lack of documentation of required physical examinations and immunizations.

For additional information regarding the provision of education to homeless children or youth contact Denise A. Doolittle, District McKinney-Vento Liaison at 1300 Flanders Road, Mystic, CT 06355 or at 860-572-2152.

Migrant Students - (Policy #6141.312)

The Superintendent will develop and implement a program to address the needs of migrant children in the District. Migrant students are students who move with itinerant workers (parent(s)/guardian(s)) who travel from one area to another in search of work.)

This program will include a means to:

1. Identify migrant students and assess their educational and related health and social needs.
2. Provide a full range of services to migrant students including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes.
3. Provide migrant children with the opportunity to meet the same statewide assessment standards that all children are expected to meet.
4. Provide advocacy and outreach programs to migrant children and their families and professional development for district staff.
5. Provide parents/guardians an opportunity for meaningful participation in the program.

Migrant Education Program for Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Involvement

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation, and evaluation of the migrant program.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of migrant students will receive instruction regarding their role in improving the academic achievement of their children.

For purposes of this policy, the term “migrant” student shall mean a student who is, or whose parent or legal guardian is, a migratory agricultural worker, including a migratory dairy worker and migratory fisher worker, and who, within the preceding thirty-six (36) months, has changed school districts to obtain, or for his/her parents to obtain, agricultural fishing or dairy work.

HEALTH

Asbestos Management

The school district complies with Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AHERA). Specifically accredited/certified persons will be utilized as required to inspect all school buildings for asbestos-containing material. Appropriate action will be taken to control the release of asbestos fibers upon completion of inspections. Corrective steps and long-range maintenance in a management plan shall be made available to all concerned persons and filed with the Department of Public Health.

Employees, parents and the public shall be notified of this plan. Records shall be maintained of the location of all known asbestos and records shall be maintained of all abatements. Further information concerning the school district’s procedures for asbestos control, removal and disposal can be found in the school district offices.

Concussions

Note: Public Act No. 14-66 requires that a coach **MUST** immediately remove a student- athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who (A) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following a suspected blow to the head or body, or (B) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred. **Upon removal of the athlete, a qualified school employee must notify the parent or legal guardian within 24 hours that the student athlete has exhibited the signs and symptoms of a concussion.**

Green Learning Program

Environmentally preferable cleaning products that minimize the potential harmful impact on the environment and human health are chosen for use in the Groton schools. Products are chosen that meet or exceed standards approved by the Federal Department of Administrative Services in consultation with the Commissioner of Environmental Protection. Such products include but are not limited to general purpose cleaners, bathroom cleaners, carpet cleaners, glass cleaners, floor finishes, floor strippers, hand cleaners, and soaps. Employees, students, parents and others entering Groton Public School facilities are prohibited from bringing any cleaning products into the schools.

Pesticide/Herbicide Application Plan

The use of pesticides/herbicides in the Groton schools is regulated. Pesticides/herbicides are used only when there is no alternative and then only after regular school hours and when there are no planned activities except when there is an immediate health threat and then only non-restricted pesticides/herbicides are used. Children are not allowed into the area of use until it is safe to do so per the directions for use of the pesticide/herbicide label.

Parents/guardians and staff may register with the school principal to be notified before the date of application of the active pesticide/herbicide ingredients and the location of the application. Records of pesticide/herbicide use for the past 5 years are available for review at each school.

No pesticides have been used in recent years. Use of herbicides has been limited to athletic fields at Fitch High School.

The pesticide/herbicide management plan is available by contacting the Director of Buildings and Grounds (860-572-2190).

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Disciplinary procedures used in the Groton Public Schools range from informal hearings to expulsion from school. The procedure to be used depends upon the seriousness of the violation, the specific circumstances of the situation and the individual's overall pattern of behavior. A series of minor infractions committed by the same student can be considered a major infraction, as determined by the school administration, as repeated behaviors can have a demoralizing effect on the general student body and staff and be disruptive to the learning environment. In cases where multiple infractions have been committed by a student, the school administration will investigate each infraction and determine the cause for a specific consequence(s). In addition to the usual school procedures, criminal infractions must also be reported by the school administration to the police. The cooperation of every facet of the school community, including staff, students, and parents/guardians, is essential to the maintenance of a positive learning environment at Robert E. Fitch High School.

Discipline policies are instituted and enforced by the Board of Education; please refer to the Board of Education Policies within the Student Handbook. It is the philosophy of Fitch High School to promote a positive atmosphere that helps students to grow academically, socially and emotionally. Our entire staff is dedicated to providing students with a safe, productive and enjoyable environment. We encourage all students and parents to become allies in this endeavor. Like any school, FHS has its share of rules and regulations designed not to limit freedoms, but rather to ensure that the rights and opportunities of both students and staff are protected. This section is intended to enable students and parents to better understand our expectations for student conduct, and to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect. To that end, general responsibilities for school personnel and expectations for student behavior are provided below:

SCHOOL PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to serve the student body well, the school staff has the responsibility to:

- provide a safe and productive learning environment;
 - be informed about and knowledgeable of school rules and policies, consistent with legal requirements and Board of Education policies;
- maintain discipline in a fair, consistent and equitable manner;
 - conduct disciplinary hearings and conferences in an impartial and objective manner; and
- resolve disciplinary problems in a fair, consistent and equitable manner.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

In order to assist the school administration and staff in their efforts to provide a positive, productive school environment conducive to learning, the student body is expected to . . .

- understand that they are responsible for their actions and that inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated;
- be informed about and abide by school and Board of Education rules and policies;
 - behave in a responsible and appropriate manner during all school functions held on or off school grounds;

- attend school regularly and be prepared for class by completing daily assignments and make-up work;
- continue to develop a moral and ethical sensibility as well as practice moral and ethical behavior;
- learn about, understand, and respect diversity and differences among all groups; and
- understand, as well as apply, the basic principles of healthful daily living.

Thus, the Groton Public Schools Board of Education expects the highest standards of conduct from all students at all times, whether in school, out of school, or at a school-sponsored activity. Proper student behavior is obligatory and conduct incompatible with or disruptive to the educational process is unacceptable and will be addressed by the school administration and staff accordingly.

For purposes of organizing the consequences for student behavior that is unacceptable, potential infractions have been classified into four broad categories listed below. These categories are not mutually exclusive because the same infraction or behavior can conceivably fall into more than one category. Infractions within each category range from very minor to very serious or major infractions. The behavior/infraction charts list disciplinary consequences and reference relevant Board of Education policies.

Section I: Infractions or behaviors that jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of individuals in the school community

Section II: Infractions that demonstrate a lack of honesty, respect, and courtesy toward individuals in the school community

Section III: Infractions that demonstrate a lack of respect for personal and public property and possessions

Section IV: Infractions that demonstrate a lack of respect for maintaining an orderly teaching and learning environment

Code of Conduct Definitions

Arson

Arson is the intentional attempt or act of starting a fire in the school on the school bus or on school property. Reference Section I.N. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts

Assembly Conduct

Assemblies are held for the education and enjoyment of students, who are asked to give every courtesy to the speaker and to the program. It is the responsibility of each student to maintain high standards of conduct. Violations will result in a denial of assembly privileges and may be cause for further disciplinary action.

Assault

Intent to cause physical injury to another person, causing such injury to such person or to a third party; or recklessly causing physical injury to another person; or causing physical injury to another person by means of a deadly weapon, a dangerous instrument, or an electronic defense weapon. Reference Sections I.K. and in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Bigotry

Derogatory terms, **intentionally or unintentionally directed**, should not be used in the school setting. Examples include slurs, equating animals to a certain racial group, offensive language targeting a specific group of people, etc. Verbal demeaning for one's race, sexuality, gender identity, or religion. Taking an aspect of someone's identity to **demean/degrade** another. Students who exhibit such behaviors will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Reference Section II.F the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- a) causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
- b) places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- c) creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- d) infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- e) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but is not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Bullying may take many forms, such as, but not limited to:

1. physical violence and attacks;
2. taunts, name-calling or discriminatory slurs, including but not limited to insulting, disparaging or derogatory comments regarding a person's race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, national or ethnic background, disability, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, or a student's association with a person or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics;
3. threats and intimidation;
4. extortion or stealing of money and possessions;
5. cyberbullying.

Reference Section I.G. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Bus Misconduct

All students are extended the privilege of riding to and from school and to school activities on the school bus. The bus driver has the responsibility of maintaining orderly behavior of students on school buses and will report, in writing, all misconduct to the transportation services manager and the school administrator. Video cameras may be used to record student behavior on the school bus and videotapes of students' behaviors may be used to support disciplinary action. Reference Section I.A. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Cheating

"Sharing" student work or collaborating on assignments that should be individually produced; using crib notes during assessments; sharing information about an assessment with students who have not completed the assessment; obtaining or passing unauthorized copies of or information about tests, quizzes, or other course assignments; stealing or unauthorized copying of another student's answers, homework, notes, or course materials. Reference Section II.B. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Controlled Substance

Controlled substance means a drug or other substance identified under schedules I, II, III, IV, or V in Section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 USC 812 (c)). 34 CFR 300.530 (i)(1). "Illegal drug" means a controlled substance, but does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed healthcare professional, or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under that Act or under any other provision of federal law. 34 CFR 300.530 (i)(2).

Cutting Classes during the School Day

Students are expected to attend each of their classes every day unless given permission from the school administrator to be absent from a class for a specific purpose. Reference Section IV.I. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone, or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

Dangerous Instruments

Dangerous instrument is any instrument, article, substance or device which is capable of causing death or serious physical injury, or which poses a serious threat to school personnel, students or property, including by way of example, but not limited to any knife with a metal blade or a razor, utility knife, box cutter, or any instrument, article or substance which, under the circumstances in which it is used or attempted or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury to persons or property. (See also Firearms, Deadly Weapons, and Weapons.) Reference Section I.J. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Deadly Weapon

Deadly weapon is any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles, as defined in C.G.S. 53a-3(6). Reference Section I.K and I.O. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts

Detentions

Students may be given detentions by classroom teachers for tardiness to class, misbehaving in class, failure to do assigned work or similar offenses. Teachers may assign classroom detentions where the students must report to their classroom from 2:30 -3:30 p.m. Administrative detentions may also be given ranging from 1-3 hours. For more serious infractions, Saturday detentions will be given for, but not limited to, failing to attend detentions, bus misconduct, possession/use of tobacco, vandalism, repeated tardiness to school, cutting classes, and unauthorized areas. Saturday detention will run from 8:00- 12:00. Alternative activities may be substituted for traditional Saturday detention. i.e., restitution, restorative practices.

Dress Code Violation

Students are expected to dress in a manner that is suitable for a school environment. Furthermore, students should dress so that their clothing does not jeopardize the health or safety of the wearers or others, or cause distraction or disruption of the educational process as determined by the school administration. Clothing advertising drugs or alcohol is inappropriate for school wear. Footwear and shirts must be worn at all times. Clothing should be neat and clean. The wearing of head coverings, except for religious purposes in the school building is not allowed. Any student dressed inappropriately will not be admitted to class. Earbuds or other listening devices should not be visible at any time except when ALLOWED in the cafeteria. Refer to F.H.S. Dress code visual. Reference Section II.A. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol

Possession, use, sale, or transfer of drugs, alcohol, tobacco products including E-cigs, Vapes, etc., or drug paraphernalia, or students under the influence of drugs or alcohol, is prohibited at all times on school property, school buses, and at school-sanctioned activities. Offenders will be referred for prosecution, suspended from school and recommended for expulsion. A student may be required, as part of disciplinary sanction, to complete an appropriate rehabilitation program of community service. Students and parents should be aware that lockers and student vehicles on school property may be searched by school authorities for the location of alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, or weapons. Please note the Board of Education policy on “Breathalyzer Testing” on page 42 of this handbook.

- **Drugs:** Includes, but shall not be limited to, any medicinal preparation (prescription and non-prescription), and any controlled substance whose possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption is illegal under state and/or federal law. Reference Sections I.D., I.E., I.L. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts
- **Medical Marijuana:** Although possession and use of marijuana for certain medical conditions, consistent with Connecticut's P.A. 12-55, "An Act Concerning the Palliative Use of Marijuana," is no longer a crime in Connecticut, the possession and use of marijuana remains illegal under federal law. Consistent with federal law, including the Controlled Substances Act and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, the use and or possession of marijuana continues to be prohibited while a student is on a school bus, at school, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity. The District will continue to enforce its policies regarding controlled substances and any students who violate District policy prohibiting the use, sale or possession of illegal drugs in District facilities and school property will be subject to disciplinary and criminal action.
- **Drug Paraphernalia:** Equipment, products and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use or designed for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing or concealing, or injecting, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise introducing controlled drugs or controlled substances into the human body, including but not limited to all items specified in C.G.S. Section 21a-240(20)(A), such as “bongs,” pipes, “roach clips,” miniature cocaine spoons, crack cocaine vials, tobacco rolling papers, and any object or container used, intended or designed for use in storing, concealing, possessing, distributing or selling controlled drugs or controlled substances. Reference Section I.L. in the Consequence Charts.

Emergency Removal from School

Emergency situations under which the continued presence of the student in school poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that a hearing may be delayed until a time as soon after the exclusion of the student as possible.

Expulsions

Expulsion is the exclusion from school privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, and is deemed to include, but not be limited to, exclusion from the school to which the student in grades three to twelve, inclusive was assigned at the time the disciplinary action was taken, provided the exclusion does not extend beyond a period of one calendar year.

Exclusions

Exclusion is any denial of public-school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.

Falsifying Signatures, Excuses or Other School Documents, or any Deliberate False Statement Whether Written or Stated

Students found to have falsified a signature, an attendance excuse or other school documents, or to have made any deliberate false statement, whether written or stated are subject to disciplinary consequences. Reference Section III.C. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Fighting/Physical Altercation/Physical Aggression

A planned or unplanned encounter which results in a student or students assaulting, or attempting to assault, another individual(s) in a manner that is not reasonably necessary for self-defense. Reference Section I.I. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Firearm

Firearm is any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any firearm muffler or firearm silencer, or any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas such as a bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine or any similar device, and excluding an antique firearm, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, as amended.

Gang Symbolism/Involvement

Student behavior, dress, signing or symbolism intended to represent gang affiliation will not be tolerated on school grounds or at school-sponsored events. Additionally, gang-related behavior/symbolism which takes place off school grounds and/or on the internet will not be tolerated. Violation of this policy may result in discipline, including suspension or expulsion. The Groton School District works in conjunction with the Groton Police Department to determine what is gang-related.

Hazing

Any conduct or method of initiation, on or off campus, into any student organization or team, whether on public or private property, which endangers or creates a risk of harm to the physical or emotional health or well-being of any student or person, including any activity that causes or requires an individual to perform a task that is in violation of the law or of school district policies. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any treatment or forced physical activity that is likely to adversely affect the health or safety of any student or other person, or that subjects such student or other person to emotional stress, including deprivation of sleep or rest, confinement to a restricted area, the threat of ostracism, or extended isolation. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not in any way sanction or excuse the behavior nor lessen the prohibition contained in this policy. Reference Section I.F. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Leaving School Grounds without Administrator's Permission:

Students are not allowed to leave school grounds without the approval of the school administrator. Once present on campus, students are not permitted to leave until the end of their scheduled day. Seniors only may apply for early dismissal at the beginning of each semester. Reference Section IV.L. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Libelous, Obscene, or Defamatory Materials or Literature, Posting or Distributing

Students are expected to respect the dignity, rights, and written expression of others and are prohibited from posting or distributing libelous, obscene, or defamatory materials or literature in the school, on the school bus, or at any school-sponsored activity. Reference Section II.E. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Martial Arts Weapon

Martial arts weapon is a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or chinese star, as defined in C.G.S. 53a-3(21).

Misleading Information and/or Obstructing an Investigation

During the school year, it is fairly routine that faculty, staff, and administration have to conduct investigations on a wide range of issues, including but not limited to: school safety, lost books, grade discrepancies, unaccountable whereabouts, student-to-student conflicts, stolen property, etc. When such an investigation is being conducted, it is critical that all parties involved provide accurate information in order for the issue to be resolved. In the event that it becomes evident that a student deliberately misled or provided false information during an investigation, that student will be referred to administration for disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.

Off-School Misconduct

A student's conduct off school grounds and during non-school time including "online" behavior via the internet or text/electronic message can still be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion if there is a reasonable likelihood that the student's return to school would contribute to a disruptive effect on the educational process. A threat to the school's orderly operations, the safety and welfare of the people who work or study at school, and the safety of school property are examples. Such off-school misconduct may include, but not be limited to, the use, possession, sale, or distribution of dangerous weapons or illegal drugs, or threatening, or harassing, or violent conduct.

Obscene, Vulgar, Abusive, Inflammatory, or Disrespectful Language, Gesture or Behavior Directed Toward any Staff Member or Student

Verbal or abusive gestures toward a staff member or student will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Students who exhibit such behaviors will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Reference Section II.D. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Physical Contact, Inappropriate (Pushing or Shoving another Student-no physical injury occurs):

Any physical contact which has the potential to result in emotional or physical injury. Reference Section I.B. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Plagiarism

Intentionally or unintentionally presenting another's work as your own; using direct quotes, paraphrases, and specific ideas of another person without explicit citation; obtaining and submitting work from the Internet or other sources as your own; supplying/selling your work, or part of your work to another; inventing/counterfeiting sources; purchasing or copying pre-written papers, etc. Reference Section II.B. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Presence on School Grounds After School Hours

Students are only permitted on school grounds for school sponsored activities. Any other presence is considered trespassing and may result in school related consequences and/or policy action.

Refusal to adhere to a staff member directive: open defiance of a teacher or any school employee

A refusal to adhere to a staff member's directive and showing open defiance toward a teacher, administrator, or any school employee will not be tolerated. Reference Section II.C. in the Behavior Infraction Charts.

Removal

Removal is the exclusion from a classroom for all or part of a single class period, provided the exclusion does not extend beyond ninety (90) minutes.

School-Sponsored Activity

Any activity sponsored, recognized, or authorized by the Board of Education or its administrative agents, including activities both on and off school property.

Search and Seizure

When there are reasonable grounds to believe that a student is in possession of drugs or any object that is illegal or in violation of any Board of Education policy, there is an obligation on the part of the school personnel to search for and seize such drugs and illegal objects. Such search and seizure may involve school lockers, cars on school property, clothing, purses, book bags, books, and other personal property. All confiscated drugs or other illegal objects will be turned over to the local law enforcement officials.

Serious Bodily Injury

The Part B regulations state that the term serious bodily injury has the same definition found at Section 1365(h)(3) of the U.S. criminal code. 34 CFR 300.530 (i)(3). That provision defines serious bodily injury as bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death; extreme physical pain; protracted and obvious disfigurement; or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. 18 USC 1365 (h)(3); 71 Fed. Reg. 46,722 (2006).

Seriously Disruptive of the Educational Process

The term seriously disruptive of the educational process, means a marked interruption or severe impediment of the day-to-day operation of the school. In making such a determination the administration may consider, but shall not be limited to: whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school; whether other students from the school were involved, or whether there was any gang involvement; whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon, as defined in C.G.S. 29-38, and whether any injuries occurred; and whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol or drugs. This definition of “A seriously disruptive of the educational process” shall apply to all portions of this Policy.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The Board of Education prohibits any form of sexual harassment of employees or students, both by employees and students. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, including but not limited to:

- insulting or degrading remarks or conduct, that threaten or suggest that an individual’s submission to or rejection of unwelcome conduct will in some way influence a decision regarding that person’s education or employment;
- creating an offensive, hostile, or intimidating educational or work environment;
- interfering in any way with that person’s educational or work performance;
- includes the use of social media devices as a tool for delivery of such harassment.

Any student may request Sexual Harassment Procedures/Report Forms from the Principal’s office in the event of suspected sexual harassment. Sexual harassment by an employee or student will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion. Reference Section I.H. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Substance-Abuse Assessment

An evaluation conducted by a professional to determine the student’s overall health and condition in relation to use of a controlled substance or drug.

Suspensions

Suspension is the exclusion from school privileges, or from transportation services only, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, provided the exclusion does not extend beyond the end of the school year in which the suspension was imposed.

Out-of-School Suspension

Students may be suspended from school or school buses by an administrator for conduct which endangers persons or property, disrupts the education process, or violates school or bus rules. Students will not be allowed to attend classes, are not permitted on school grounds, and may not participate in school activities including

athletics, concerts, dances, etc. Students may be suspended for up to 10 days at a time. Whenever a student has been suspended cumulatively for 20 days, or for the 4th time, the Superintendent of Schools will be notified and a recommendation may be made that the student be expelled. Students are allowed to make up work missed while on suspension. Refer to the full Board of Education Policy on Suspension/Expulsion for more information.

In-School Suspension

In-School Suspension is the exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school, provided the exclusion does not extend beyond the end of the school year in which the in-school suspension was imposed. Suspensions Reference Section IV.N. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Suspension, Out-of-School – Violations of (Trespassing)

Failure to comply with an out-of-school suspension will result in an extension of the suspension or an additional suspension. A student's presence on school grounds while serving an out-of-school suspension can result in notification of trespassing to the local law enforcement officials. Reference Section IV.A in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Tardy To Class During the School Day

Students tardy to class during the school day will be issued passes to class only if there are extenuating circumstances that excuse their tardiness. Teachers will not allow students admittance to class without a tardy pass from the office. 3 unexcused tardies will be considered as unexcused absences to class and counts as an absence. Reference Section IV.H. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Tardy To School

Being late to school, class or an activity without permission of school personnel. Students who arrive at school after the designated start of the school day will not be admitted without administrative approval. Reference Section IV.G. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Theft or Possession of Stolen Goods

Stealing another person's possessions is illegal. School administration strongly encourages students to keep expensive items at home. A student involved in stealing or possession of stolen goods shall receive disciplinary consequences and may be referred to the local law enforcement officials. Reference Section III.E. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Trespassing

Unauthorized presence on the school premises while school is not in session is considered trespassing. Students are not allowed on school premises without permission after regular school hours or after scheduled activities in which they are participating. Unsupervised after-school activities are not allowed on school premises. Reference Section IV.A. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Truancy

Parents, guardians, or other persons having control of children between the ages of five and eighteen must assure that their children attend school "regularly during the hours and terms the public school in the district wherein such student resides is in session" per Connecticut General Statutes. Students under eighteen years of age are subject to mandatory attendance laws, unless the student is seventeen years of age and their parent or guardian consents to their withdrawal, and personally appears at the Board of Education offices and signs a withdrawal form indicating such consent. Connecticut law defines "truant" as a student who has four unexcused absences in a month or ten unexcused absences in a year. A student five to six years of age will not be considered truant if the parent or guardian has appeared personally at the Board of Education offices and affirmatively exercised the option of not sending the child to school at five or six years of age. If a parent or

guardian of an expelled student chooses not to enroll the student in an alternative educational program, the student shall not be considered truant. Failure to comply with the requirements that children attend the public schools is a violation of law, unless the parent or guardian provides alternative instruction by enrolling the student in a private school or in a home school program after withdrawing the student from the public school if the student has been enrolled. Failure to comply with this policy will result in consequences. Reference Section IV.B. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Unauthorized area (going to parking lot or being outside the school without prior approval)

Students are not permitted in unauthorized areas of the school building or campus, including but not limited to (1) unauthorized stairwells/hallways, (2) any area adjacent to the school building including parking lots, and (3) athletic fields/areas without permission. Reference Section IV.M. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Vandalism

The willful destruction or otherwise injuring of property under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education is prohibited. Any student discovered to have committed an act of vandalism of school property will make full financial restitution for repair or replacement. The parent / guardian of a minor child responsible for vandalism will be held liable for damages under the provisions of Connecticut State law. Damaged property paid for by the student remains the property of the school. Any group or school organization responsible for an act of vandalism will be held liable for damages. (See also Graffiti) Reference Section III.D. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Verbal Assault or Threatening Physical Harm

Any statement or act, oral or written, which can reasonably be expected to induce apprehension of danger or bodily injury or harm to another person, student or staff member. Reference Section I.C. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Visitors to School during the School Day

All visitors must check in at the school Safety Officer desk upon entering the building and cleared by security staff with a pass to a specific destination in the building. Students are generally not allowed to have guests. If an exception is made, permission must be obtained from the school administrator in advance of the scheduled visit. The school administrator reserves the right to restrict the number of visitors at any time during the school day or the school year. Reference Section IV.C. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Weapon

The definition of a weapon under the IDEA mirrors the definition of a "dangerous weapon" found in the U.S. criminal code. 34 CFR 300.530 (i)(4). The criminal code defines "dangerous weapon" as "a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than 2.5 inches in length." 18 USC 930 (g)(2). Reference Section I.J. in the Behavior/Infraction Charts.

Discipline Practices

Teacher Managed Behaviors:

When the discipline process starts in the classroom there is accountability to the teacher's expectations and this leads to the foundation of students recognizing that high expectations will be held and that the teacher cares about their ability to learn in a safe space.

*Classroom Disruptions or Impacts to the learning environment will be handled by the classroom teacher for 1st and 2nd offense situations. **Document these as minor incidents within the Educator's Handbook.***

Bathroom Pass Abuse: Anytime the student has been gone for a prolonged period of time please check in with the student. If you suspect a student is abusing pass privileges or wandering the halls, please put it in the Educator's Handbook so administration can check Securly Pass data.

Behavior/Infraction	Grades 9-12 Consequences
<p>Off Task Behavior (engagement in any task other than the assigned task or ongoing activity - may include talking, drawing, head down, nonresponsive, etc.)</p> <p><u><i>Reminder: Document 1st and 2nd offense within educator's handbook as minor incident</i></u></p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbal Warnings ● Redirection ● Proximity control ● Nonverbal cue to correct behavior <p>2nd Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact home ● AM/PM Teacher detention <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Referral to administration ● Parent/student/counselor/teacher conferences
<p>Not Prepared for Class (instruction/materials)</p> <p><u><i>Reminder: Document 1st and 2nd offense within educator's handbook as minor incident</i></u></p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Address the student need ● Student conference ● Verbal warnings <p>2nd Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact school counseling for support ● Utilize school resources <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Email administration ● Parent/student/counselor meeting ● CTL Pass to Teacher to catch up/organize/etc. ● Parent/student/counselor meeting
<p>Inappropriate Language (low level profanity) - not directed at anyone and there is no impact on student emotions. <u><i>This does not include words of bigotry.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Reminder: Document 1st and 2nd offense within educator's handbook as minor incident</i></u></p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No attention (if possible) ● Redirection ● Nonverbal cue to correct behavior ● Verbal warnings <p>2nd Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student conference <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Referral to administration ● Email home ● AM/PM Detention
<p>Disruptive Behaviors (Behaviors that impact the classroom environment or stop the learning process)</p> <p><u><i>Reminder: Document 1st and 2nd offense within educator's handbook as minor incident</i></u></p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Redirection ● Proximity control ● Nonverbal cue to correct behavior ● Verbal warnings ● Seat change <p>2nd Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seat change ● Teacher/Student Hallway conference

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact home ● PM Teacher detention <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Utilize school resources ● Parent/student/counselor/teacher conferences ● Referral to administration (Educator’s Handbook)
<p>Disrespect (Making targeted inappropriate comments, dismissive of teacher authority*)</p> <p><u>Reminder: Document 1st and 2nd offense within educator’s handbook as minor incident</u></p> <p><i>See separate categories for bigotry/harassment/bullying</i></p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No attention when possible ● Redirection ● Proximity control ● Nonverbal cue to correct behavior ● Verbal warnings ● Seat change ● Student conference ● Contact home ● PM Teacher detention ● Restorative conference with administration/teacher/student <p>2nd Offense/Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact home ● PM Teacher detention ● Parent/student/counselor/teacher conferences ● Referral to Admin (Educator’s Handbook) ● Restorative conference with administration/teacher/student

Administration Managed Behaviors

Administrative Discipline Process Note: The goal of our discipline practices is to reduce disruptions in the school setting and provide all students with a safe learning environment. In addition, learning opportunities will always be provided for students that are unable to follow behavior expectations. The discipline code of conduct below is a guideline that administrators will use in deciding the discipline of students at FHS. Please note that discipline is at the discretion of the administrator once the incident is fully investigated. The resulting discipline assigned could follow the guidelines exactly or it could blend other learning opportunities such as mediations or restorative practices.

Section I: Behaviors/Infractions that jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of individuals in the school community (*Parents are notified for any consequence of a detention or higher*)

	Behavior/Infraction	Grades 9-12 Consequences
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I. A.	Bus Misconduct Board of Education Policy References: #5131.1 Bus Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School Activities	1st Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conference with administration and parent contact ● Detention ● Bus seat assignment 2nd Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Detention ● Suspension of bus privileges for 10 days Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 hour detention ● Suspension of bus privileges for up to one year
I. B.	*Inappropriate Physical Contact (Pushing, Shoving Another Student – no “serious” physical injury occurs) Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities	1st Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Detention ● Reflective assignment ● Restorative process Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1-3 day suspension (ISS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) ● Referral to SRO
I. C.	*Verbal Assault or Threatening Physical Harm/Other Aggressive Conduct Board of Education Policy References: #5131.21 students-threatening behavior/threatening acts #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities	1st Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2-5 day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Potential referral to SRO ● Restorative process Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5-10 day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Potential police referral ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Possible recommendation for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education

	Behavior/Infraction	Grades 9-12 Consequences
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<p>I. D.</p>	<p>*Possession of Tobacco, Tobacco Products, Tobacco Paraphernalia, Vapes, E-Cig</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131.6 Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confiscation of paraphernalia/test of paraphernalia for substances ● Reflective assignment ● 2-day suspension (ISS) ● Referral to SRO <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3-day suspension (ISS) ● Restriction of passes possible ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Referral to cessation program (FHS CARES) option ● Meeting with Parent ● Referral to SRO
<p>I. E.</p>	<p>*Using Tobacco, Tobacco Products (Smoking, Chewing Tobacco), or Tobacco Paraphernalia, Vapes, E-Cig</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131.6 Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3-day suspension (ISS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Referral to cessation program (FHS CARES) option ● Referral to SRO <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5- day suspension (ISS) ● Referral to cessation program (FHS CARES) option ● Referral to SRO ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension
<p>I. F.</p>	<p>*Hazing</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131.91 Hazing</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2-5 day suspension (OSS) ● Superintendent notification ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Referral to SRO <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 - 10 day suspension (OSS) ● Superintendent notification ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Referral to SRO ● May be recommended for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education

<p>I. G.</p>	<p>*Bullying</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131.911 Bullying</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2- 10 day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Superintendent notification ● Potential referral to Student Services Staff ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● May be recommended for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular activities beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education ● Potential Referral to SRO
<p>I. H.</p>	<p>*Sexual harassment</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #4118.112 Sexual Harassment</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Referral to central office for investigation by district Title IX officer ● Implement Safety Plan for all involved ● Up to 10-day suspension (after Title IX investigation concludes) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Superintendent notification ● Potential referral to Student Services Staff ● May be recommended for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be further excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular activities beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education ● Referral to SRO
<p>I. I.</p>	<p>*Fighting/physical altercation</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 to 10 day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Superintendent notification ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Referral to SRO ● Restorative process <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10 day suspension (OSS) ● Superintendent notification ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● May be recommended for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education ● Referral to SRO

<p>I. J.</p>	<p>*Possession of weapon, deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, firearm or facsimile or replica of firearm</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #1700 Dangerous Instruments/weapons</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10-day suspension (OSS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Recommended for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular activities beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education ● Referral to SRO
<p>I. K.</p>	<p>*Assault</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10-day suspension (OSS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Recommended for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular activities beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education ● Referral to SRO
<p>I. L.</p>	<p>*Use or possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, inhalants, performance enhancing substances</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131.6 Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10- day suspension (OSS) ● superintendent notification ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Referral to counseling supports ● Referral to SRO <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10-day suspension (OSS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Recommendation for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular activities beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education ● Referral to SRO
<p>I. M.</p>	<p>*Sale or distribution of drugs: (drugs, alcohol, inhalants, performance enhancing substances)</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131.6 Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10-day suspension (OSS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Recommendation for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular activities beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education ● Referral to SRO

<p>I. N.</p>	<p>*Arson</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p>#5131.5 Vandalism</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10-day suspension (OSS) ● Superintendent notification ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Recommendation for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular activities beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education ● Referral to SRO
<p>I.O.</p>	<p>Bigotry- Intentional or Unintentional use of derogatory terms</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent and Student Meeting ● Reflective assignment ● 3 Hour Detention ● Possible Restorative meeting <p>2nd and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Up to 10 days of suspension depending on severity ● Parent/student meeting ● Reflective assignment ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Possible recommendation for mentoring by SEL tutors ● Repeated series offenses will result in possible recommendation for meeting with the School Principal and possible recommendation for expulsion.
<p>I. P.</p>	<p>*Hate Crime</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10-day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Superintendent notification ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Referral for expulsion ● Referral to SRO
<p>I.Q.</p>	<p>*Sexual Acts/Misconduct</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 to 10 day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Potential recommendation for expulsion ● Excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with expulsion and may be <i>further</i> excluded from any or all co-curricular and extracurricular activities beyond the academic expulsion period per action of Board of Education ● Referral to SRO

I. R.	Other serious misconduct in Section I as determined by the school administrator *Damaging school property, *Verbal altercation, *Engagement in conduct that is disruptive to the educational process of the school, *Throwing objects *Misconduct in non-class setting Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities	1st and Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consequences to be determined on a case-by-case basis and may lead to detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion • Parent or guardian notification • Potential referral to SRO
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Section II: Behaviors/Infractions that demonstrate a lack of honesty, respect, and courtesy toward individuals in the school community (*Parents are notified for any consequence of a detention or higher*)

	Behavior/Infraction	Grades 9-12 Consequences
II. A.	Student dress code violation Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities	1st Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put on their own alternative clothing • Borrow alternative clothing from a peer or the school • Parent brings alternative clothing for the student to wear • Failure to comply may require disciplinary action Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change to appropriate clothing • Parent contact • Disciplinary action for repeated offenses
II.B.	Academic integrity-cheating/plagiarism Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities	1st Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with teacher and/or administrator • Grade of zero for the work with potential opportunity for retake/resubmit for less credit • Teacher informs the parent/guardian, counselor, and administration Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with teacher and/or administrator • Grade of zero for the work. No opportunity to earn credit on the original assignment. • Teacher informs the parent/guardian, counselor, and administration
II. C.	Insubordination: refusal to adhere to staff member directive/open defiance of a teacher or any school employee Board of Education Policy References: #5090.1.4 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities	1st and Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-3 hour detention and/or 1-2 day suspension (ISS/OSS) • Reflective assignment • Restorative process with all involved • Potential meeting with student, parent, administrator and other appropriate staff members

II. D.	Obscene, vulgar, abusive, inflammatory or disrespectful language, gestures, or behavior directed toward any staff member or student Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities	1st Offense and Subsequent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1-10 day suspension (ISS/OSS) based on severity of act ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Restorative process
II. E.	Posting Or Distributing Obscene, or defamatory material or literature Board of Education Policy References: #5145.2 Freedom of Speech/Expression #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities	1st and Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1-10 day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Reflective assignment ● Restorative practices ● Potential referral to SRO
II. G.	Other serious misconduct as determined by school administrator Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities	1st and Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consequences to be determined on case-by-case basis and may lead to detentions, in-school- suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion ● Parent or guardian notification ● Potential referral to SRO

Section III: Behaviors/Infractions that demonstrate a lack of respect for personal and public property and possessions (*Parents are notified for any consequence of a detention or higher*)

	Behavior/Infraction	Grades 9-12 Consequences
III.A.	Inappropriate use of school technology (Accessing inappropriate websites) Board of Education Policy References: #6141.321 Technology Appropriate Use #5114 suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities	1st and Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2- 3 hour/ result in a 2–5 day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away)during suspension ● May be excluded from independent use of school technology ● May be recommended to Board of Education for expulsion ● Potential referral to SRO

III.B.	Inappropriate use of technology in extended school community (Cyber-bullying) Board of Education Policy References: #5131.913 Cyber-bullying #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities	1st and subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2–5-day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Superintendent notification ● Referral to SRO ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) during suspension
III.C.	Falsifying signatures, excuses or other school documents, or any deliberate false statement whether written or stated Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities	1st Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent Guardian notification ● 3-hour detention
III.D.	*Vandalism Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5131.5 Vandalism #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities	1st Offense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 to 5-day suspension (ISS/OSS) ● Superintendent notification ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● Restitution required ● May be recommended to Board of Education for expulsion ● Referral to SRO
III.F.	*Theft or possession of stolen goods Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities	1st and Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2-5 day (ISS/OSS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension ● May be recommended to Board of Education for expulsion ● Referral to SRO
III.G.	Other serious misconduct in Section III as determined by school administrator Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities	1st and Subsequent Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consequences to be determined on case-by-case basis and may lead to detentions, in-school- suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion ● Potential referral to SRO

Section IV: Behaviors/Infractions that demonstrate a lack of respect for maintaining an orderly teaching and learning environment (*Parents are notified for any consequence of a detention or higher*)

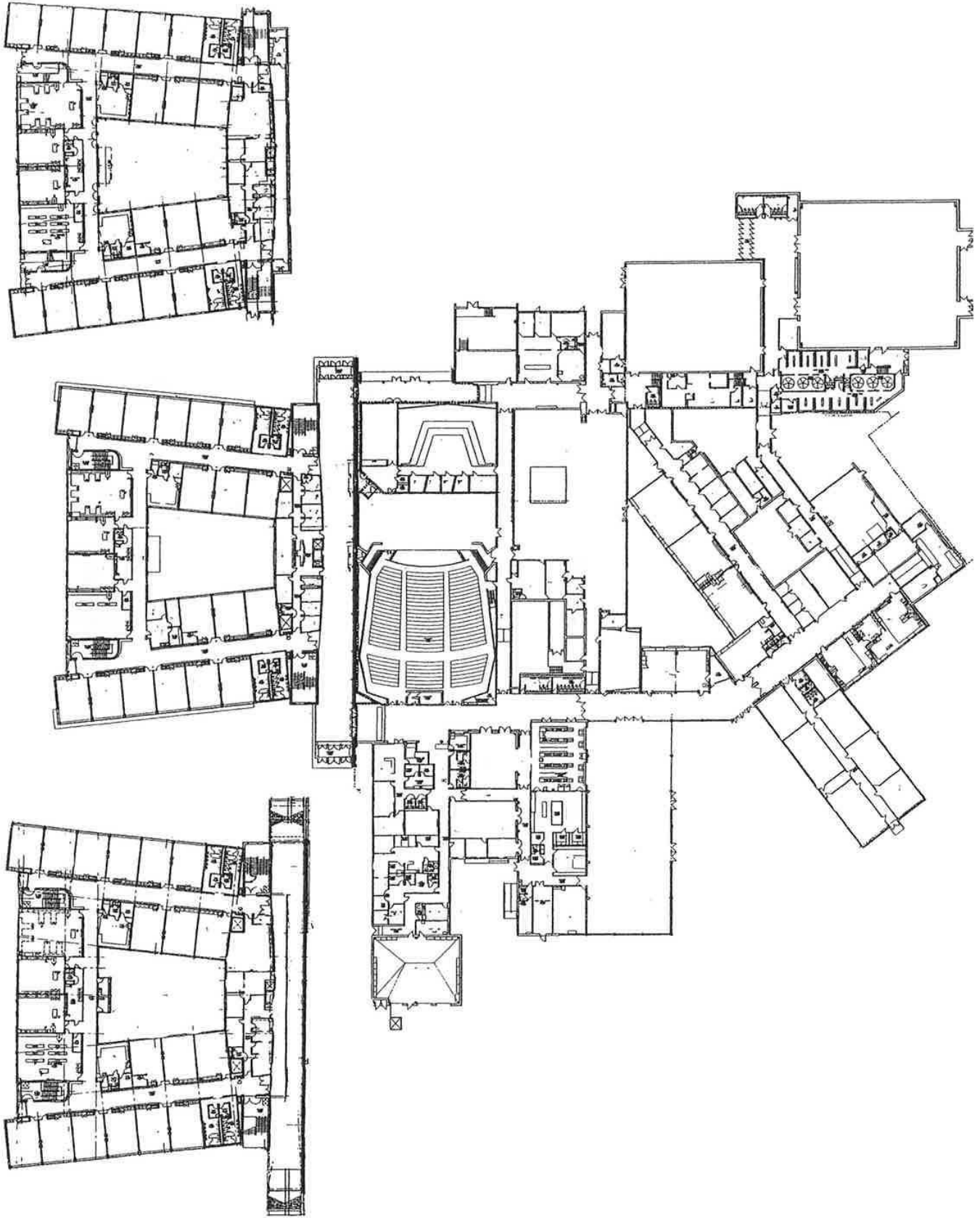
	Behavior/Infraction	Grades 9-12 Consequences
IV.A.	<p>Trespassing and violations of out-of-school suspensions</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written/verbal warning and removal from school premises ● May be required to serve extended or additional suspension ● Referral to SRO
IV.B.	<p>Truancy</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5113 Truancy</p>	<p>1st and Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Credit or promotion may be withheld ● Parent or guardian notification ● Home Visits ● Superintendent notification ● Social agencies notified, as appropriate ● Potential referral to SRO
IV.C.	<p>Bringing unauthorized visitors to school during the school day</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: # 5131 Student Conduct</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5- 10 days of suspension (OSS) ● Visitor must leave school grounds ● May be recommended to Superintendent for expulsion ● Referral to SRO <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suspension 10 days OSS ● May be recommended to Superintendent for expulsion ● Referral to SRO
IV.D.	<p>Cafeteria misconduct</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remove from area and/or loss of cafeteria privileges ● Possible detention ● 1-day suspension (ISS) <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Additional loss of cafeteria privileges ● 3 hour detention or 1-3 day suspension (ISS) ● Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension

	Behavior/Infraction	Grades 9-12 Consequences
IV.E	<p>Inappropriate use of electronic communication devices (cellphones, other personal devices, earbuds, smart watches)</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #6141.321 Appropriate use of Technology</p> <p>#5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st and 2nd offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The office will confiscate the device for the rest of the school day The parent picks up the device 3 hour detention 1 week loss of privileges <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 week loss of privileges Saturday detention (4 hour)
IV.F.	<p>Tardy to school-first class/period (After 7:45 am, students are to report to the Tardy Kiosk)</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5113 student attendance #5131 Student Conduct</p>	<p>1st Unexcused Tardy Referral: (6 tardies)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact home by Attendance Office <p>Tardy and ALL Subsequent Unexcused Tardy Referrals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5 hour detention Parent contact and potential meeting with administrator to make a plan for arriving to school on time
IV.G.	<p>Tardy to class during the school day Board of Education Policy References: #5113 student attendance #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p><u>Reminder: Document 1st and 2nd offense within educator's handbook as minor incident</u></p>	<p>1st Offense (after three tardies to a class)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher assigned detention <p>2nd Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher assigned detention <p>Subsequent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Referral to Administrator 1.5-3 hour detention
IV.H.	<p>Pass Use for Extended Time without Permission (less than 30 minutes) Board of Education Policy References: #5113 student attendance #5131 Student Conduct</p> <p><u>Reminder: Document 1st and 2nd offense within educator's handbook as minor incident</u></p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher detention <p>2nd Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Referral to Administrator 1.5 hour detention <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Referral to Administrator 3 hour detention

IV.I.	<p>Cutting classes during the school day (More than 30 minutes)</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5 hour detention <p>2nd Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 hour detention <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 day suspension (ISS) • excluded from all co-curricular and extracurricular activities concurrent with suspension
IV.J.	<p>Failure to serve teacher detention</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5 office detention <p>2nd Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 hour office detention
IV.K.	<p>Failure to serve office detention</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 hour detention <p>2nd offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 hour detention
IV.L.	<p>Leaving school grounds without administrator's permission</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5090.1.4 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 hour detention/ISS • Potential loss of parking privileges <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 day suspension (ISS) • Potential loss of parking privileges for remainder of school year • Parent or guardian notification/parent meeting with administrator • Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension
IV.M.	<p>Unauthorized area violation (being outside the school or in unauthorized areas of the building without prior approval) including walking out of class without permission</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 hour detention <p>2nd Offense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 hour detention/ISS <p>Subsequent Offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2- 5 day suspension (ISS/OSS) • Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension

IV.N.	<p>Failure to serve in-school suspension or misbehaving during in-school suspension</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Conduct #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p>1st Offense and subsequent offenses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 days suspension (ISS/OSS) • Excluded from school grounds/all school sponsored events (home or away) while on suspension • Converting of in-school suspension to out-of-school suspension
IV.O.	<p>Other serious misconduct in Section IV as determined by the school administrator</p> <p>Board of Education Policy References: #5131 Student Misconduct in Schools #5114 Suspension/Expulsion/exclusion from School/School Activities</p>	<p><u>1st and Subsequent Offenses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consequences to be determined on case-by-case basis and may lead to detentions, in-school- suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion • Parent or guardian notification • Potential referral to SRO

APPENDIX



FITCH HIGH SCHOOL

Groton Public Schools 2025-2026 School Calendar

July 2025

0 days / 0 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

3, 4 July 4th Recess
7-31 SpEd Summer School
TBD Summer School 9-12 at FHS

August 2025

3 days / 3 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

4-14 SpEd Ext ABA Summer Session
20 Freshman Orientation
27 First Day of School (K-12)
29 First Day of School (Preschool, TK)

September 2025

21 days / 24 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

1 Labor Day
9 TLI-Early Dismissal

October 2025

22 days / 46 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

7 TLI-Early Dismissal
13 Columbus/Indigenous People's Day
29-31 Parent/Teacher Conferences
Early Dismissal (ES, MS, HS)

November 2025

15 days / 61 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

4 Professional Development
11 Veteran's Day
26-28 Thanksgiving Recess

December 2025

15 days / 76 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

9 TLI-Early Dismissal
22-31 Winter Holiday Recess

January 2026

19 days / 95 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

1, 2 Winter Holiday Recess
13 TLI-Early Dismissal
19 Martin Luther King Day

February 2026

18 days / 113 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27

10 TLI-Early Dismissal
16, 17 Presidents Day Recess

March 2026

21 Days / 134 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

6 Professional Development
10 TLI-Early Dismissal
25-27 Parent/Teacher Conferences
Early Dismissal (ES, MS, HS)

April 2026

16 days / 150 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

3 Good Friday
13-17 Spring Recess
28 TLI-Early Dismissal

May 2026

20 days / 170 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

12 TLI-Early Dismissal
25 Memorial Day

June 2026

10 days / 180 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

12 Tentative Last Day of School-Early Dismissal
15-18 Snow Make-up Days
19 Juneteenth
FHS Graduation - TBD

GRADE LEVEL	MARKING PERIOD ENDS	REPORT CARDS ISSUED
Grades K - 5	Nov 24 Mar 11 June 12	Report cards will be distributed within 10 school days after the marking period ends.
Grades 6 - 8	Oct 30 Jan 23 Apr 1 June 12	Report cards will be distributed within 10 school days after the semester ends.
Grades 9 - 12	Oct 30 Jan 23 Apr 1 June 12	Report cards will be distributed within 10 school days after the semester ends.

No School for Students - Professional Development, Holidays, School Recess
Early Dismissal - Parent/Teacher Conferences, TLI, Last Day of School



GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADMINISTRATION OFFICES

P.O. Box K, Groton, Connecticut 06340 • 1300 Flanders Road, Mystic, Connecticut 06355

PHONE: (860) 572-2100 • FAX: (860) 572-2107

www.grotonschools.org

FHS Handbook

Acknowledgement & Agreement Form

The FHS Handbook, which contains the school policies and procedures is located on the district and school website, www.grotonschools.org. Review the handbook with your son/daughter and sign and return. Failure to sign does not affect the student's responsibility to act in accordance with the policies outlined in the handbook.

I agree to abide by all the policies and procedures described in the FHS Handbook. I understand by signing this document, I am aware of the expectations within this handbook and especially the policies emphasized below:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Cell Phone Policy▪ Attendance Policy▪ Dress Code Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Code of Conduct▪ General Important Information▪ Appropriate Use of Technology
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Student Name

Grade

Date

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Please indicate appropriate answer below for additional important information needed by FHS

I give permission for my son/daughter to be photographed

YES NO