

Summary of COVID-19 New and Revised Board of Education Policies

NEW POLICIES:

- *Policy Concerning Temporary Policies and Regulations Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic*
This new, temporary policy serves to explain the process of implementing and repealing temporary policies and identifies the requirement of the school district to comply with federal and state laws, regulations and guidance as related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- *Use of Face Coverings in School*
This policy provides protocols concerning the use of face coverings in school and addresses the September 2020 memorandum issued by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, which mandates the use of face coverings for preschool students over the age of three.
- *Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) (Added to 4000 Series – Personnel)*
This new policy tracks the requirements of the FFCRA concerning employee leave for reasons relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. This policy will sunset on December 31, 2020, in accordance with federal law.
- *Policy Concerning Health and Safety Protocols Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic*
This new, temporary policy authorizes the administration to develop appropriate health and safety protocols to safeguard the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Importantly, the policy requires the administration to provide appropriate and clear notice of these protocols to students and staff.

REVISED POLICIES:

Series 1000 - Community:

- *1400 – Use of School Facilities*
In accordance with the recent state guidance, the temporary revisions provide flexibility to the administration to limit or restrict the use of school facilities by private and community organizations. These revisions also require compliance with health and safety protocols by any private or community organization that is permitted to use school facilities.
- *1410 - Green Cleaning Programs*
The temporary revision clarifies that disinfectants and sanitizer may be used by the schools in accordance with the green cleaning statute and a recent memorandum from the Department of Administrative Services.
- *1500 – Policy Regarding Visitors and Observations in the Schools*
The temporary revisions allow the administration flexibility to limit or restrict non-essential visitors into the school buildings, and require any visitors to comply with the school's health and safety protocols.
- *1510 – School Volunteers, Student Interns and Other Non-Employees*
The temporary revisions allow the administration flexibility to limit or restrict non-essential volunteers into the school buildings, and require any volunteers to comply with the school's health and safety protocols.

Series 4000 - Personnel:

- *4540 – Employee Use of District Computer Systems*
The policy and regulations were revised to clarify the board’s responsibility relative to computer systems. Specifically, the revisions clarify that the board has installed computers and a computer network (including Internet access) on board premises and may provide other electronic devices that can access the network, but does not necessarily provide computers and Internet access in locations other than the board premises. The regulations and notice regarding electronic monitoring were also revised to specify that employees are expected to exercise appropriate judgment and may be monitored electronically when engaged in remote teaching or use of a digital teaching platform.
- *4620 – Employment and Student Teacher Checks*
The policy was revised to indicate that timelines regarding state and national criminal record checks may be modified by the district in accordance with any executive order issued by the Governor or any order issued by the Commissioner of Education that is related to the COVID-19 pandemic or public health emergency.

Series 5000 - Students:

- *5210 - Attendance, Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism (Administrative Regulations)*
The temporary revisions to this policy require schools to actively monitor student absences and collect data concerning medical absences to allow the district to identify trends that would suggest the spread of illness, such as COVID-19, in accordance with state guidance. Note that we anticipate receiving additional guidance from the State Department of Education concerning attendance and students who do not attend school during the COVID-19 pandemic. We may revise this policy in accordance with that guidance. We further recommend that boards review any policies linking receipt of graduation credits to class attendance, in accordance with the impending state guidance.
- *5510 - Student Discipline*
The temporary revisions to this policy clarify that students may be disciplined, including suspended or expelled, for failing to comply with the school’s health and safety protocols developed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The revisions further provide that expulsion hearings may be held virtually if physical presence in school is limited or restricted.
- *5650 – Health Assessments/Screenings*
The Health Assessments policy has been temporarily revised to address recent Department of Public Health guidance. Specifically, the revisions implement flexibilities in the timing for required health assessments upon initial entry to school, in either 6th or 7th grade, and in either 9th or 10th grade. Of note, the Department of Public Health has not at this time relaxed or otherwise amended the immunization requirements for school attendance.

- *5760 - Use of District Computer Systems*

The policy and regulations were revised to clarify the board's responsibility relative to computer systems. Specifically, the revisions clarify that the board has installed computers and a computer network (including Internet access) on board premises and may provide other electronic devices that can access the network, but does not necessarily provide computers and Internet access in locations other than the board premises. Similarly, the policy was amended to clarify that the board will implement technology protection measures (*e.g.*, filtering technology) for board-owned computers or devices and board-provided Internet access, to the extent practicable. Finally, the regulations were amended to reflect current federal and state statutory definitions unrelated to COVID-19. These changes will also be included in our standard revisions to our model policies, which will be shared with model policy subscribers later this summer.

- *5770 - Use of Private Technology Devices*

The policy was revised to reflect that privately owned technological devices, including desktop computers, may be used during instructional time if specifically permitted by instructional staff or necessary to access a digital learning platform or remote learning. The policy was also revised to reflect that the improper use of such technology is prohibited when utilized for school or at a school-sponsored activity, that searches of privately owned devices can only occur if such devices are on school property, and that reports of theft, loss or damage to such devices can be made if the suspected incident occurred on school property or at a school-sponsored activity.

- *5780 – Transportation*

This policy was temporarily revised to provide that the district will request that parents volunteer to transport their children to school, in accordance with state guidance. The revisions further clarify that parents are responsible for the safety of their children while walking to and at the bus stop, which includes following health and safety rules.

Series 6000 – Instruction:

- *6100 – Credit for Online Courses (previously adopted/some small changes)*

We revised this policy in April 2020 to address the closure of schools and to allow students to earn credit through distance learning programs. We include this policy here only to bring the recent revision to your attention. The revised policy is not included in the Temporary Policy Revisions, as the change was broad and permanent. The policy can be accessed in the client portal in Series 6000.

Series 9000 – Board Bylaws:

- *9503 - Meeting Conduct*

This bylaw has been temporarily revised to permit a board of education to convene virtually and to limit or restrict public comment during virtual board meetings.