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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents:

Welcome to a new year at Center School.

Our goals this year are: 1) The Litchfield Public Schools' students will increase their comprehension and interpretation of written text and materials through the use of differentiated instruction; 2) The students will use a variety of media and technology resources for directed and independent learning activities. These goals are directly aligned with state standards and the Litchfield Public Schools' Long-Term Plan.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information about the practices and policies at Center School. Visits to the school for conferences are always welcome. The Litchfield Public Schools' website is www.litchfieldschools.org

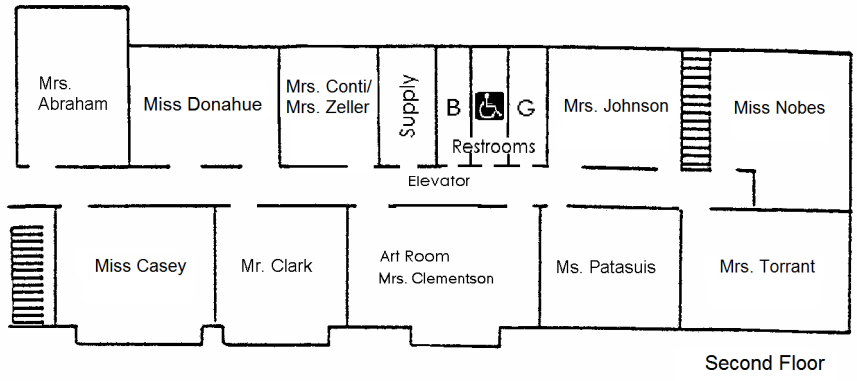
I would be happy to answer any questions you have regarding your child and welcome your cooperation in helping us make your child's educational experience a rewarding one.

Sincerely,

Andrienne Longobucco
Principal

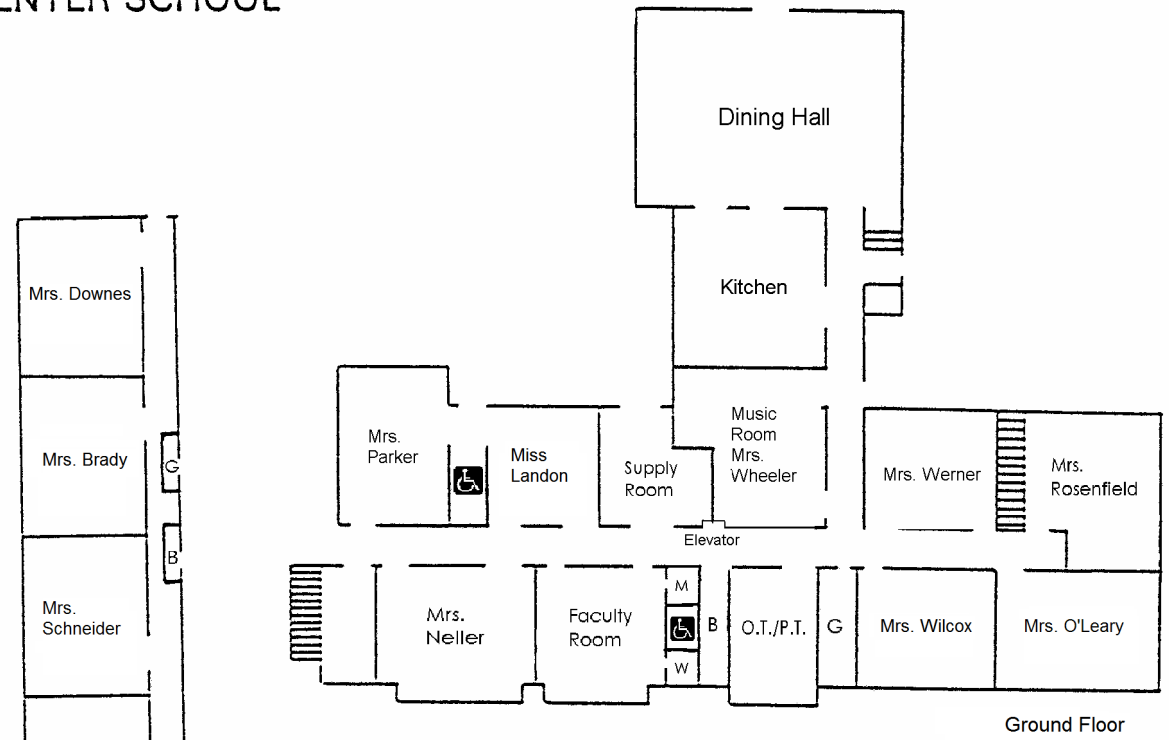
The ABC's of Helping Your Child
by Carole L. Riggs

- A Accept your child, unconditionally.
- B Believe in your child. Trust in his or her ability.
- C Communicate with your child. Share ideas.
- D Discuss things with your child.
- E Enjoy your child. When parents enjoy their children, children enjoy their parents.
- F Find things of interest to do together.
- G Give your child responsibility which can be handled. This can lead to a feeling of accomplishment.
- H Help your child with words of encouragement.
- I Impress upon your child the vision of what is all around. Talk about the things you see, hear, taste, feel and smell.
- J Join your child in fun activities.
- K Keep from over identifying with your child. Don't try to live your life again through your child.
- L Listen to your child. He or she needs someone to share thoughts and ideas.
- M Model behavior you want to see in your child.
- N Name things for your child. Labels are important.
- O Observe the way your child goes about tasks. Provide help when needed.
- P Pace your child. Help your child do one thing at a time and do it well.
- Q Question your child using question words such as who, what, where and when. Ask about stories or everyday things that happen.
- R Read to your child every day.
- S Spend time with your child.
- T Take your child to the library on a regular basis.
- U Understand that learning isn't always easy. Sometimes we all fail. We can learn from our mistakes.
- V Value your child's school and teachers. Your attitude will often be mirrored in your child.
- W Write with your child. Encourage the youngster to write; even scribbles are important.
- X X is often unknown quantity. What else would you like to add to this list?
- Y You are your child's most important teacher.
- Z Zip it all up with love. Love gives zest to life.

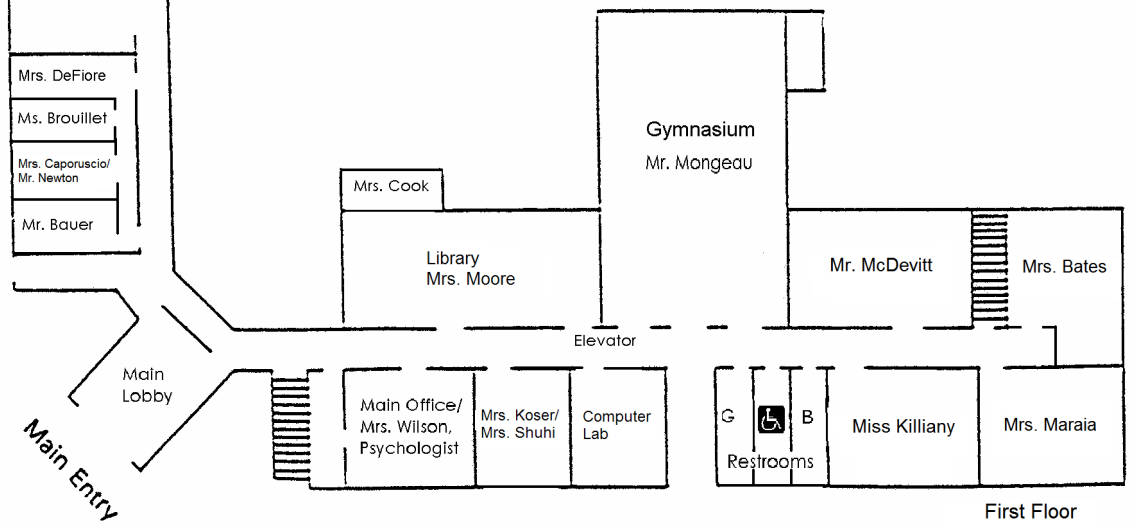


Second Floor

MAP OF CENTER SCHOOL



Ground Floor



First Floor

Main Entry

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mr. James Katzin, Chair
Mr. Frank Gorman, Vice Chair
Mrs. Christine Reardon, Secretary
Mrs. Gayle Carr

Mrs. Elizabeth Fabbri
Mr. Donald Falcetti
Mr. John Noone
Mr. Wayne Shuhi
Mr. Frank Simone

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Dominick Vita

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Mr. Pat Buccitelli

DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES

Mr. Gary Zaremski

DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Mr. Don Johnson

FACILITIES MANAGER

Mr. Tony Crowe

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The School

The Center School has a very special history. It was built in 1925 and accommodated grades K-12. In 1955, when the new High School was built, Center School became an elementary school. From 1987 to 1988, Center School was closed for major renovations. It reopened in August of 1988 as a "new" K-4 school. It now serves students Pre-K through Grade 3.

Mission

Our mission is to educate primary age students by providing developmentally appropriate programs which are based on children's needs. We strive to encourage a lifelong appreciation for learning in an exemplary environment which fosters respect, inclusion, decency, empathy, cooperation, and responsibility.

Expectations

The Center School shall provide a balanced curriculum offering a variety of academic and developmentally appropriate programs responsive to the changing needs of its students and society. The students will be carefully monitored to ensure that the academic programs challenge their capabilities and meet their needs.

The expectation for all students is to:

- read with understanding and for enjoyment,
- express themselves clearly and correctly in both writing and speaking,
- listen with understanding,
- use mathematical skills as a practical tool,
- apply appropriate problem-solving skills in social and academic areas,
- learn about other people and their ways of living, past and present,
- gain an awareness of local geography and government,
- be introduced to life, earth, and physical sciences through process and exploratory approaches,
- develop skills and attitudes that promote physical and mental health,
- develop skills and increase sensitivity, imagination, and joy of self-expression through the arts,
- use technology and other media as a tool to gain knowledge and enhance understanding of other curricular areas,
- utilize a cross-curricular approach in implementation of the curriculum,
- demonstrate social and academic responsibility for their own actions,
- respect integrity, hard work, and the rights and opinions of others.

Philosophy

Education is the key to a full and productive life. The purpose of education at Center School is to provide an environment in which all children will develop to the optimum of their capabilities; physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally. Individual needs shall be recognized and pupils helped to understand their responsibility in the learning process.

The role of the school is to provide an opportunity for each student to attain the skills and abilities necessary to meet future educational and life challenges. The school shall provide a stimulating environment that challenges students to think for themselves and become self-directed, self-disciplined and creative.

The school will promote an atmosphere of cooperation and open communication among children, parents and community members. The school shall encourage and guide each student to become a purposeful and effective member of a free society.

Commitment

At Center School we are committed to providing the best possible instructional program to meet the unique needs of young students. The curriculum and programs are designed to provide a smooth transition from the contained classroom of the elementary school to the more comprehensive program of an intermediate school. The staff is knowledgeable of and dedicated to primary and intermediate elementary education. The community is supportive of the school and an active participant in developing, implementing and evaluating its programs.

Center School is a place where learning is celebrated. We believe that scholastic achievement is most important. Our school is a place where students feel secure, and where students and parents feel welcome.

We are proud of our school, and we are committed to improving the total instructional program. This commitment to improvement through planned change will allow us to take another step towards educational excellence.

School Goals

Our goals for 2008-2009 are: 1) The Litchfield Public Schools' students will increase their comprehension and interpretation of written text and materials through the use of differentiated instruction; 2) The students will use a variety of media and technology resources for directed and independent learning activities.

All curricular areas are aligned with the State of Connecticut Curricular Frameworks and National Standards.

Reading/Language Arts

The Reading/Language Arts program offers children the opportunity to develop literacy skills through active teaching and discovery experiences. Reader's and Writer's Workshop, which is an individualized reading and writing approach for each child, is the foundation of our Reading/Language Arts

program. Correlated assistance is offered to children through an ongoing diagnostic process.

Math

The math program emphasizes a practical hands-on, manipulative, problem-solving approach. Our goal is to help children apply math to life experiences. Correlated assistance is offered to children through an ongoing diagnostic process.

Science

The science program taps the children's natural curiosity about their world. Inquiry units are covered in each grade.

Social Studies

The social studies program emphasizes concepts with a focus on learning about families, communities, different types of cultures and geographical locations.

Music

The music curriculum uses quality folk song literature to develop singing, listening, movement and music literacy skills. These skills are developed through a variety of challenging activities, which culminate in recorder instruction.

Art

Art instruction is provided for all children. A variety of materials and media is used to encourage children to present their thinking and creativity through many varied and unusual projects. All children should bring in a smock to protect their clothing from art material that stains.

Physical Education

Physical education is required for all children in grades K-3. Emphasis is on personal space and movement. Students must wear sneakers or go barefoot for safety reasons. A signed note from the child's physician is required to be excused from gym.

Library/Technology

The Library/Media Center gives all children the opportunity to borrow books, use technological equipment and conduct independent research. A class period is provided each week to instruct the children in the proper and efficient use of our well-equipped library/media/technology center and to provide support of classroom themes.

PUPIL SERVICES

Special Education

Regulations state that special education means specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.

Each local school district must provide programs designed to meet the particular educational needs of students whose disabilities have resulted in learning difficulties. Some students who need special education may require modification of their instructional program and occasional support services; some may require extensive specialized instruction and services during the day. A student may have more than one disability, requiring more than one kind of specialized program or service. Some students with disabilities have special emotional needs which should be considered when developing their educational programs.

As every student is different, each student with special education needs must have an Individualized Education Program.

Referral Process

If you suspect that your child may require special education, you should discuss the situation with school personnel as soon as possible.

After a student has begun attending school, any persistent learning difficulties noted by the student or by his or her parents or teachers may be a sign that special education is needed. Sometimes a disability can go undetected until a student has learning problems in school. Whether a student receives surprisingly poor grades or is unhappy and uncooperative in class, a complete evaluation will help parents, teachers, and the student understand the problem and, if necessary, plan an appropriate educational program.

Before a child is referred for evaluation, "pre-referral" strategies must be explored. What this means is that alternative procedures and programs in regular education must be explored and, where appropriate, implemented. Should the child's difficulties persist after this intervention, a referral for special education evaluation is then properly made to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT).

Center School shall accept and process referrals (the standard referral form is available from the School Psychologist or Director of Special Services) from appropriate school personnel, as well as from a child's parents; or from a physician, clinic or social worker, provided the parent so permits in order to determine a child's eligibility for special education and related services.

Once a student is referred to the Planning and Placement Team (PPT), the school district must do two things:

1. The parents must be informed in writing that the student has been referred to the PPT to determine whether the student is eligible for special education, and must be informed of all their due process rights.
2. Written parental consent must be obtained before pre-placement evaluation and testing may begin.

At Center School, special education services are available to students who have been diagnosed through the PPT process. These include speech/

language therapy, psychological evaluations, projective testing or counseling with the school psychologist, health assessment by the school nurse, occupational therapy, physical therapy and learning center services.

The Litchfield Public Schools adheres to section 504 Regulations, described as non-discrimination on the basis of handicap in programs and activities receiving or benefiting from Federal Financial Assistance.

STATE MANDATED INFORMATION

Immunization Requirements

Before a child is permitted to attend the Litchfield Public Schools, he/she must have proof of immunization against the following illnesses: Haemophilus Influenza type B (Hib), Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), Polio, Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus (DPT), and Hepatitis B (HBV). Students entering kindergarten must show proof of having received 2 doses of measles vaccine, 4 doses of DPT/DtaP vaccine and 3 doses of polio vaccine (IPV or OPV) with at least 1 dose given on or after the fourth birthday. Children born January 1, 1997 or later must have one dose of Varicella (Chicken Pox) vaccine on or after that individual's first birthday and before that individual's 13th birthday or two doses of Varicella given at least four weeks apart if the first dose was on or after the 13th birthday. Exemption: child has written statement signed and dated by physician that child had Varicella based on family/medical history. Children born after January 1, 1994 must have full 3 dose schedule of Hepatitis B vaccine.

Transferred School Records

The Principal may admit the student who is being transferred from another Connecticut school without possession of the record provided that the Principal or nurse has telephoned the sending school and has assurance from that school's Principal that proof of immunization is in the school record being forwarded. If records indicate that the child is not properly immunized, parents will be notified that the child will not be allowed to attend school until the child is properly immunized.

Student Records

The Center School collects, records, and maintains information about pupils and their families which are necessary to the effective performance of their designated educational function. This information, which constitutes the student record, is collected for educational purposes which include instruction, guidance, and research. The administration is responsible for the collection and storage of data used to promote the educational progress of each child while safeguarding the rights and privacy of the student and family. Student records are confidential; therefore, the contents are available only to parents, a school staff member, or persons authorized by statute.

Since 1974, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (the Federal law known as the "Buckley Amendment") grants you the right to inspect your child's school records and to request correction of any information in the records which

is inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of the child's right to privacy or other rights. The law also guarantees the confidentiality of school records.

Just as a student's or parent's information can help the school, the school records may help the student or parent in understanding a problem. Upon written request, schools will make an appointment for you to inspect and discuss your child's school records, and will provide one free copy of each document in your child's school record. Schools may charge for additional copies; however, a charge may not be applied if it would deny you your right to access the educational records. Each school district in Connecticut must publish its policies and procedures regarding student records, and you may request a copy of your district's records policy.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration for kindergarten occurs each spring. Children who will be five years old on or before January 1 are eligible to enter kindergarten in September. Children who will be six years old on or before January 1 are eligible to enter first grade in September. When registering a child for Kindergarten through Grade 3, parents must submit a birth certificate and health records. Proof of residency may be requested at time of registration.

Student Records

Records of a student may be reviewed by parents. Letters of request should be directed to the administration.

A student's name may be disclosed in a news release unless a written refusal has been submitted to the principal by the parent or legal guardian.

Kindergarten Orientation

Kindergarten orientation takes place late each spring for all prospective kindergarten students. This procedure allows parents and prospective students to meet with the Center School staff.

SCHOOL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMS

Health Services

"The school nurse strengthens and facilitates the educational process by modifying or removing health related barriers to learning in individual students and by promoting an optimal level of wellness for students and staff." (National League of Nurses)

Center School has full-time nursing service, which includes health assessments, health education, evaluation, treatment and referral of accidents and illnesses. A confidential health record is maintained for each student. The school nurse plans and implements State Mandated Programs.

Physical Examinations

A Health Assessment is required for all students entering kindergarten. They are also required for all new students entering the school. Other students transferring into the school may be required to have a physical after an evaluation of their incoming medical record is made by the school nurse. Immunization records must also be evaluated by the school nurse. A school physical examination form may be obtained from the school to be completed by the examining physician and returned to school.

Visual and hearing examinations are conducted for all pupils annually. Findings are noted on the medical record of each child and any conditions needing further attention are reported to the parents by the school nurse.

Medical Administration of Prescription and Nonprescription Drugs

There are specific state statutes regarding the administration of medication in school. Board of Education policy requires that any child needing medication during the school day must have that medication brought to school by a responsible adult. Prescribed medicinal preparations may be administered by the school nurse. THE MEDICATION TO BE ADMINISTERED MUST BE DELIVERED DIRECTLY TO THE SCHOOL NURSE BY A RESPONSIBLE ADULT AND BE DELIVERED AND DISPENSED FROM A CONTAINER PROPERLY LABELED WITH THE NAME AND STRENGTH OF THE MEDICATION, NAME OF PATIENT, NAME OF PHYSICIAN, THE DATE OF THE ORIGINAL PRESCRIPTION, AND DIRECTIONS. No exceptions to this policy will be allowed.

Communicable Diseases and Health Problems

Children who contract any of the following diseases should be treated by a physician and be reported to the school nurse before being allowed to re-enter school: chicken pox, impetigo, head lice, conjunctivitis, streptococcal sore throat, scabies, and ring worm. The school nurse will relate our exclusion policy at that time.

Illness

Illness may require a child to be sent home. The nurse will notify the parent or, if not available, the person noted on the emergency form. If information on the emergency form is changed during the year, please notify the office or the nurse.

Parents are required to call the school when children are absent. If a child is absent due to a communicable disease, they must see the nurse before being readmitted.

Dental Health

A fluoride rinse program is carried out on a weekly basis throughout the school year. It is administered by parent volunteers under the supervision of the school nurse.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Our committee to improve disciplinary procedures recommends that we make our expectations for parent, student and teacher responsibility for conduct clear to parents and students at the beginning of each school year.

Parents' Responsibility for Promoting a Positive School Atmosphere

We at Center School believe the area of student discipline affects the total achievements of our school. An orderly, respectful, stimulating atmosphere in the classroom and throughout the school is essential. Student discipline should be the combined responsibility of students, parents and school personnel.

First and foremost, good discipline begins at home. Parents, by their own example and guidance, help children develop positive attitudes toward the school, as well as good habits of behavior. It is our hope that parents will share with teachers an active interest in the child's progress and assist in monitoring homework assignments. Parents should understand the school rules concerning pupil conduct and cooperate with the school in carrying out corrective disciplinary procedures.

Students' Responsibility for Promoting a Positive School Atmosphere

Children attending Center School are expected to develop their individual abilities to the fullest. The children must understand that they are responsible for their own actions and that positive behaviors contribute to an orderly and stimulating school environment. As a member of the school community, each child should:

- show kindness and respect for others.
- use good manners.
- work up to their potential.
- complete and return homework consistently and promptly.
- obey school and classroom rules.
- follow the directives of adults promptly.
- exhibit self-control in a variety of situations.
- respect property.

Teacher's Responsibility for Promoting a Positive School Atmosphere

Teaching involves providing an effective program of instruction as well as establishing an atmosphere conducive to learning. In order to achieve this, the teacher should:

- work toward a program of instruction which develops each child's interest, talent and abilities.
- manage classroom routines so that they contribute to the total instruction program.
- teach the children what is expected of them in terms of accepted behavior.
- enforce the rules of the school in a fair and consistent manner.
- inform parents, in accordance with school procedures, about the academic and behavioral progress of the children.

- be sensitive to the behavior of all pupils and aware of sudden changes which may need assistance.
- work with the principal and other school personnel when necessary to help pupils toward the attainment of self-discipline.

Discipline Procedure

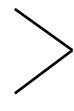
1. The teacher will remind the student of the rule and have him/her demonstrate the proper behavior.
2. If the student ignores a school rule after being reminded about proper behavior, he/she will be warned and will be required to write the rule (Grade 1) and an explanation of why observing the rule is important (Grades 2 and 3). This must be signed by his/her parents and returned to the teacher.
3. If the behavior continues, the teacher will contact the parents to discuss the problem and notify the principal.

The committee also felt that teachers needed some concrete ideas for promoting good behavior and for reprimanding poor behavior. In addition to the strategies already outlined in our handbook, the following suggestions can be used.

To help students reach our behavioral expectations, the committee suggests that teachers may employ the following incentives;

- extra privileges for small groups
- rewarding stickers or points for specific time periods of good behavior (i.e. quiet walking in the halls)
- "good work/behavior" certificates
- treasure box treats, popcorn parties, extra recess, etc.

To discourage or end poor behavior, the committee suggests that teachers employ the following consequences:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • classroom time-out • loss of privileges • staying in for recess |  | <p>at the discretion of each individual teacher</p> |
|---|---|---|

If all of these strategies have been tried and the child is still disrupting the teaching and learning process, the teacher will refer the child to the Rules Review Room. This applies to students in grades 1-3 only.

Rules Review Room Procedures:

Teacher will place student's name on a rules review list in the office.

1. Teacher will write the reason the child has been sent to the room on the form letter that will be taken home with the student for their parent's signature.
2. The letter can be left in the office folder prior to the weekly Rules Review Meeting time.
3. Students will report to the Rules Review Room.
4. Students will form a group and will each give a brief description of why they have been sent to the room.
5. Principal/Lead Teacher will discuss alternate choices for positive behavior with the children.
6. Extra time in the room can be used for heads-down quiet reflection or rules writing.

Rules Review Room: Teacher's Responsibility:

1. Don't overuse the room. It is for repeat offenders only!
2. Be sure the child is aware of this infraction before going to the room.
3. Follow up with the form letter home, adding a note about the specific behavior of the child.

Rules Review Room: Student's Responsibility:

1. Report to the room knowing why you are there.
2. Take a letter home for parent's signature and promptly return the note to the teacher.

General School Rules

1. Be polite and considerate.
2. Walk silently through the halls.
3. Keep hands to yourself.
4. Respect property.

General Classroom Rules

All students in the school are expected to behave responsibly. These are rules which would apply to any class in the school. Each individual class will develop its own rules and consequences which specifically relates to that class, its teacher and students.

Dining Hall Rules

1. Follow directions of the adults.
2. Walk in orderly lines.
3. Remain seated.
4. Use good manners.
5. Talk quietly.

Playground Rules

1. Follow directions of the adults.
2. Show kindness and respect to others.
3. Use appropriate toys and games.
4. Ask permission before re-entering the building.

Bus Conduct

Students are expected to remain seated, to use quiet voices and behave in a manner which will insure the safety of all passengers. Students who misbehave on the bus may be assigned a seat by the driver or a school administrator. In the case of repeated or severe behavior problems, a student may be suspended from the bus and parents are responsible for transportation.

Dress Code

Parents are responsible for the appearance of the child(ren). Center School requires dress that is in the best interest of the child's health and safety. Children must come to school dressed appropriately for school activities. Clothing which causes disruption to the school environment will not be permitted. It is the responsibility of the Center School staff to make decisions concerning the appropriateness of dress.

Student dress should be appropriate for the weather, as well as the playground conditions. Students are required to wear boots and snow pants in order to play on the outdoor equipment, whenever there is snow or ice on the ground. Students who are not dressed appropriately will play on the blacktop area only. In order to play on the equipment, students should wear appropriate clothing and shoes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Absences

All students are expected to attend school. Absences should not occur without parental consent (see Truancy Policy, page 23). If your child is not going to be in school, parents are asked to notify the nurse (567-7513) or Main Office (567-7510) before 9:30. If a call is not received, the school will make every attempt to "call back" parents. This may involve a call to the parent's work place.

Accreditation

Accreditation of Center School has been granted by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), a nationally recognized organization.

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 group review process. Re-accreditation was granted in February, 2006 and runs through 2016.

Dismissal

Dismissal from school during the school day requires a note to the teacher at the beginning of the school day. The pupil must be picked up at the Main

Office. Children are not allowed to leave school for appointments without a parent or adult.

It is presumed that students will use their usual means of transportation (i.e., bus or walker) unless the office is notified of other arrangements.

Early Dismissal Days

Certain afternoons during the school year are set aside for parent-teacher conferences or holidays. Please see calendar for dates. Students who are picked up are dismissed at 12:45, walkers at 12:50 and bus students shortly thereafter on these days, following lunch.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted regularly as required by state statute.

Grade Placement

A mixture of children with varying ability levels is placed in each classroom. The grade level teachers and the principal discuss children that should be together and children that should be in different rooms for the following year. Preliminary lists are made and then reviewed by members of the CARE team (School Nurse, School Counselor, School Psychologist, School Social Worker and Principal), the grade level teachers, the Language Arts Coordinator, Math Coordinator and the Special Education teachers. Each teacher has input into how the classes are made and then after much deliberation, changes are made and final lists are produced.

We feel strongly that there be a good match between the student and teacher. Student learning styles and teaching styles differ as all are individuals. We strive for the best match for student and teacher.

Homework

Homework assignments are given to reinforce and augment the lessons taught in class. They help students develop responsibility, proper work and study habits, and give parents the opportunity to provide support and recognition.

Assignments are determined by teachers in accordance with the needs of students, grade level, and the objectives of the curriculum.

Invitations

Please do not distribute invitations at school for birthdays and parties.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items are located in the Dining Hall. Students are encouraged to check frequently for missing items. Parents are requested to label all articles of clothing and especially lunch boxes.

Lunch Program

Hot lunch is served daily. An alternate lunch (Monday through Thursday) or soup and sandwich (Monday through Friday) are also offered. The price for each is \$2.50, including one milk. Additional milk or milk purchased for cold lunch is \$.45.

Payments for the week are encouraged. Please make checks payable to Education Connection. Charging is not allowed. A peanut butter and jelly sandwich and milk or a cheese sandwich and milk will be provided if the child does not have lunch money. Free and reduced applications are sent out in the beginning of the school year.

Make-up Work

Make-up work will be available to children who miss school due to illness, emergency, or other exceptional circumstances. The school cannot legitimize absences for vacation (see Truancy Policy, page 23) by giving work in advance. Children who miss school will be allowed to make up the work when they return.

Newspapers

Newspapers and the local cable TV station often find what is happening in the schools newsworthy and frequently write about and take pictures of the students. Any parent who would object to the possibility of having their child's picture appear in the newspaper or on Cable News is asked to notify the school principal in writing.

Notices

Notices will be sent home with your child from time to time. Please encourage your child to get them home in readable form. Show interest by reading them and sharing them with your child.

Permission Notes

We will assume that your child will ride the bus home daily (or walk if not assigned to a bus route) unless we receive a written note stating otherwise. Please send in a note with your child on the day of the change. Do not send notes in advance. Phone calls with changes are discouraged, and will only be taken before 2:00 p.m. if it is absolutely necessary. It becomes difficult to make changes with your child at the last minute.

Children may not change buses to ride to other children's homes for parties. Notes are necessary for after-school activities or parent pick-ups. This includes all Recreation Department activities, Brownies, Cub Scouts, etc.

Promotion

Children are promoted to the next grade level on the basis of satisfactory academic progress and social development.

PTO

The PTO serves as a vehicle for parents and teachers to express and implement an exchange of ideas to promote the education, socialization, and general health and welfare of our children in Center School. All parents are encouraged to attend PTO meetings. The PTO actively fund raises to offer our children enrichment opportunities. For further information, please contact Lori Legendre at 283-5486.

Recess

Recess is required for all children except in extraordinary circumstances. These exceptions must be cleared through the school nurse. A signed note from a physician is required for a child to be excused from outdoor recess.

Report Cards

Report cards are sent home to parents with students in Grades K-3 three times each school year.

Regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences are held during the school year. They provide an opportunity for a detailed reporting of a child's progress. Parents and teachers are encouraged to communicate on a regular basis.

School Cancellations

School closing due to inclement weather will be announced over radio stations WZBG Litchfield (97.3 FM) and WTIC Hartford (1080 AM), and television stations WTNH Channel 8, WFSB Channel 3 and WVIT Channel 30 at regular intervals between 5:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Home telephone numbers will be called through the Global Connect system to notify parents of emergency early dismissals.

Parents should inform their children of procedures to follow in case of an early dismissal where no one may be at home when the children arrive.

School Hours

Students arriving by bus will be released at 8:35 to their classrooms. The official start of school is 8:45. If you are bringing your child to school, it is encouraged that you arrive at 8:30 so that your child can go to their classroom with the majority of students. There is a 25-minute lunch period and a 25-minute recess period. The dismissal time for students who are picked up is 3:00. Walkers will be dismissed shortly after that time and buses will leave at approximately 3:15. The scheduled half-day hours are from 8:35 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Arrival of bus students occurs at 8:30. Children enter school through the main entry on Woodruff Lane. Pupils walking to school or being transported by parents **should not arrive before 8:30.**

Student Transfers

Parents of students who are going to move out of our school system must notify the school of the date of their child's withdrawal from school. A release of student information form must be signed so student records may be forwarded to the school the student(s) will enter.

Tardy Students

Tardy students **must report to the office** before entering classrooms. The child will be given a tardy slip to prevent that child from being marked absent.

Telephones

Telephones are for school use only. Only emergency calls should be made by the students during the day. Communication with the school should be in the form of a written message to the teacher or office.

Transportation

Transportation for the Litchfield Public Schools is contracted through All-Star Transportation (567-4237).

Use of Parent Drivers

Use of parent drivers for school trips is not allowed. Teachers will make arrangements for buses, school vans, etc., through the Main Office.

Visitors

Visitors are always welcome. Arrangements can be made by contacting the teacher or the administration at 567-7510. Anyone entering the building must use the intercom to the right of the main entrance to identify himself or herself. The door will then be unlocked electronically from the Main Office. **All visitors are asked to report to the Main Office, sign in and wear a visitor's badge.**

Volunteer Program

Along with our tremendously caring and helpful community, we hope to link and bond our community and school through positive and hopefully enriching experiences. Please join us to volunteer by speaking with your child's teacher.

Walkers

Walkers may arrive at school no sooner than 8:30. Dismissal is at 3:00. No bicycles are to be ridden to school.

Web Site

Please visit our web site at www.litchfieldschools.org or e-mail us at centerschool@hotmail.com

STAFF

Principal

Mrs. Andrienne Longobucco

Secretaries

Mrs. Joanne Murphy

Mrs. Janice Warner

Kindergarten

Mrs. Karen Brady

Mrs. Deborah Downes

Mrs. Maureen Mancini

Mr. Matthew McDevitt

Mrs. Lori Schneider

Grade 1

Mrs. Kelly Leifert-Wilcox

Mrs. Cathy Neller

Mrs. Melanie O'Leary

Mrs. Robin Rosenfield

Mrs. Betsy Werner

Grade 2

Mrs. Jennifer Abraham

Ms. Erin Casey

Mr. Chris Clark

Miss Randi Donahue

Grade 3

Mrs. Jennifer Johnson

Miss Lisa Nobes

Ms. Alisa Patasuis

Mrs. Darlene Torrant

Science

Mrs. Donna Maraia

Art

Mrs. Rochelle Clementson

Music

Mrs. Judith Wheeler

Physical Education

Mr. Brian Mongeau

Librarian

Mrs. Joanne Moore

Special Education

Mrs. Erin Bates

Miss Elizabeth Landon

Mrs. Denise Parker

Assistants

Mrs. Aletha Abbott

Mrs. Allison Boender

Mrs. Mary Jane Evans

Mrs. Lisa Garrity

Ms. Michele Kaplan

Mrs. Mary Jane Ruthven

Ms. Susan Stonehill

Miss Heather Todor

Mrs. Margaret Towne

Information Technology Specialist

Mrs. Roe Cook

Nurse

Mrs. Beth DeFiore

Speech/Language Therapy

Mrs. Judy Albert

Ms. Christine Brouillet

School Psychologists

Mr. Seth Newton

Mrs. Janet Wilson

School Counselor

Mrs. Rachel Caporuscio

School Social Worker

Mrs. Lisa Heuschkel

Subject Area Coordinators

Mrs. Donna Maraia/Science/Health

Mrs. Joanne Moore/Library Media

Mrs. Robin Rosenfield/Language Arts/Social Studies

Mrs. Lori Shuhi/Lead Teacher/Mathematics

Supplemental Skills

Mrs. Linda Conti

Mrs. Ellen Koser

Mrs. Lori Shuhi

Mrs. Cynthia Zeller

Custodians

Mr. Corky Bauer

Mr. Tom McKinnon

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES

Students

#5113.2

Truancy:

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of early intervention for students exhibiting truancy behavior. A "truant" means a child from Grade One through Grade Twelve who is enrolled in the Litchfield Public Schools and has four unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school year.

An "excused absence" is an absence from a regularly scheduled school day for:

- a. Reasons of health, including illness, incapacity or doctor's visits. The district reserves the right to require a physician or other appropriate certification for absences in excess of five consecutive days or a total of fifteen days in any school year.
- b. Religious holidays
- c. Court appearance
- d. Funeral in immediate family
- e. Approved school activities
- f. Suspension or expulsion
- g. Limited absences from school for special activities with parental consent, subject to the approval of the principal.

Under Connecticut law, the Board has adopted the following policy to address truancy:

- a. A meeting shall be held with the parent of each child who is truant, or other person having control of such child, and appropriate school personnel to review and evaluate the reasons for the child being a truant.
 - b. The meeting must be held no later than ten school days after the child's fourth unexcused absence in a month or tenth unexcused absences in a school year.
 - c. If the parent or other such person having control of a child who is truant fails to attend the above-described meeting OR if such parent or other person otherwise fails to cooperate with the school in attempting to solve the truancy problem, the Superintendent of Schools shall be required to file a written legal complaint for each truant with the Superior Court of the State of Connecticut under Connecticut General Statutes Section 46b-149 alleging the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his family is a family with service needs.
1. The Board shall coordinate services with and referrals of children to community agencies providing child and family services.
 2. The Board shall, either on an annual basis or at the beginning of each school year, obtain the telephone number or other means of contacting such parent or other person having control of each child in grades kindergarten to twelve during the school day.
 3. The Board shall institute a system of monitoring the unexcused absences of children in grades kindergarten to eight. The "monitoring system" shall include:

Whenever a child enrolled in school in any such grade fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day AND the school has received no indication that the child's parent or other person having control of the child is aware of the pupil's absence, a reasonable effort to notify by telephone the parent or such other person shall be made by school personnel or volunteers under the direction of school personnel.
 4. The Board shall provide annual notice of this policy and the related requirements under Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-184 to parents or other such individual(s) having control over pupils that attend grades kindergarten to grade eight of the Litchfield Public Schools.

Policy Adopted: September 8, 1992

Policy Revised: November 17, 1998

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY**ATTENDANCE****Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process****Suspension**

An authorized member of the administrative staff may suspend a student from school privileges or transportation services when the student's conduct:

1. on the school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity is in violation of the Board's publicized policy or is seriously disruptive of the educational process or endangers persons or property.
2. off school grounds has violated a publicized policy of the Board and is seriously disruptive of the educational process.

For any one incident, a student shall not be suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. No student shall be suspended more than ten (10) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, unless the student is granted a formal hearing as specified in C.G.S. 4-176e – 4-180a.

Students may not be suspended without an informal hearing before the building Principal or the Principal's designee unless the Principal determines that an emergency situation exists.

A suspended student must be given an opportunity to complete any class work, including examinations, which were missed during the suspension.

At the discretion of the Principal, in-school suspensions (not to exceed five consecutive days) may be given when deemed appropriate no more than fifteen (15) times or a total of fifty days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.

Unless an emergency exists, no student shall be suspended without an informal hearing by the administration. If an emergency situation exists, such hearing shall be held as soon after the suspension as possible.

A suspension shall not extend past the end of the school year.

A suspension shall be included in the student's cumulative educational record. Such notice shall be expunged from the cumulative record by the Board if the student (1) graduates from high school or (2) is not expelled or suspended again during the two-year period commencing on the date of his/her return to school from the suspension.

Expulsion**Mandatory Expulsions**

The Board of Education or an impartial hearing board must expel a student whenever there is reason to believe that a pupil:

1. on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity was in possession of a firearm, as defined in federal law (18 U.S.C. Subsection 921), as amended from time to time, or deadly weapon, dangerous instrument or martial arts weapon, as defined in state law, as amended from time to time; or
2. off school grounds, did possess such firearm in violation of C.G.S. section 29-35 or did possess and use such a firearm, instrument or weapon in the commission of a crime under chapter 952; or

3. on or off school grounds offered for sale or distribution a controlled substance, as defined in subdivision (9) of C.G.S. section 21a-240, whose manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting or possessing with the intent to sell or dispense, offering, or administering is subject to criminal penalties under C.G.S. sections 21a-277 and 21a-278.

A student must be expelled for one calendar year if the Board or the impartial hearing board finds that the pupil did so possess and use, as appropriate, such a firearm, instrument or weapon or did so offer for sale or distribution such a controlled substance.

The Board, subcommittee of the Board, or an impartial hearing panel may modify the term of a mandatory one year expulsion on a case by case basis.

Permissive Expulsions

The Board of Education or an impartial hearing board may expel a student whenever there is reason to believe that a pupil:

1. on school grounds or at a school sponsored activity violated a publicized policy of the Board or is seriously disruptive of the educational process or endangers persons or property; or
2. off school grounds violated a publicized policy of the Board and is seriously disruptive of the educational process.

In making a determination as to whether conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the administration may consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to: 1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school; (2) whether other students from the school were involved or whether there was any gang involvement; (3) the unlawful use of a weapon, as defined in C.G.S. Section 29-38, and whether any injuries occurred; and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.

1. Conduct that may be grounds for expulsion if occurring on school property, school transportation vehicles or at any school-sponsored activity include, but is not limited to:
 - A. Willfully striking or assaulting a student or any member of the school staff or contracted services provider.
 - B. Theft.
 - C. The use of obscene or profane language or gestures to a member of the school staff.
 - D. Deliberate refusal to obey a member of the school staff.
 - E. Blackmailing, threatening or intimidating school staff or another student.
 - F. Willful destruction of school property of staff members or other students.
 - G. Creating a disturbance in the classroom.
 - H. Participating in walkouts from, or sit-ins within, a classroom or school building.
 - I. Possession of drug paraphernalia.
 - J. Unauthorized use or misuse of computers or other technological equipment.
 - K. Sexual harassment, harassment and hazing.
 - L. Gambling
 - M. Throwing snowballs, rocks, sticks, food, etc.
 - N. Any violation of school policies or rules.

Any student who engages in any of the aforementioned acts shall be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion. The above-noted list is not exhaustive and students may be disciplined, up to and including expulsion, for other forms of misconduct.

2. Conduct that may be grounds for expulsion if occurring off of school property or outside of school activities includes, but is not limited to:
 - A. Conduct leading to a Class A misdemeanor felony arrest if that conduct is determined to pose a danger to the student himself/herself, other students, school employees or school property.
 - B. Adjudication as a delinquent or a youthful offender as the result of a felony if the conduct leading to the adjudication is determined to pose a danger to the student himself/herself, other students, school employees or school property.

- C. To the extent that it is applicable, any of the conduct listed in the above section that may be grounds for expulsion if occurring on school property, school transportation vehicles or at any school-sponsored activity, may also be grounds for expulsion if occurring off of school property or outside school activities.

Any student who engages in any of the aforementioned acts shall be subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion. The above-noted list is not exhaustive and students may be disciplined, up to and including expulsion, for other forms of misconduct.

- 3. A special education student's handicapping conditions shall be considered before making a decision to expel. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting must be held to determine whether the behavior or student actions are in violation of Board of Education standards set forth in policy governing suspension and expulsion are the result of the student's handicapping condition.
- 4. Any special education student found to have carried a firearm, deadly weapon or dangerous instrument on school property or at a school-sponsored activity or offering for sale or distribution on school property or at a school-sponsored activity a controlled substance, whose manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting or possessing with the intent to sell or dispense, offering, or administration is subject to criminal penalties will be referred to IEP for modification of individualized education plan or in order to prevent reoccurrence of such behavior and to ensure the safety of other children in the school.

If an IEP determines that the special education student's inappropriate behavior or actions are deemed not to be the result of the student's handicapping condition; suspension or expulsion procedures shall be conducted in accordance with provisions of this policy for non-special education students. If the special education pupil is expelled, he/she must be offered an alternative educational opportunity consistent with his/her needs during the period of expulsion.

- 5. A. Any student under sixteen who is expelled shall be offered an alternative educational opportunity during the period of expulsion according to the terms of the law. Any student between the ages of sixteen and eighteen not previously expelled and who wishes to continue his/her education shall be offered an alternative educational opportunity if he/she complies with conditions established by the Board, unless such student has been expelled for conduct endangering persons which included (1) possession of a firearm, as defined in federal law, as amended from time to time, or a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument or martial arts weapon, as defined by state law, as amended from time to time, as defined in C.G.S. section 21a-240(9), whose manufacture, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting or possessing with the intent to sell or dispense, or offering, or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Connecticut General Statutes Sections 21a-277 and 21a-278.
 - B. If a pupil is expelled for possession of a firearm or deadly weapon the Board of Education shall report the violation to the local police department or in the case of a student enrolled in a regional vocational-technical school to the state police. If a pupil is expelled pursuant to this section for the sale or distribution of such a controlled substance, the Board of Education shall refer the pupil to an appropriate state or local agency for rehabilitation, intervention or job training, or any combination thereof, and inform the agency of its action. Whenever a local or regional Board of Education notifies a pupil between the ages of sixteen and eighteen or the parents or guardian of such pupil that an expulsion hearing will be held, the notification shall include a statement that the Board of Education is not required to offer an alternative educational opportunity to any pupil who is found to have engaged in the conduct described in this subsection.
- 6. In determining the length of an expulsion, if applicable, and the nature of the alternative educational opportunity, if applicable, the Board or the impartial hearing board may receive and consider evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to the pupil's removal from a classroom, suspension or expulsion.
 - 7. A period of expulsion may extend into the next school year.

8. A student may be expelled before the formal hearing provided that an emergency exists, but in this case the hearing shall be held as soon after the expulsion as possible.
9. The notice of formal hearing required by C.G.S. 4-177 shall be given to the parents or guardians of the student and to the student if the student is a minor.
10. An expelled pupil may apply for early readmission to school. Except as provided in this subsection, such readmission shall be at the discretion of the Board. The Board may delegate authority for readmission decisions to the Superintendent of Schools for the school district. If the Board delegates such authority, readmission shall be at the discretion of the Superintendent. Readmission shall not be subject to appeal to Superior Court. The Board or Superintendent, as appropriate, may condition such readmission on specified criteria.
11. If a person who is at least seven years of age but less than twenty-one (21) years of age and enrolled as a student is arrested, either during the school year or when school is not in session, for a violation of Connecticut General Statutes Section 530-206c, i.e., the sale, carrying and brandishing a firearm or facsimile of a firearm (a Class A or B misdemeanor or a felony), the municipal or state police department/officer that made such arrest shall, not later than the end of the next weekday following such arrest or the next school day if the arrest occurred during the school year, orally notify the Superintendent of Schools in the district where the person resides of the identity of such person and the offense or offenses for which he/she was arrested. Moreover, the arresting officer shall, within 72 hours of such arrest, provide written notification of such arrest, containing a brief description of the incident.

The Superintendent shall maintain the report in a secure location and only inform the Principal or supervisory agent of the school where the person is a student as required by Connecticut General Statutes Sections 10-233h and 46b-124. The Superintendent or the parents of the arrested pupil may request the arresting officer's presence if an expulsion hearing is held pursuant to an arrest. Further, if the police officer is called as a witness at the hearing, the police officer may provide oral testimony, reports and any other information on the arrest.

Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process

Under provisions of C.G.S. 10-233d, a student may be expelled at a meeting at which three or more members of the Board are present provided that at least a majority of those present at the expulsion hearing vote for expulsion, and provided that at least three affirmative votes for expulsion are cast.

Annual Notification

Students and parents or guardians shall be notified of this policy annually.

STUDENT RECORDS**CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS****Policy**

The Litchfield Board of Education ("Board") complies with the state and federal regulations regarding confidentiality and access to and amendment of student records. The Board shall implement procedures that protect the privacy of parents and students while providing proper access to records. Availability of these procedures shall be made known annually to parents of students currently in attendance and eligible students currently in attendance.

Directory information includes information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes but is not limited to, the name, address, telephone number, electronic mail address, photographic and video images, date and place of birth, major field(s) of study, grade level, participation in school-sponsored activities or athletics, weight and height (if the student is a member of an athletic team), dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The school district will notify parents or eligible students annually of the district's intent to disclose such information and provide such individuals with an opportunity to object to such disclosure.

See Board of Education policy # 5125(a)

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY

ACTIVITIES

Conduct

Bullying Behavior In The Schools

In accordance with state law, it is the policy of the Litchfield Board of Education that any form of bullying behavior, whether in the classroom, on school property or at school-sponsored events, is expressly forbidden.

To implement this policy, the board of Education directs the Superintendent to develop and adopt regulations no later than February 1, 2003, to address the existence of bullying in the schools. As provided by statute, such regulations shall: (1) enable students to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators, (2) enable the parents or guardians of students to file written reports of suspected bullying, (3) require teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying or receive student reports of bullying to notify school administrators, (4) require school administrators to investigate any written reports filed pursuant to subdivision (2) and to review any anonymous reports, (5) include an intervention strategy for school staff to deal with bullying, (6) provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying, (7) require school administrators to notify both the parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed, and (8) require each school within the district to maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in such school and make such list available for public inspection. The notification required pursuant to subdivision (7) shall include 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. Any information provided under this policy shall be provided in accordance with the confidentiality restrictions imposed under the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act ("FERPA") and the district's Confidentiality and Access to Student Information policy and regulations.

For purposes of this policy, "**Bullying**" shall mean any overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, which acts are repeated against the same student over time.

For purposes of this policy, "**School-Sponsored Activity**" shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board of Education.

Students who engage in bullying behavior shall be subject to school discipline up to and including expulsion in accordance with the Board's policy on student discipline.

Legal References:

Public Act No. 02-119
Connecticut General Statutes Sections 10-233a through 10-233f

First Reading: December 10, 2002
Second Reading: January 14, 2003
Final Reading: January 28, 2003
Policy Adopted: January 28, 2003

TECHNOLOGY**Student Use of the District's Computer Systems and Internet Safety****Introduction**

We are pleased to offer students access to the district's computers and computer networks, including access to electronic mail (e-mail) and the Internet (which will be referred to collectively as "computer systems".) Access to the school's computer systems will enable students to explore libraries, databases, and bulletin boards while exchanging messages with others. Such access is provided solely for education-related purposes. Use of the district's computer systems will be allowed only for students who act in a considerate and responsible manner in using such systems.

The Board of Education and the Administration believe in the educational value of such computer systems and recognize their potential to support our curriculum by expanding resources available for staff and student use. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

These computer systems are expensive to purchase, install and maintain. As the property of the district these computer systems must be carefully handled and their integrity preserved for the benefit of all. Therefore, *access to the computer systems is a privilege, and not a right*. Students will be required to adhere to a set of policies and procedures, as set forth in detail below. Violations may lead to withdrawal of the access privilege and/or disciplinary measures in accordance with the Board's student discipline policy.

Definitions (As described in federal regulations. See "Legal References".)

Obscene – means any material or performance if, a) taken as a whole, it predominantly appeals to the prurient interest, b) it depicts or describes in a patently offensive way a prohibited sex act and c) taken as a whole, does not have serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value. For the purposes of this section, "prohibited sex act" means erotic fondling, nude performance, sexual excitement, sado-masochistic abuse, masturbation or sexual intercourse.

Child pornography –means any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture, or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical, or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where -

- (a) the production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- (b) such visual depiction is, or appears to be, of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
- (c) such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

Harmful to minors – any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:

- (a) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
- (b) depicts, describes or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
- (c) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

Monitoring

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer systems just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Communications on the computer systems are often public in nature and general school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with district standards and will act in a responsible and legal manner, at all times in accordance with district standards, as well as with state and federal laws.

It is important that students and parents understand that the district, *as the owner of the computer systems, reserves the right to monitor and review* the use of these computer systems. The district intends to monitor and review as needed to ensure that the systems are being used for district-related educational purposes.

As part of the monitoring and reviewing process, the district will retain the capacity to bypass any individual password of a student or other user. *The system's security aspects, such as personal passwords and the message delete function for e-mail, can be bypassed for these purposes.* The district's ability to monitor and review is not restricted or neutralized by these devices. The monitoring and reviewing process also includes oversight of Internet site access and of document downloading and printing.

Therefore, all users must be aware that *they should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of these computer systems.*

Student Conduct

Students are permitted to use the district's computer systems for legitimate educational purposes. Personal use of district computer systems is expressly prohibited. Conduct which constitutes inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Sending any form of harassing, threatening, or intimidating message, at any time, to any person (such communications may also be a crime);
- Gaining or seeking to gain unauthorized access to computer systems;
- Damaging computers, computer files, computer systems or computer networks;
- Downloading or modifying computer software of the district in violation of the district's licensure agreement(s) and/or without authorization from a teacher or administrator;
- Using another person's password under any circumstances;
- Trespassing in or tampering with any other person's folders, work or files;
- Sending any message that breaches the district's confidentiality requirements, or the confidentiality of students;
- Sending any copyrighted material over the system;
- Using computer systems for any personal purpose, or in a manner that interferes with the district's educational programs;
- Accessing or attempting to access any material that is obscene, contains child pornography, or is harmful to minors, as defined above;
- Transmitting or receiving e-mail communications or accessing information on the Internet for non-educational purposes.

In addition, as noted above, if a particular behavior or activity is generally prohibited by law, by Board policy or by school rules or regulations, use of these computer systems for the purpose of carrying out such behavior or activity is also prohibited.

Misuse of the computer systems, or violations of these policies, may result in loss of access to such computer systems as well as other disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion, depending on the specific conduct.

Anyone who is aware of problems with, or misuse of these computer systems, or has a question regarding the proper use of these computer systems, should report this to his or her teacher or principal immediately. Most importantly, the Board and the Administration urge *any* student who receives *any* harassing, threatening, intimidating or other improper message through the computer system to report this immediately. It is the Board's policy that no student should be required to tolerate such treatment, regardless of the identity of the sender of the message. *Please report these events!*

Internet Safety

The Administration will take measures: to assure the safety and security of students when using e-mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; to prohibit unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online; to prohibit unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally identifiable information regarding students; and to

restrict students' access to online materials harmful to minors, including obscene materials and child pornography.

Legal References:

Children's Internet Protection Act (Public Law 106-554)
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-182b; 53a-183; 53a-250
Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510 through 2520
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Pub. L. 107-110), to be codified at 20 U.S.C. § 6777
18 U.S.C. § 2256 (definition of child pornography)
Miller v. California, 413 U.S. 15 (1973) (definition of obscene)
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-193 (definition of obscene)

Implementation:

This regulation is effective: February 11, 2003

STUDENTS

#5131.6

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY

ACTIVITIES

Drug Policy for the Litchfield Public Schools

The Litchfield Public School community is committed to providing an optimal educational environment for all students. This includes a zero tolerance for drug use, possession or distribution by our students.

Through a comprehensive K-12 Health Program, students shall be equipped with the knowledge and skills to make responsible decisions about their behavior. The school system shall stress openness and communication among students, parents and the schools as a major deterrent to drug involvement and the development of healthy, productive citizens.

Policy Adopted: 6-23-87

Policy Revised: 7-26-94

Policy Revised: 11-17-98

STUDENTS

#5145.5(a)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated among individuals of the Litchfield Public Schools. It is the policy of the Board that any form of sexual harassment is forbidden, whether by students, supervisory or nonsupervisory personnel, individuals under contract, or volunteers subject to the control of the Board. Students are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful and courteous to employees, to fellow students and to the public. At all times the Board will enforce this policy as proscribed under Title IX and other relevant federal and state laws, as amended from time to time.

Definition

There are two forms of sexual harassment, quid pro quo and hostile environment:

- Quid pro quo is defined as a situation whereby anyone causes a student to believe that he or she must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity. It can also occur when a school employee causes a student to believe that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to unwelcome sexual conduct.
- Hostile environment harassment occurs when unwelcome, sexually harassing conduct is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.

Board's Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure

Any pupil who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct to his/her Assistant Principal, Principal and/or the Superintendent of Schools as soon as possible. All complaints will be treated confidentially. No adverse action will be taken against a pupil making a good faith report under this policy.

Thereafter, a prompt investigation will be conducted by an impartial investigator to be assigned by the Assistant Principal, Principal and/or the Superintendent of Schools and/or the Director of Special Services. Such individual will then present relevant findings to the Board of Education for their consideration and action if necessary.

EQUITY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE: LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to problems which may arise concerning claims of discrimination. All proceedings shall be kept as confidential as is appropriate. Evidence of reprisal against a complainant or witness shall be viewed as an infraction of this policy.

Any individual who wishes to inquire or to register a complaint concerning alleged discrimination in the Litchfield Public Schools shall have an opportunity to bring such concerns to the attention of the Equity Coordinator or Superintendent, who has the authority to resolve such complaints. The following grievance procedure shall be used by any student, parent or employee in making a complaint or inquiry. Officials shall be governed by this procedure.

Level I - The complainant shall discuss the alleged discriminatory act or practice with the Equity Coordinator or the individual closest to the daily decision-making level. This will normally be a principal, teacher, counselor, department chairperson or head custodian. If satisfaction cannot be achieved through informal discussion, the following procedure must be initiated.

Level II - The complainant shall, within forty calendar days of the alleged incident on forms provided, put the complaint in writing and file it with the Equity Coordinator. Within five working days, a conference must be held. Within five working days following the conference, the complaint must be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties or referred to the Superintendent of Schools. Within five

working days, the Equity Coordinator shall notify the Superintendent and must notify the complainant of this notification. The Board will be apprised by the Superintendent of any grievance reaching Level II.

Level III - Within ten working days after receipt of such complaint, the Superintendent must hold a hearing and within five working days of the hearing resolve the complaint, negotiate a long-term solution or refer the matter to the Board of Education for hearing and decision.

Level IV - The Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools and the Equity Coordinator shall proceed in accordance with appropriate State Statutes.

Grievance procedures taking precedent over this four level procedure include procedures stated in Litchfield Board of Education policies:

#5145.5 Sexual Harassment (Students)

#4188.11 Nondiscrimination (Permanent Personnel)

4118.112 Sexual Harassment (Permanent Personnel)

EQUITY GRIEVANCE FORM

Any student, parent/guardian, employee or employment applicant who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of the Equal Employment or Equal Education Policies of the Litchfield Public Schools may discuss and/or file a grievance with the Equity Coordinator of the Litchfield Public Schools. Reporting should take place within forty calendar days of the alleged discrimination.

Equity Coordinator: Gary Zaremski, 35 Plumb Hill Rd., P. O. Box 110,
Litchfield, CT 06759-0110 (Phone: 567-7505)

Name of Presenter/
Complainant _____

Employee _____ Employment Applicant _____ Student _____ Parent/
Guardian _____

Home Address _____

Phone _____ Date of Claim _____ Date of Incident _____

Statement of Incident/Issue (include all pertinent information: who, how, where, when, how often, feelings, witness). Please attach any additional information/documentation as necessary.

Signature of Presenter _____

Signature of Equity Coordinator _____

Date Received _____

Forms are available from Equity Coordinator, Administrators, Guidance Offices and School Media Centers.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Litchfield Public Schools shall provide continuing notice to the public, and the staff and students that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability with regard to admission or access to, or treatment or employment in programs and activities of the Litchfield Public Schools. Continuing notification may include the posting of notices, publication in local newspapers, placement of notices in school district publications and student/parent handbooks and distribution of memoranda or other written communication.

NOTICE OF NON DISCRIMINATION

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN *(includes the NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT for the LITCHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS; this nondiscrimination statement is required to be printed in major publications for students, parents, and teachers; the Equity Coordinator for Title VI (race, color, national origin), Title IX (sex equity), section 504 (handicap), and ADA (disability) is Gary Zaremski, Director of Special Services, Litchfield Public Schools, P.O. Box 110, Litchfield, CT 06759, 860-567-7505.)*

The federal and state governments have enacted and enforced laws regarding the equality of employment and equality of opportunity in education.

Therefore, the Board of Education reaffirms its policy to ensure an equal educational opportunity for all students and to prohibit discrimination as proscribed under federal and state law, as amended from time to time. It is also the policy of the Board of Education to be impartial in all of its relations with its students without regard to race, color, national origin, citizenship, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, or any other legally protected status. The Board of Education complies with the policy and procedures of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Board of Education is an equal opportunity employer. The Board shall recruit, hire, compensate, train and develop, evaluate, discipline, place, promote, lay off, terminate, and otherwise take employment actions in accordance with all federal, state and local laws. It is also the policy of the Board of Education to be impartial in all of its relations with its employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, citizenship, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, jury duty, Vietnam-Era Veteran status, physical or mental disability, or any other legally protected status. The Board of Education complies with the policy and procedures of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

This goal statement shall be made available to all present and future employees.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICERS

Superintendent of Schools for employment and personnel matters.

Superintendent of Schools for matters dealing with curriculum, instruction, textbooks and learning materials.

Policy Adopted: September 27, 1983

Policy Revised: November 27, 1990

Policy Revised: August 25, 1998

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CONCEPT AND ROLES IN STUDENT PERSONNEL

The focus of the school system is on the learner, the student. The student's educational development toward the school's goals is the central concern of the Board of Education's policies and of administrative procedures.

Each student shall be given equal opportunity. But since children vary widely in capacities, interests, social and economic background, no two can be treated exactly alike if the fullest development of each is to be achieved.

Discrimination among students applying for admission to or attending our schools with respect to race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, sex or physical disability is prohibited.

Policy Adopted: August 13, 1985

Policy Reviewed: October, 1998

PARENT RIGHTS: Section 504 Of The Rehabilitation Act Of 1973 (Appendix J 2006 CASE)

You have the right to:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from public education programs without discrimination because of his/her disability;
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law;
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child;
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education. This includes the right to be educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school district make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities;
5. Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided nondisabled students;
6. Have your child receive an individualized evaluation and receive specialized education services if s/he is found to be eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. Have evaluation, educational and placement decisions made based upon a variety of information sources, and by persons who know the student, the evaluation data, and placement options;
8. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting determined by the school district at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if the student were placed in a program operated by the district;
9. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities offered by the district.
10. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program and placement and obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records;
11. Receive a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records;
12. Request amendment of your child's educational records if there is reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request for amendment, it shall notify you within a reasonable time and advise you of the right to a hearing;
13. File a grievance; contact Gary Zaremski (860-567-7505) for the local equity grievance procedures/form.
14. Request an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program or placement. You and the student may take part in the hearing and have an attorney represent you at your own expense. The impartial Hearing Officer will be selected by the district. Hearing requests must be made to Gary Zaremski at 860-567-7505. This is the person in the district who is responsible for assuring the district complies with Section 504 requirement.

Information Regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Appendix D 2006 CASE)

Section 504 is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with a disability in any program receiving federal assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities include activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working);

2. has a record of such impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Litchfield school district recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel, students and their parents. No discrimination against any person solely due to his/her disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child has a current disability and is termed to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational programs.

If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) specifies rights related to educational records. This Act gives the parent/guardian or eligible student the right to: 1) inspect and review the child's educational records; 2) make copies of these records; 3) receive a list of all persons having access to those records; 4) ask for an explanation of any item in the records; 5) ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is misleading, inaccurate, or violates the child's rights; and 6) a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Gary Zaremski, the Section 504 Coordinator for the school district, at 860-567-7505.

**Litchfield Public Schools/CSDE
Special Education Policies and Procedures
Child Identification**

(Entire manual available in the Center School Office)

CHILD IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

Identification of School Age Students (5-21 Years of Age)

- **Transfer Students**

The principal or designee in each of our schools reviews the records of any new student transferring from another school system whether transferring from a District within Connecticut or from out of state. If the records indicate that the student has been identified as a student with disabilities and that the student requires special education and related services, the student is immediately enrolled in school and, in consultation with parents, given an appropriate program including services comparable to those described on the student's IEP. If the Individualized Education Program from the sending school requires revision, a Planning and Placement Team meeting is held at the earliest possible opportunity to develop, adopt and implement a new IEP. For students transferring from another state, our District may also conduct an evaluation if determined to be necessary and develop a new IEP, if appropriate.

- **Currently Enrolled Students**

Students attending our District schools receive the ongoing attention of professional personnel to help support their successful learning. Students whose behavior, attendance, or progress in school is considered unsatisfactory, at a marginal level of acceptance (i.e., potential drop-outs), or are suspended repeatedly, are promptly referred to a PPT by completing the District's standard referral form (*See Chapter 1 Appendix*) and notifying the parents within 5 school days of the referral by completing the Notice of Referral to PPT (*See Chapter 1 Appendix*). A PPT is scheduled to discuss the referral concerns and to decide how the PPT will proceed (*See Chapter 4 Evaluation*). Such students are identified through anecdotal records, conversations with parents, individual performance records and standardized test results (including, but not limited to, the Connecticut Mastery Tests or Connecticut Academic Performance Tests).

Alternative Procedures and Programs Prior to PPT Referral

Before our District personnel refer a student to a Planning and Placement team, alternative procedures and programs in regular education are explored and implemented where appropriate. Each school in our District has teams that provide a variety of alternative strategies to the teacher. These teams are called the Teacher Assistance/CARE/Support Teams. Parents are encouraged to collaborate with the teacher and other involved staff during this time.

Parents or school personnel may request assistance from the school's Teacher Assistance/CARE/Support Teams. The teams work collaboratively with the classroom teacher and parents to develop and document strategies to assist the student within the regular education program. If the student's problems or difficulties persist, a prompt referral to a PPT is made.

Referral Form

A standard referral form is used to document all referrals to the Planning and Placement Team. This form is available at the Special Education Department or in each of our District's schools. Concerned parents and/or staff may complete the form. Once the form is completed, it is given to the school administrator or his/her designee. The completion of this referral form initiates the Planning and Placement Team process (*See Chapter 1 Appendix*).