

The Friendship School FAMILY HANDBOOK



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Published 2007

Our Mission

The mission of the Early Childhood Learning Center, The Friendship School, a model urban, suburban, collaborative effort between New London and Waterford, is to ensure that all enrolled preschool and kindergarten children will acquire the readiness skills to be active members of a diverse learning community, and that their families are informed advocates involved in the development and education of their children by: maintaining high expectations for language and literacy acquisition through a developmentally appropriate curriculum; and offering full-day, comprehensive support services.

Welcome

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the Friendship School, a school aptly named for its mission and purpose: friendship among the children and families of two neighboring communities, New London and Waterford.

The Friendship School Handbook has been created to help you have a better understanding of The Friendship School (TFS). It contains helpful tips for parents, general information concerning the operation of the school and other information about how and why we do things the way we do. We hope you will find it useful.

Families are another important component of our mission and purpose. We hope to involve families in our daily activities at The Friendship School and welcome family members to join us any time. Helping hands are always greatly appreciated. There will be many special events here for us to enjoy together, such as the Hispanic Heritage Celebration, Open House and the Basket Bonanza. Monthly Friendship Family Organization (FFO) meetings, held at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month, allow all families to have a voice in the operation of the school. Please join us whenever you are able to attend. Child care is provided for families who attend FFO meetings.

An important part of our mission is our academic focus, which is language acquisition and literacy. Every day we do our best to fill our little ones' heads with words, ideas and experiences to enable them to become successful readers and learners throughout their school careers. We are very respectful of the fact that we have a great opportunity to have a positive effect on the future of almost five hundred children in Waterford and New London combined.

Welcome to The Friendship School family!

Sincerely,

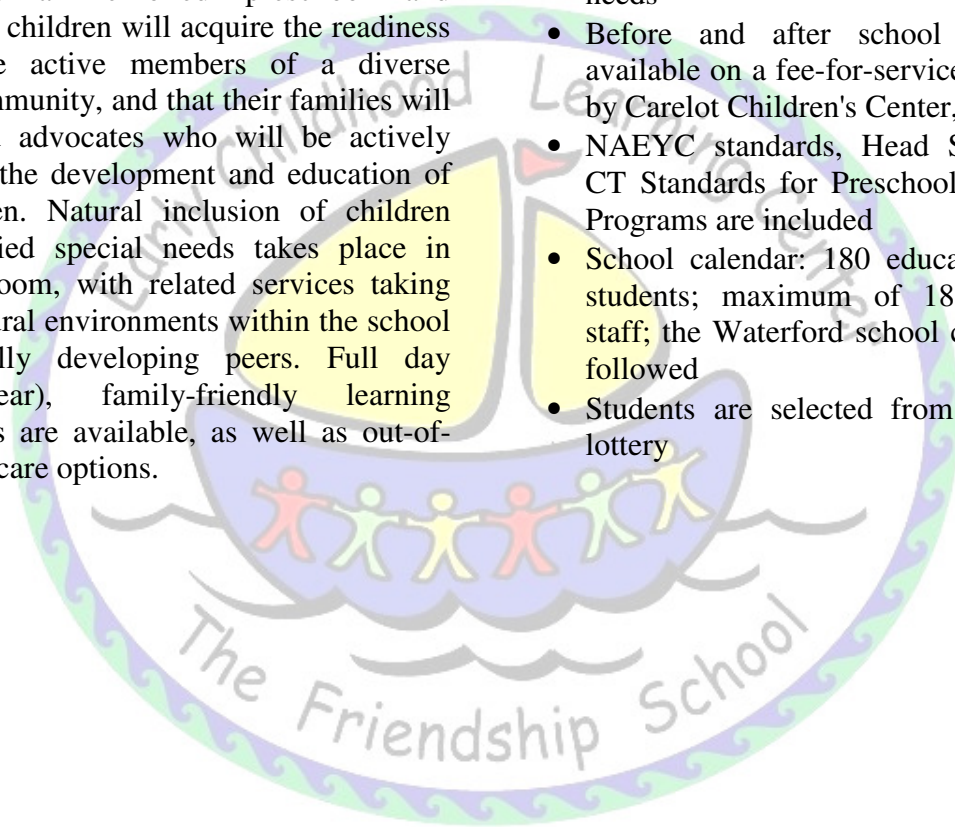
Kathy Suprin
Director

WHAT IS TFS?

The Friendship School is a model urban-suburban collaborative effort between Waterford and New London with LEARN, the regional educational service center for southeastern Connecticut, serving as the local educational agency for the school. Opened in a new building on the shoreline on August 31, 2005, this unique school serves 520 three, four, and five-year-old children, with its mission to ensure that all enrolled preschool and kindergarten children will acquire the readiness skills to be active members of a diverse learning community, and that their families will be informed advocates who will be actively involved in the development and education of their children. Natural inclusion of children with identified special needs takes place in every classroom, with related services taking place in natural environments within the school with typically developing peers. Full day (school year), family-friendly learning opportunities are available, as well as out-of-school-time care options.

Highlights

- 520 students – three, four, and five-year-old children
- Family resource center
- Classes are full day with out-of-school-time care options that are funded by parent fees
- Preschool programs are based on individual family and student needs as indicated on the IEPs of children with identified special needs
- Before and after school child care is available on a fee-for-service basis provided by Carelot Children's Center, Inc.
- NAEYC standards, Head Start Standards, CT Standards for Preschool and Readiness Programs are included
- School calendar: 180 educational days for students; maximum of 187 for teaching staff; the Waterford school calendar will be followed
- Students are selected from each town by lottery



**The Friendship School Personnel –
Please see listing on the website**



Ways to Help your Child

1. The most important thing you can do to help your child learn to read is to read to him/her every day. We will read to them every day, too.
2. Get to know your child's teacher and allow the teacher to get to know you and your family. Go to open-houses, visit the classroom, and participate in special activities. Know what is being taught and what is expected of your child.
3. Send your child to school every day unless he or she is ill. Try to schedule appointments after school. Making attendance a priority sends the message that school is important.
4. Children learn best when they feel good about themselves. A good rule: "EVERY CHILD SHOULD EXPERIENCE SOME SUCCESS EVERY DAY". Pay attention to what your child does well. Notice the smallest improvements and be generous with praise. Never use humiliation and ridicule. Be positive.
5. If you ask, "What did you do in school today?" and your child answers, "Nothing," ask more specific questions based on what you know is being taught. Even if you do not get much information, you are telling him/her that you care about what his/her day was like at school.
6. Children learn best from someone they respect. Avoid putting down the teacher in front of the child. Don't say the teacher is "too strict" or "too demanding." If you are not comfortable with the teacher's teaching methods, talk to the teacher.
7. Be sure to inform the teacher of any new situations that might impact your child. Examples might include an illness, death in the family, divorce, new job or loss of a job.
8. Talk to your child about friends and being a friend, sharing and taking turns. We'll be doing the same thing here.
9. If your child exhibits a new problem, contact the teacher immediately. Some students may begin to have headaches or become restless because they feel unchallenged; others may invent excuses because they feel unsuccessful. In any case, contact the teacher so that everyone works on this problem together.
10. Through teacher conferences and progress reports, you will get to know your child's strengths and areas of development. Set goals that your child can meet successfully. Setting small goals, which a child can reach one by one, works better than having one large goal.
11. Use rewards rather than punishments.
12. Children do as their parents do, not as they say. If a parent gets excited about new books and ideas, a child will too. If a parent acts as if anything worth doing is worth doing well, a child will do the same.
13. Concentration and paying attention are important keys to learning and they are important skills a child will use for the rest of his or her life.
14. Teach your child to ask questions as he or she reads, listens to stories, or participates in general conversations.
15. Children sometimes exhibit detachment anxiety. Help your child by suggesting fun things that will happen at school. Assure them that they can ask for any help they need. When you come as a volunteer, it is not uncommon for your child to cling or act more disruptive at first. With repeated visitations, your child will become accustomed to your presence in the classroom. Your child will LOVE having you come to help at The Friendship School!
16. Select an age-appropriate bedtime. Monitor T.V. and video selections as these affect classroom interactions.
17. Label your child's name on all bags, coats, hats, books, sweaters and other personal belongings with a permanent marker so that we can return lost items to them. Our lost and found box gets so full that we have to make a trip to Goodwill every few months.
18. We will call you if your child is having a difficult day and has had to be removed from his classroom for hitting or hurting others or himself/herself. Together we will decide on a course of action for that day and make a plan for the future. Unusual behaviors are usually a sign that something is going on in the life of the child. Together we can figure out what it is and make it better.
19. Encourage your child to sit facing forward and to behave on the bus. Be sure to be waiting at the bus stop with or for your child.
20. Art is an important, child-loved part of our day. We use water-based paint and markers and smocks but parents can expect that we might get messy some days in school.
21. Parents/guardians of pre-k children should send in a change of clothes and any diapers/wipes their

child will need during the day. Bedding for nap time mats, which are crib sized, is also required.

22. The nurses' office keeps a supply of extra clothes just in case anyone needs a change of clothes. Remember the nurses when you have clothes that your children have outgrown. Hand-me-downs are appreciated in the health room.
23. If you shop for back to school supplies in the summer it might be a good idea to contact your child's teacher for a list of recommended materials. Many teachers will contact you with ideas as the new school year approaches.

School Attendance

All children arriving at TFS must be accompanied by an adult and delivered safely to another adult once they are inside of the school. Because our students are so young they need to be escorted into the school every day. Students who arrive by bus will be escorted as a group by Friendship School Instructional Assistants and Teachers to their class' meeting place in the foyer where their teacher will be waiting at 9:15 a.m. No child should be left unattended in the foyer before 9:15 a.m. or dropped off at the curb to walk into school alone. After the first few weeks of school, kindergarten teachers wait for their arriving students in their classrooms at 9:15 a.m. rather than in the foyer. Kindergartners are escorted into the building and then they walk to their classes. Again, no kindergartner should arrive in a classroom before 9:15 a.m. because there may not be an adult in the room.

The Friendship School is a public school and as such is required to keep accurate records of each child's attendance. More importantly, we believe that part of our purpose is to emphasize good school attendance habits that will carry into the future. In addition, the more a child attends school the more opportunities he or she will have to learn and grow academically, socially, emotionally and physically.

Please call the school if your child will be absent.

LEARN has very specific attendance policies which The Friendship School follows. They are described in the following paragraphs:*

The LEARN Board of Directors believes that regular school attendance is essential to the academic success of students. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board of

Directors to monitor school attendance for the following two purposes:

- a) Identify students who are truant or habitually truant, and
- b) Enlist the cooperation of parents and, when necessary, the juvenile justice system, in order to change the behavior pattern that has developed.

Absences have adverse effects on educational progress. Students who are absent from class for any reason are deprived of education opportunities, student-teacher interaction, and learning experiences shared with their classmates.

Without an excused absence as defined herein, pupils should not be excused from a session, allowed to be late or dismissed before the close of school. Students involved in serious violations of attendance rules shall be referred to the Director or her designee for further action.

The LEARN Board of Directors recognizes the importance of early intervention for students who are truant. A "truant" is a child, ages 5 to 18, who has four unexcused absences in one month or ten unexcused absences in one year.

A student absence will be considered excused if it is the result of:

- Illness or injury
- A death in the family
- A religious obligation
- A court appearance
- A school sponsored activity
- Suspension from school
- Participation in an educational program organized and/or sponsored by a recognized institution of learning
- A situation deemed legitimate by the director or her designee.

Arrival Time

Friendship School teachers spend the first part of every day greeting each child and conducting a morning meeting or circle time where children greet

each other and learn about what will be happening in their day. When a child arrives late he/she misses this important community experience and may even miss morning snack or breakfast! If a child should arrive late we request that accompanying parents or guardians sign him or her in at the front desk. The child will be issued a late slip and the parent may then bring him/her to class where they can help him/her blend in with the activity of the moment. An arrival after 9:45 a.m. is considered tardy. A child who arrives after 10:30 a.m. should bring a lunch unless the cook manager has already been informed that the child will need a lunch (or a call can be made to the office earlier if the parent knows that the child will be arriving late).

Release of Student

Upon enrollment in The Friendship School every parent completes a form designating the names of all adults who are allowed to pick their child up at school or to be the individuals contacted in case of an emergency. In addition, the first time a parent picks up the child at dismissal time (3:45 p.m.) or for any other reason, he/she is asked to complete another form designed specifically for naming adults who are approved to pick up their child. Children will only be released to parents or legal guardians or others as authorized by the parents or legal guardians. Every adult who picks up a child will be asked to show an official form of identification as we match their name to one on our approved list. The Friendship School staff member who is supervising this process at dismissal time each day will issue a pass to the person picking up the child. This pass should be given to the classroom teacher as proof to the teacher that the adult is authorized by the office.

It is helpful to let the classroom teacher know in advance when a child is to be picked up early or will not be riding the bus home. Early pick-ups are authorized in the school office.

School Cancellation/Late Openings

Snow Days: Due to hazardous road conditions school may be canceled. Listen to the following radio stations for cancellation information (given as early as 6:00 AM): WFSB-TV (Channel 3) WTNH-TV (Channel 8) - WXLN/102.3 FM - WCTY/97.7 FM - WKLN/100.9 FM - WMOS/104.7 FM - WNLC/98.7 FM WBMW/106.5 FM - WQGN/105.5 FM - WICH/1310 AM. If Waterford cancels school, there will be no school at TFS. If New London cancels school but Waterford does not, there will be no transportation to TFS for New London students.

If an early closing is announced before school begins for the day, **there will be no school at TFS.** The reason for this is that, for TFS, an early dismissal on a snow day would be at 11:00 a.m. and it doesn't make sense to have the children in transit on a bad weather day for an hour and a half of school.

Late Openings: Whenever we have a delayed opening, school starting time is based upon the road conditions and your local district. Listen to your local radio stations to obtain this information. For example, a one hour delay means school would begin at 10:30 a.m. and the morning bus stop time would become an hour later, also. If there's a late opening on a Wednesday (early dismissal day), there will be no school at The Friendship School.

Early Closing: If the weather causes TFS to close early, dismissal will be at 11:00 a.m. and an announcement will be made on the local radio stations. Please make sure the office has your most up to date contact information in case we need to contact you. This is most important, not only for closing information but for emergency purposes.

Carelot Clubhouse will follow The Friendship School Closings. If school closes early, the Clubhouse will not be open in the afternoon and parents will be responsible for contacting the school office about transportation. If school is closed for the day because of bad weather, the Carelot Clubhouse will also be closed.

School Meals

Students can bring a snack and lunch to school each day or buy a breakfast and/or lunch from the school cafeteria. At the beginning of each month children will be given a new lunch menu. Extra copies will always be available in the school office and the menu will also be posted on our school website. Breakfast and lunch payments can be made daily, weekly or monthly with checks made payable to TFS and payment sent to school in an envelope marked with the child's name and the teacher's name. When payment is made monthly, in advance, parents will be notified when there is a near zero balance on the child's account. When a child has no breakfast/lunch money, the cafeteria will advance the cost of a breakfast/lunch for one day and parents will be notified. On the second day without lunch money, an alternate lunch (Ex. cheese sandwich) and milk will be provided. No child will ever go without lunch at TFS; however, school lunch costs prohibit the Cook Manager from extending "credit" for more than one day.

Breakfast: The Friendship School cafeteria sells student breakfasts for \$1.00. The reduced cost for students who qualify is 30 cents. Students who qualify for free meals will receive free breakfast and lunch. Breakfast will be served at approximately 10:00 a.m. each day, and will coincide with morning snack time for students who bring a snack.

Lunch: Lunch, including milk, costs \$1.75 per day. Milk costs 45 cents if purchased separately. The cost for reduced price lunch is 40 cents.

Each year every family must complete the application for free/reduced price lunch and breakfast, whether they think they will qualify or not. An application is included in TFS enrollment packages. Free lunch applications are also available in the school office. Families must reapply every year for free or reduced price lunch. Completed applications should be returned to the school.

Families will be informed when they are qualified. In the meantime, children will need to buy or bring a snack and lunch.

Special Note

Remember that many TFS students have severe allergies. This is why we try to maintain a nut free

environment. We ask that parents refrain from sending foods made with nuts, particularly peanuts, to the school and thank all of our families for respecting the difficulties that other families have with food allergies.

From the Nurses

The health of a child is a cooperative effort of home and school. No child should be sent to school if he/she has a severe cold, fever, sore throat, vomiting, rash, or any other symptom of a contagious disease. If a child is well enough to attend school, he/she should be able to participate in all activities including recess. If a child comes to school on a doctor's recommendation with crutches, cast, etc., a letter from the parent and/or doctor giving limitations, if any, and procedures for going home, should be given to the child's teacher for the nurses' office.

Students who are sent home from school with a fever will not be allowed to return to school until the child is free of fever for 24 hours. The reason for this is two-fold: 1. a child recovering from an illness has a weakened resistance and is susceptible to other illnesses and 2. other students need protection from any lingering illness the child may have. During the flu season, please note this important guideline.

If a child is to be given medication at school, State law requires a permission form signed by the doctor and the parent. Forms are available in the nurse's office. Parents may bring the signed form and any medication to the health room. As an alternative parents are welcome to come to school to give a dose of medicine. Children are not allowed to carry medication to school to take on their own (e.g. prescriptions, aspirin, throat lozenges, sun screen).

Several health screenings are given to each child during the school year, such as hearing and vision screenings. Should your child need further examination by a professional, you will be notified by the school nurse.

Nurses' Hours are: Monday to Friday
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Immunizations: All students entering the school system are required to have immunizations for polio, rubella, measles, DPT, and mumps as well as a hematocrit and a TB test. A recent physical

examination is required prior to the admittance of new students.

It is of utmost importance that any child who wears glasses or hearing aids brings his/her glasses or hearing aids to school every day. A day of learning is missed without them.

For additional information see LEARN policy #5141.10 (v)

Health Emergencies

If a child becomes ill and needs to go home, parents/guardians will be notified to come and get the child within an hour of notification. If this is impossible, arrangements should be made with a neighbor or friend who is on the list of adults approved to pick up the child to do so within an hour. Please make sure the school has your most current emergency numbers and updated contact information for your emergency contacts.

School Based Health Center

Child & Family Agency of Southeastern CT operates a School Based Health Center at The Friendship School. The goal of this program is to provide accessible preventive health care for all children.

Services include:

- Physical examinations
- Immunizations
- Diagnosis/treatment of minor illnesses & injuries
- Individual and group counseling
- Social skills development
- Referrals to health and mental health
- Services in the community

All children MUST have written parental permission to participate in the School Based Health Center. Permission forms are available in the school office. Every Friendship School family is eligible for this program.

The School Based Health Center provides a half-time Nurse Practitioner and a half time Social Worker for The Friendship School.

Dental Clinics

The Friendship School offers a dental program for all students called Brighter Smiles. This program is sponsored by the Community Health

Center. Registration forms are available in the office.

Parent Meetings

Prior to the opening of school teachers meet with parents and children to begin to get to know each other. This usually occurs the day before school opens. Children and families meet the teacher, view their classrooms, receive their name tags and tour the school bus which is parked in front of the school.

About a month later the school holds an Open House for all families. This is an evening when families can visit the school and meet other families and their child's classmates, see the classroom again, view some of the work of the children and hear about how they spend their day.

Parent/Teacher conferences are held in November and again in April. Parents/Guardians attend these meetings in order to hear specifically how their child is learning and growing in school. Report cards, which are sent home three times during the year, give another look at student progress with the accepted curriculum.

Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the school any time. When visiting it's important to remember that the teachers will be teaching and managing a class. Your helping hands will be greatly appreciated and conferences can be arranged before or after school for private or lengthy discussions you may wish to have with the teacher.

There will also be many special events at The Friendship School to enjoy together, such as the Hispanic Heritage Celebration, planned by the Bilingual Teachers and their students, and the Basket Bonanza, planned by the FFO.

Monthly Friendship Family Organization (FFO) meetings, held at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month, allow all families to have a voice in the operation of the school. Child care is provided for families who attend FFO meetings.

Our Curriculum

A copy of the curriculum that TFS uses is available in the Parent Resource Room. The Curriculum Framework for Preschool, published by the State of Connecticut, is our guide for three and four-year-olds

and the Waterford Public Schools' Curriculum is what we follow for kindergarten.

Philosophy of Delivery of Services to Students with Disabilities

The Friendship School accepts and endorses inclusion for children with disabilities. "Inclusion" is defined as the delivery of instruction and related services to children with disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate, with non-disabled children in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The Friendship School supports inclusion as a means to provide access to the school's approved curriculum. A major long-term benefit of including children with disabilities in educational settings with non-disabled children is to prepare them for future participation in a diverse and integrated society.

The Friendship School STAT Team

The Student/Teacher Assistance Team (STAT Team) meets every Friday morning to assist teachers in developing strategies to meet the needs of students in their classes who are having difficulties in some area of their development, including but not limited to: academics, work habits, attendance, health, language development, physical development, behavior or self-care. The team members include teachers, administrators, related services staff and a school health professional. At the meeting the teacher talks about the skills and areas of difficulty for the student and the team brainstorms ways to help the child. A second meeting is usually scheduled for several weeks later to consider how the ideas have helped and to make more suggestions if necessary. Parents are always informed by phone and by letter when a teacher has made an appointment with the STAT Team to discuss their child. After the meeting the teacher will call to share the results of the meeting. For record keeping purposes, forms from the meeting which record the suggestions are filed in a yellow folder and kept in the child's cumulative record folder so that next year's teacher will have some ideas for how to help the child.

This process is a regular education process used in other school systems as well as a way to provide helpful ideas to teachers for the benefit of students. Sometimes the meeting will result in a referral for a meeting (Planning and Placement Team Meeting) to discuss Special Education services, but not usually.

Physical Activity

We believe that students need good outdoor activity which is part of our social and physical education program and research has shown a clear link between physical activity and brain development. Thus, unless it is raining or extremely cold we will be outside, at least for a little while. Students may play on the upper or lower playground or they may go with their teacher to the grassy area behind Waterford High School. Children will be running and playing every day so their clothing should be casual and their shoes sensible. If there is a medical reason that a child should not be going outside, a note from the doctor must be on file with the nurses. When the temperature is below 32 degrees, including the wind chill factor, the students will not have their regular ½ hour of outside recess. This does not mean that the children won't go out, at some point during the day, with the teacher to get some fresh air.

The rules of recess are the same as they are throughout the school day. We expect everyone to play safely and to treat each other with respect.

In the play areas the students will be supervised either by teachers, classroom assistants or playground assistants. When children ride tricycles, they will wear helmets which will be sanitized between users. Individuals may also use their own helmets in school.

Every week students will have a class with our physical education teacher in the Gross Motor Room where they will learn to play group games and will develop skills that are appropriate for their age, such as running, skipping, throwing and catching. In their P.E. classes students also will learn about safe play on the playground equipment.

Transportation

Most students are transported to and from school by bus or van. **Every year** families will need to complete transportation paperwork, even if their child already rode the bus for a year, so that the bus company can establish the new routes. Prior to the opening of school the bus company will notify parents of the drop off and pick up locations and times.

When a child begins attending TFS after the first day of the school year, a request for transportation form must be completed and given to the school office personnel who will fax it to the bus company. Changes in transportation requests are handled in the

same way. Changes do not take effect until families are notified. A change or new arrangement usually takes 72 hours to take effect.

Below are the contact numbers, you can call in case you have any questions or concerns regarding bus pick-up and drop-off locations and times.

Laidlaw Transportation
Waterford - 443-2244
New London - 442-1070

A parent/caregiver **MUST** accompany the child at the bus stop both in the morning and in the afternoon. When there is not an adult waiting at the bus stop at the end of the day the bus will return the child to school. The child will be brought to the after school care provider, Carelot Clubhouse, where he/ she will remain until he/she is picked up, which must be before 6:00 p.m. when Carelot Clubhouse closes. There will be a fee for this child care service. The police will be notified and/or a DCF referral will be made in cases where a parent or guardian is not regularly waiting at the bus stop.

Bus Behavior

Safe conduct on the bus is required so that the driver can concentrate on driving. Normal pattern for bus misbehavior is that it is reported to the school. An administrator speaks with the child, and then calls the parent/caregiver to make them aware of the situation.

The consequence procedures are:

- 1st Offense - Discussion/Verbal warning/Parent Notification
- 2nd Offense -Discussion/Bus Suspension (For 1 day)
- 3rd Offense -Discussion/Bus Suspension (For 2 days)
- 4th Offense -Discussion/Bus Suspension (For 1 week)
- 5th Offense - Discussion/Bus Suspension (Remainder of the school year)

Field Trips

Friendship School teachers may plan educational field trips for children to enjoy and also as a way to expand their vocabularies and experiences. Students might go to an orchard, a farm or to the beach with another class or with their grade level group based on a unit of study that is happening in the classroom.

Permission slips will be sent home to cover each educational and cultural trip that utilizes bus

transportation or that involves a walking trip anywhere other than to Waterford H.S. and the Waterford Community Center. Please return these slips promptly to ensure that your child can participate in these experiences. If there is no signed permission slip on the day of the trip, the child will have to remain at school in another classroom. Without parental permission we cannot take a child on a trip. We thank families for supporting these field trips financially and for often sponsoring another student. The FFO also will fund trips for children whose families may not be able to manage the cost of the trip. A note to the teacher will be handled with confidence. We also thank parents for accompanying classes on these trips.

Permission slips for walking field trips to Waterford High School and Community Center are completed with registration information. Teachers will let parents/guardians know when their classes are going to the high school or the community center so that they can chaperone if they are available and so that they can talk to their children about the event.

Silent Meditation

The 1995 Connecticut Education Laws Sec. 1016A. Silent Meditation, states as follows:
Each local or regional board of education shall provide opportunity at the start of each day to allow those students and teachers who wish to do so, the opportunity to observe such time in silent meditation. The Friendship School complies with this law. Teachers will discuss with students what they might do during this time.

Birthdays

Birthdays are very special days for young children and The Friendship School will celebrate a child's special day by encouraging others to extend a birthday wish, by singing the "Happy Birthday song" or by setting up a card-making activity so classmates can make a card for the birthday boy or girl. Parents/Guardians are welcome to plan with the teacher to visit the school on their child's birthday to lead a special birthday activity or to send in supplies for the teacher to do so. Because of the number of food allergies that TFS students have, we require that

cakes, cupcakes or other foods be reserved for the at-home celebration.

No child will be required to participate in a birthday observance if his/her religion or cultural beliefs do not allow his/her participation. Out of respect for religious or cultural norms teachers will offer alternate activities at these times.

Holidays

It is part of the mission of The Friendship School to give respect to the holiday observances of different cultures and to celebrate the seasons and special events that are related to the school's curriculum and mission. For example, teachers will celebrate the seasons because they are part of the pre-k and kindergarten curriculum. A celebration in the fall might center on the theme of harvest or pumpkins and coincide with Halloween. The focus will be on developing vocabulary and experiences that are enriching for children who are three, four, and five years old. Costumes and candy (because of allergies) will be left to parents but teachers will talk about these things and will celebrate the holiday in a way that is appropriate for students and in connection with the curriculum. A February celebration might include the theme of friendship since friendship is part of the TFS mission, the school name and the curriculum. Should Valentine's Day occur during a school week teachers will discuss it, teach new words, read stories about it in the context of friendship and will help children make cards for each other. Again, the chocolates and other candies should remain at home.

As mentioned elsewhere in this document, birthdays will be celebrated through songs, books and enriching activities. Cakes and other foods should not be brought to school because of the many allergies that students have. Because so many TFS children have food allergies, it would be difficult for the school to monitor who eats what during a celebration. Students can enjoy and learn without food.

In general, holiday activities will be historically accurate, developmentally appropriate and connected to the curriculum or specific children and families within the school. Differences in how each family celebrates will be evident and respected. Families can visit classes to share their customs and celebrations. Recognition will be made that all people do not celebrate all holidays. Parents with special concerns

about holiday celebrations should discuss these concerns with the teacher at the beginning of the year. There will always be alternate activities available.

Holidays can promote positive cultural identity, appreciation of other lifestyles, awareness of the larger society, and positive social interactions among children. Holidays will be presented as part of a comprehensive effort to provide experiences and ideas on topics that children may read about with greater understanding in the future.

Children will learn about national holidays including: Constitution Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Columbus Day, and Thanksgiving Day. Patriotic songs may be taught and sung in class in association with historical units in line with the curriculum. The Pledge of Allegiance will be recited each day as it is in all public school classrooms.

Home to School Connection

The Friendship Schools develops and fosters school/family/community partnerships as a critical aspect in programming for students. TFS recognizes that education is a shared responsibility throughout a student's entire educational career. TFS recognizes that it must do its part in developing and sustaining effective partnerships. Each member of the school/family/community partnership plays a unique and important role in contributing to success for all students. These are some of the ways we maintain communication between home and school:

- Weekly Newsletter
- Web-site: www.thefriendshipschool.org
- TFS Family Organization Meetings and Events
- Classroom newsletters
- Open door policy
- Frequent communication
- Open House
- Parent/Teacher conferences
- Committees

The Friendship School will:

- Maintain open lines of communication with families
- Contact parents/guardians on a regular basis
- Contact parents/ guardians as soon as there is a problem
- Involve parents/ guardians in their child's school work and life

- Involve parents/ guardians in the life of the school
- Provide a list of resources for families in crisis.
- Provide communication opportunities in a variety of settings including family homes
- Help network parents/ guardians for transportation to school events
- Bring parental concerns forward within the school to determine if there is a broader school issue.

Room Communicator

One parent/guardian in each classroom agrees to notify other parents/guardians of various needs assigned by the teacher, including field trips, early closing days, meetings, or other issues. This individual assists in facilitating open communication between parents, teachers, and the school director.

Library Media Center

The Friendship School Library Media Center, thanks to donations from many generous supporters and from Book Fair proceeds, is developing a diverse selection of reading listening and viewing materials which are appropriate and engaging for pre-school and kindergarten students. The collection supports all areas of the curriculum. The school librarian, in collaboration with classroom teachers, invites students to enjoy the media center's resources as they visit for story reading and book selection. Parents and guardians are welcome to visit the media center during school hours and are encouraged to volunteer in the library.

Parents Right to Know

As a result of the federal law, No Child Left Behind, parents can request professional qualifications of their child's teachers. This information is available through the school office.

If you wish to see the State of Connecticut current report on The Friendship School, you can find this by accessing the Strategic School Profile for the Friendship School on the website of the Connecticut State Department of Education. Access to the website is gained by going to www.state.ct.us/sde/ and then clicking on the button for school/district data.

Acceptable Use Policy for the Use of Computers, the Internet and Electronic Mail

The Friendship School offers students access to a computer network for the Internet. Access to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases and museums. There are valuable educational benefits and opportunities available from the Internet.

At the pre-k and kindergarten level, students use classroom and computer lab computers under the close supervision and direction of teachers and classroom assistants. Most classes visit the computer lab weekly and many are beginning to use the smart board technology available at TFS.

What is expected?

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with school standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's computer resources. The students are advised never to access, keep or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

Children are taught to use computer programs and to treat computers and other electronic equipment with care. A child's family will be held responsible for damage to equipment that is deliberate.

The Friendship School Family Organization

The Friendship School Family Organization (FFO) includes all the members of our school community. Its function is to help provide understanding about the school to everyone within and outside of our school community and to offer opportunities for active involvement of all members. Every parent/guardian is invited to become a member of the FFO. In addition to many of the tasks normally done by active school parent groups, there is a strong emphasis on providing growth experiences for all members through parent enrichment and special events. Meetings are held at TFS on the third

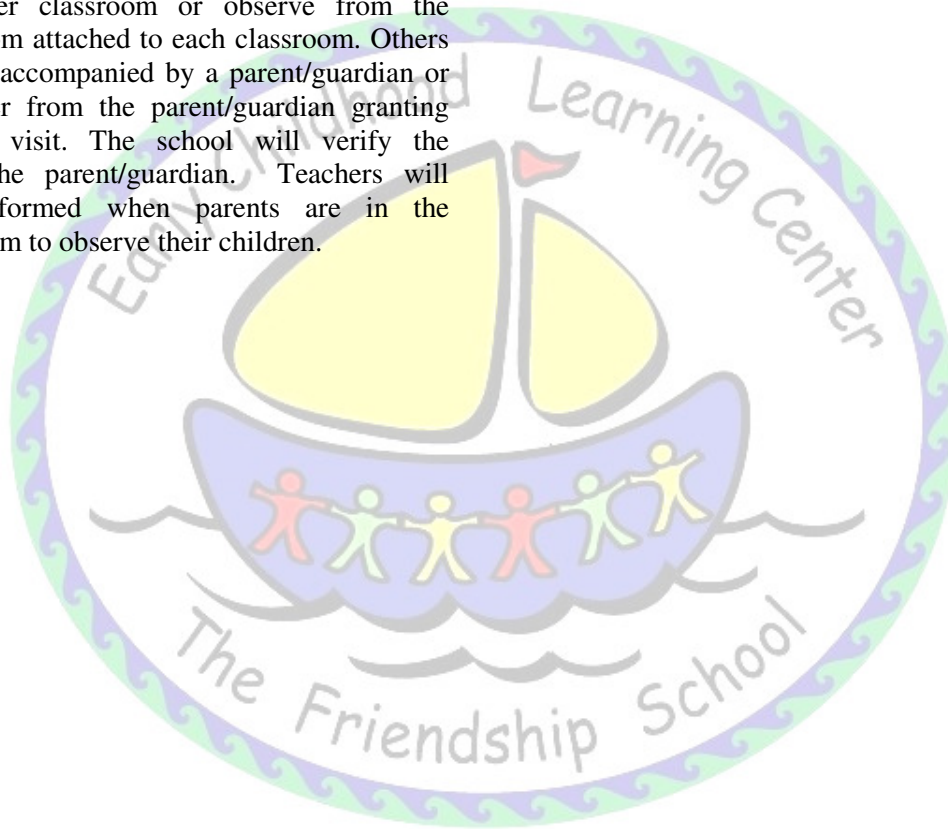
Thursday of each month from 7-8 p.m. with child care provided.

Several fund raising activities are conducted each year in order to support classroom teachers with activities. The Friendship School Family Organization also hosts several teacher appreciation breakfasts/lunches each year.

Visitors

Visitors will need to ring the doorbell to enter the building. All visitors are required to sign in and out, to show identification and to state where they will be visiting. Only parents/guardians are allowed to visit a child in his/her classroom or observe from the observation room attached to each classroom. Others must either be accompanied by a parent/guardian or provide a letter from the parent/guardian granting permission to visit. The school will verify the signature of the parent/guardian. Teachers will always be informed when parents are in the observation room to observe their children.

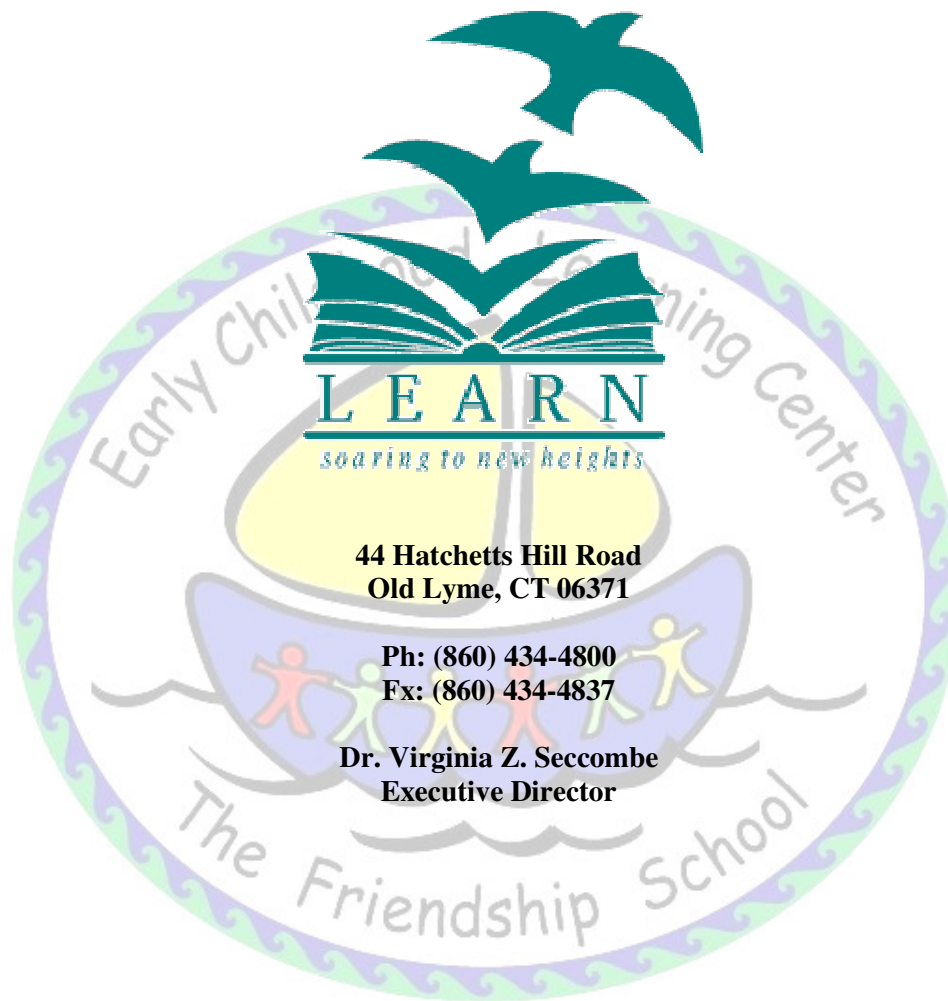
classrooms. Community volunteers are also welcome to read to children, help in the library or work in a classroom. Volunteers are required to complete a screening application, reference check and background check prior to beginning their work at TFS.



Volunteers

A major goal of this school is parent/guardian involvement. Volunteers are welcome and needed to assist with classroom activities, as well as to be participants on Family Organization committees. In addition, many student volunteers from Waterford and New London High Schools complete either community service hours, Young Education Society hours, or classroom requirements for childcare experience by volunteering in Friendship School classrooms. Teachers rely on their valuable assistance in the classroom. Volunteers must complete registration paperwork in the office before beginning to volunteer. College interns may spend part of their semester as volunteers in various

**Selected
LEARN POLICIES**



*A complete LEARN Policy manual is located in the TFS Parent Resource Room.

Exclusion from School for Disciplinary Purposes

LEARN and The Friendship School (TFS) affirm their commitment to the right of each child to obtain an education in an atmosphere conducive to learning. In connection with this right, there lies the responsibility on the part of each student to abide by the policies and school rules which were established to insure an orderly education process.

Exclusion from school (removal, suspension, or expulsion) may be a necessary disciplinary action for students whose conduct endangers persons or property, seriously disrupts the educational process, or violated publicized policy and/or school rules. In keeping with the mandates of Connecticut General Statutes concerning exclusion for disciplinary purposes, LEARN and The Friendship School:

1. Authorizes teacher in its employ to remove a student from class when such students causes a serious disruption of the education process within the classroom.
2. Authorizes the administration of the schools under its direction to suspend any student whose conduct endangers persons or property, seriously disrupts the educational process or violates publicized policy and/or school rules.
3. LEARN retains for itself the authority to exclude from school until a PPT is convened, any student whose conduct endangers persons or property, seriously disrupts the education process, or violates publicized policy and/or school rules. Whenever LEARN excludes a student from school permanently, it shall, with the student's home district offer such student an alternative educational program or plan: The policy on exclusion shall apply to all activities sponsored by LEARN and TFS. Included in these activities are transportation, field trips, extra curricular activities as well as the regular school day.

Definitions

The term *Removal* - means excluding a pupil from class when such pupil causes a serious disruption within the classroom, provided no pupil shall be excluded from class more than six times in any year nor more than twice in one week unless the pupil is referred to the Director or his/her designee and granted an informal hearing in accordance with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes.

The term *Suspension* - means an exclusion from school privileges for disciplinary reasons by an authorized member of the administrative staff after talking to all persons involved. Suspensions shall not be for more than ten consecutive school days, or fifty school days in a school year provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school in which the suspension is imposed.

The term *Exclusion* - means the exclusion of a pupil from school privileges for more than ten consecutive school days by the Board of Directors for LEARN for a period of time not to exceed 180 days for reasons as defined in Connecticut General Statutes.

The term *Emergency* - means a situation under which the continued presence of the pupil in school poses a danger to persons or property or a disruption of the education process. In such cases a student may be excluded before an investigation of the incident. A hearing should be scheduled as soon after exclusion as possible.

Misconduct Requiring Disciplinary Action

The following breaches of conduct on school property, in a school classroom, on school transportation, or at any school activity, may result in removal, suspension or expulsion:

- A. Disruptive activities at school functions.
- B. Disruptive classroom procedures.
- C. Willfully or recklessly striking or assaulting, or attempting to strike or assault, another person.
- D. Stealing or attempting to steal school property, private property, or other public property.
- E. Causing, or attempting to cause, damage to school property, private property, or other public property.
- F. Throwing of food or causing disruption in a lunchroom or cafeteria.
- G. Possessing, using, transporting, or transmitting, consuming or having consumed dangerous drugs, narcotics, or alcoholic beverages without authorization. Dangerous drugs or narcotics shall mean any controlled drug, as defined in Connecticut General Statutes, Section 19- 443 as amended.
- H. Possession or use of electronic paging or two-way communication devices such as beepers.
- I. Using obscene or profane language, or making obscene or profane gestures to members of the school staff, students or other persons.
- J. Deliberately refusing to comply with a reasonable directive from a member of the school staff.
- K. Participating in a walk-out, sit-in, or boycott, picketing or other demonstration which disrupts the educational process.
- L. Threatening, harassing, intimidating, or blackmailing school staff, students, or other persons.
- M. Leaving school grounds without permission.
- N. Failure to report to, or remain in an assigned area.
- O. Violating school smoking regulations.
- P. Violating published attendance regulations.
- Q. Violating any other disciplinary regulations and directives of LEARN/TFS.
- R. Wearing any article of clothing (including jackets, shoes, hats and bandannas) jewelry, or other item which is identifiable as a known symbol of gang membership or affiliation.
- S. Off-campus misconduct which directly affects the school's orderly operations by threatening
- T.

the safety of school property or the welfare of the persons who work or study there.

- U. Gambling.
- V. Possessing, using, transporting, or transmitting any firearms, knives, explosives, or other dangerous object or substances of no reasonable use to the student at school.

The normal process of disciplinary action shall be:

- I. Teacher Intervention
 - II. Administrative involvement
 - III. Parent notified
 - IV. Meeting to develop next steps
 - V. Meeting of LEARN, parents, home district (may be PPT)
 - VI. Notification to outside authorization.
- Depending on the severity of the situation, removal and suspension can occur at any point in this process.

Students Records: Confidential

LEARN provides special education and regular education services to local education agencies (LEAS's) in accordance with Sections 10-66n of the Connecticut General Statutes as may be amended from time to time. LEARN will maintain records and provide for the filing, protection, confidentiality, classification, review, and, when appropriate, destruction of all records received and generated in connection with a student's attendance in a LEARN program. The maintenance of these records will be in accordance with Connecticut Regulations Concerning Children Requiring Special Education, (Section 10-76d-18), The Family Education Rights and Privacy act (20 U.S.C. 123g) and regulations there under and 20 U.S.C. 1417 and regulations there under.

In addition, all LEARN personnel who collect or use personally identifiable information regarding students will be annually informed of the confidential nature of such information, and LEARN procedures with respect to the rights of students and parents as they relate to the confidentiality of records and information.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Procedure to Inspect and Review Education Records

Parent or eligible student may, upon request, inspect and review the student's education records. Eligible persons must submit to the LEA or the appropriate LEARN designate a written request that identifies as accurately as possible the record or records for which the request for inspection and review is submitted. As required by Section 1076d-189(b)(1) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, request by parents of students requiring special education and related services will be accommodated within 10 days of the receipt of such requests, within 3 school days of the receipt of such request if the requests are made in order to prepare for a meeting regarding an individualized education program or within 3 calendar days of such a request if the request is made in order to prepare for a meeting related to any due process proceeding.

When a record contains information about other students, the eligible student or parent will not be allowed to inspect or review the portion of the record that pertains to other students.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that school correct records, which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

One free copy per year of the student's education records will be provided by LEARN within 10 school days of a written request by parents of students.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them.

Substance Abuse

Through the use of curriculum development, classroom activities, community support and resources, a consistent administrative and faculty effort, education processes mandated through IDEA, and rehabilitative and disciplinary procedures, the administration and staff of LEARN/TFS, in cooperation with the student's parents/guardians, will work to educate, prevent, and intervene in the abuse of all drug, alcohol, and mood altering substances by the entire student population in accordance with state law.

As an extension of this policy, the rules, regulations, and guidelines shall be used by all LEARN personnel when responding to drug, mood altering substance, and alcohol related situations.

Substance Abuse Rules and Regulations

A student who, on school grounds, during a school session, or anywhere at a school-sponsored activity, is under the influence of alcohol, drugs or mood altering substances or possesses, uses, dispenses, sells or aids in the procurement of alcohol, narcotics, restricted drugs, mood altering substances, or any other substance purported to be a restricted substance or over the counter drug shall be subjected to the process pursuant to the provisions and procedures outlined below.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student who is required to take medication (prescribed by a physician) during the school day shall so inform the school nurse, LEARN staff, or the person designated to act in the absence of a nurse. Such medication will then be administered under the supervision of the school nurse or the designated individual.

Procedures

1. Any teacher or other school personnel who believes that any student is not functioning properly, should contact the designated administrator who will take responsibility to see that the student is immediately seen by a nurse or other individual capable of evaluating the student. This individual and this teacher will document a referral. The staff is not being asked to evaluate whether or not this is chemical in nature.
2. The nurse will determine whether the student is in need of urgent medical attention. If so, the nurse will administer any first aid required and/or immediately request emergency services and will immediately notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and LEARN/TFS administration.
3. If urgent medical attention is not required, the nurse will inform the administrator of the student's condition. The administrator will then contact and inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the situation, including physical and behavioral observations.
4. If it is determined that the student's inability to function properly is due to drug or alcohol abuse, the following shall apply:

Consequences of Alcohol or Other Drug Abuse

Consequences for the Use, Sale or Possession of Intoxicants or Mood Altering Drugs in a manner Not Prescribed by a Physician.

Any student in LEARN/TFS using, in possession of, or under the influence of intoxicants, mood altering drugs, or look-alike, or in possession of related drug paraphernalia during a school session, on school premises, or anywhere at a school-sponsored activity shall automatically be subject to the following actions:

First Violation

Any student found to be in violation of this policy for the first time during his/her tenure at LEARN/TFS will be suspended from school. The police will be notified in case of possession. The sending LEA will be contacted, and a PPT will be convened as soon as possible if appropriate. In some cases the school administrator may make a referral to appropriate agencies licensed to assess and treat drug and alcohol abuse.

The PPT for identified students will consider the following options for action:

- a. In school counseling;
- b. Involvement in a drug abuse group in the school;
- c. Referral to self-help groups within the community that are specifically set up to assist the person involved with alcohol or other drugs; and
- d. Referral to appropriate agencies (i.e. agencies licensed to assess and treat drug including alcohol abuse).

The PPT will set the guidelines for failure to comply.

Second Violation

Any student found to be in violation of this policy for the second time during his/her tenure at LEARN/TFS, shall be suspended. The police will be notified in case of possession if appropriate.

The LEA will be notified, and a PPT will be convened as soon as possible.

- a. The PPT will give serious consideration to the following actions in which the student must:
 - 1) Seek and complete an assessment by a physician or related agency (NOTE: the chosen agency must be licensed to evaluate drug, including alcohol problems);
 - 2) Demonstrate compliance with the treatment program as recommended after the assessment;
 - 3) Successfully complete treatment program; and
 - 4) Agree to a behavior contract between the student, school administration and a representative of the assessment group as a condition of re-admittance to the program.
- b. Review PPT recommendations and student actions up to present.

- b. As a result of the second violation, the PPT will give due consideration to the appropriateness of LEARN/TFS as a placement.
- d. The PPT shall develop guidelines for failure to comply.

Third Violation

- a. Readmission to School after the Third Violation.
- b. Reentry to LEARN/TFS will be determined with the PPT process.
- c. Student Enrollment in Non-Public Education During the Period of Rules Enforcement.
- d. Any student who elects to enroll in any non-public or public education during the period of time affected by these rules and then chooses to re-enroll in LEARN/TFS will be enrolled only under the conditions specified by agreement with administrations during the placement PPT.
- e. Consequences for Selling, Dealing, or giving Away Intoxicants or Mood Altering Drugs.
- f. Any student found to be exchanging, distributing, selling, giving away, or possessing an intoxicant or mood altering drug with the intention of exchanging, distributing, selling or giving away such intoxicants or mood altering drugs, look-alike drugs or paraphernalia on school premises or while participating in or attending school sponsored activity, will be subject to the same actions previously outlined in this policy, and the police will be notified.

g. Administrative Guidelines

- I. The Executive Director shall provide for the development of administrative rules relating to this policy to include all relevant definitions.
- II. Prescription medications are to be construed as exceptions to this policy when used by the individual for whom they are prescribed in the manner and amount prescribed.
- III. Designated school personnel may search a student's car, locker, and bag, may demand that a student empty his/her pockets if there is reasonable cause to believe that the student possesses objects or chemicals which may endanger the health, safety, and welfare of himself/herself or others.
- IV. When the LEA policy and the LEARN/TFS policy do not coincide, the appropriate administrators shall mutually agree as to which policy (ices) shall be placed in. All policies and actions must comply with [PL.94-142] IDEA

Dangerous Weapons in the Schools (#5133)

School rules have long forbidden students to bring weapons or dangerous instruments onto school property or school-sponsored activities. Weapon and dangerous instruments shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Any firearms of any description.
2. Any knife or similar items that could be dangerous to others as defined by State law.
3. Chemical weapons or explosive devices (e.g. mace, ammunitions).
4. Any device having a sharp point (e.g. ice picks)
5. Any other dangerous instrument that is capable of inflicting injury.

A student having in his or her possession, or in a desk or locker, or anywhere on school property, school transportation, or while any school-sponsored activities are occurring, any weapon listed above, shall be subject to both school discipline (expulsion) and law enforcement intervention. In addition, use of such weapons or dangerous instrument will result in criminal prosecution.

A student using such a weapon to threaten or inflict injury on another will be referred to the police for criminal prosecution.

In the enforcement of this policy, LEARN administrators may authorize:

1. Unannounced inspections of students' lockers.
2. Inspections of student automobiles driven to school and parked on school property.
3. Inspection of the contents of student's pockets, purse, and/or bags if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of a weapon or dangerous instrument.

In all cases of possible violation of criminal statutes related to the possession and/or use of weapons, the LEARN administration and police department will work cooperatively to determine the best course of action.

Each LEARN administrator shall provide written copies of this policy to all members of the faculty and student body.

Sexual Harassment (#5005)

It is the policy of the LEARN Board of Directors that any form of sexual harassment is forbidden in the workplace and in all school facilities, whether by supervisory or non-supervisory personnel, by individuals under contract, or volunteers subject to the control of the Board.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, including but not limited to, insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct; threats or suggestions that a student's submission to or rejection of unwelcome conduct will in any way influence an academic decision regarding that student, or conduct of a sexual nature which substantially interferes with a student's academic performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic environment, such as the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

It is the express policy of the Board to encourage victims of sexual harassment to report such claims. Students are encouraged to promptly report complaints of sexual harassment to the Executive Director or a responsible designee who will forward the report to the Executive Director. Complaints will be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality will be maintained by all persons involved in the investigation, and no reprisals or retaliation will be allowed to occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of sexual harassment. The Executive Director will develop and distribute sexual harassment complaint procedures.

LEARN Grievance Procedures for Titles VI and IX, Section 504

Informal Procedure

- A. Any student, parent/guardian, staff member, or applicant to a program who feels that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis on race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap shall contact the designated Compliance Coordinator within 30 days of the alleged occurrence to discuss the nature of the complaint. The Compliance Coordinator shall maintain a written record, which shall contain the following:
1. Full name and address of the complainant.
 2. Full name and position of the person(s) who allegedly discriminated against the complainant.
 3. A concise statement of the facts constituting the alleged discrimination.
 4. Dates of the alleged discrimination.
- B. At the time the alleged discrimination complaint is filed, the Compliance Coordinator shall review and explore grievance procedures with the complainant and answer any questions. The Compliance Coordinator shall begin investigating the complaint as soon as practical, but in no case, more than ten (10) working days from the time the complaint was received. Within this time limit the Compliance Coordinator shall meet informally with the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint was lodged, and shall provide confidential counseling where advisable and shall finally seek an informal agreement between the parties concerned. Every attempt shall be made to seek a solution and resolve the alleged discrimination complaint at this level.
- C. If the complainant is not satisfied with these initial informal procedures and within twenty (20) working days from the date of the original discussion with the Compliance Coordinator, more formal procedures may be initiated by the complainant to future individual(s) against whom the complaint explore and resolve the problem internally.

D. If the complainant is not satisfied with these initial informal procedures and within twenty (20) working days from the date of the original discussion with the Compliance Coordinator, more formal procedures may be initiated by the complainant to future individual(s) against whom the complaint explore and resolve the problem internally.

Formal Procedure

- A. Level One – Program Coordinator/Director
- a) grievance with the program coordinator/director specifying the alleged discrimination.
 - b) Within five (5) working days after the receipt of this formal grievance, the program coordinator/director will hold a meeting with the grievant.
 - c) The program coordinator/director shall, within four (4) working days after the hearing, render a decision and reasons in writing to the grievant.
- B. Level Two - Executive Director
- d) If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level One, the grievant, within five (5) working days after the decision or seven (7) working days after the Level One meeting, file the grievance with the Executive Director.
 - e) The Executive Director shall, within five (5) working days after the receipt of the grievance, meet with the grievant.
 - f) The Executive Director shall, within five (5) working days after such meeting, render a decision and the reasons in writing to the grievant.
- C. Level Three - LEARN
- g) If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of his/her grievance at Level Two, he/she may, within five (5) working days after the receipt of the decision or eight (8) working days after the meeting with the Executive Director, file the grievance with the LEARN Board of Directors.

The LEARN Board of Directors or a committee thereof shall, within ten (10) working days after the receipt of the grievance, meet with the grievant for the purpose of resolving the grievance.

g) The LEARN Board of Directors or a committee thereof shall, within five (5) working days after such a meeting, render its decision and the reasons in writing to the grievant.

Any person may also file a complaint of illegal discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights, Washington, D.C., at the same time he/she files the grievance during or after use of the grievance process, or without using the grievance process at all. If a complaint is filed with the Office for Civil Rights, it must be filed in writing no later than 180 days after the occurrence of the possible discrimination.

Compliance Coordinator for Title VI and Section 504
Doreen Marvin
or
Mary Royce
LEARN
44 Hatchetts Hill Road
Old Lyme, CT 06371
860-434-4800

Compliance Coordinator for Title IX
Lynmarie R. Thompson
or
Mary Royce
LEARN
44 Hatchetts Hill Road
Old Lyme, CT 06371
860-434-4800

Emergency Evacuation Plan

This was developed in response to a request for providing an emergency evacuation plan in the case of a nuclear power plant emergency or other incident.

ALERT SIGNAL - is a steady siren toner for three (3) minutes or more from sirens or loud speakers on emergency vehicles.

WHEN YOU HEAR THE ALERT SIGNAL - turn on your radio or television to listen to the Emergency Broadcast System. You will be kept informed by local and state authorities as long as there is an emergency.

IF YOU ARE TOLD TO STAY HOME AND TAKE SHELTER - stay indoors and close all windows, doors, dampers, etc. **STAY CALM** and keep tuned to the Emergency Broadcast System for further instructions.

IF YOUR CHILDREN ARE IN SCHOOL - do not attempt to pick them up. Your children will either be sheltered at school, or transported and cared for at the reception center/shelter according to the location (town or city) in which the school is located. This information can be found in all SNET Telephone Books on pages 1 and 2 of the yellow pages.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

TEACHERS/INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS:

All students shall be safely boarded on proper vans/buses, etc. prior to leaving the classroom and/or school.

OFFICE PERSONNEL:

NOT directly responsible for student evacuations may leave as soon as directed.

SCHOOL BASED SERVICES ADMINISTRATION:

Shall be responsible for contacting district transportation companies for LEARN students not transported by LEARN Transportation.

Public Act 99-256: An Act Concerning Laser Pointers

This Act prohibits persons under the age of eighteen from possessing a laser pointer on school grounds or in any public place. The Act also provides that no person shall sell, offer to sell, lease, give or otherwise provide a laser pointer to a person under eighteen years of age. A person may temporarily transfer a laser pointer to a person under eighteen years of age for educational or other lawful purpose if the minor is under the direct supervision of a parent, legal guardian, teacher, employer or other responsible adult. This Act takes effect October 1, 1999.

Public Act 99-288: An Act Concerning Education Accountability

This Act provides that on or before July 1, 2000, each board of education shall review and revise its policy for promotion grade to grade and for graduation in order to ensure that such policies foster achievement and reduce the incidence of social promotion. Such policy shall include objective criteria for the promotion of graduation of students, reporting of students' progress against such criteria, and alternatives to promotion such as transition programs, and shall provide for supplemental services. The policy may require students who have substantial academic deficiencies that jeopardize their eligibility for promotion or graduation to attend after-school program, summer school or other such programs offered by the school district to assist the students in remediating such deficiencies. This Act further provides that on or by October 1, 1999, the State Board of Education shall prepare a list of elementary and middle schools, by school district that are in need of improvement based on student performance and performance on the State Wide Mastery Examination.

The Department of Education shall notify each board of education of the schools in its district that are on the list. Thereafter, on or before January 1, 2000, and biannually thereafter, each board of education, through its superintendent of schools, shall meet with the Commissioner of Education or his/her designee to discuss the process for improving school performance. Such board of education shall require the school in question to develop an improvement plan and take steps necessary to become accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The improvement plan will be submitted by the school in question to the board of education for approval and shall be implemented at the beginning of the following school year. The improvement plan may provide for site based management and shall be developed in consultation with the school's principal, teachers and parents of students attending the school. The board of education shall monitor progress made by the school under the improvement plan. If two years after the date of approval of the improvement plan the board of education finds that the school has not sufficiently progressed, the board of education shall develop a plan for such school requiring one or more of the following actions:

1. closing and reconstituting the school;
2. restructuring the school in terms of the grades included or the programs offered, or both;
3. providing for site-based management of the school; and/or
4. allowing students in that school to attend other public schools in the school system. The board of education may include in such plan a provision for the transfer of employees. The board of education shall submit its plan to the Commissioner of Education for approval.

5. In addition, each board of education for a priority school district shall within available appropriations require the schools to provide additional instruction, unless the school's principal determines that such instruction is not necessary based on the recommendations of the student's teacher, for the 2000-2001 school year and each year after, of each student who fails to meet the state-wide standard for remedial assistance on the fourth grade Mastery Examination; and for the 2001-2002 school year and each school year thereafter, to each student who fails to meet the state wide standards for remedial assistance on the Sixth Grade Master Examination.

Such instruction may include tutoring, an after school or school vacation program or a weekend school program. In addition, such boards of education shall require students to attend summer school. The Department of Education may award grants to boards of education of priority school districts for summer school programs and weekend school programs. This Act took effect July 1, 1999.

Non-Discrimination Statement

LEARN is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, religion, national origin, color, race, marital status, ancestry, mental disorder, physical, mental or learning disability.

Asbestos Policy

All LEARN buildings that are occupied by LEARN employees and students, have been inspected by an accredited inspector as required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AHERA). AHERA requires Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to identify Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) in their school building and to take appropriate actions to control the release of asbestos fibers.

The building will be re-inspected every 6 months by qualified school personnel to determine any changes in the condition of the identified ACM. Additionally, the school building will be re-inspected every 3 years by an accredited and licensed inspector following the same basic criteria as the original inspection.

An Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) has been prepared by an accredited and licensed asbestos management planner as required by AHERA and the State of Connecticut Department of Health. The AMP is available for review during the normal business hours, without cost or restriction, to representatives of EPA and the State of Connecticut, school district personnel, their representative, parents or legal guardians and the public.

Soliciting Funds From and By Students (#1324)

Fund-raising activities may be approved by the Executive Director consistent with the following guidelines:

1. The fund-raising is in connection with school-sponsored projects. All such requests shall be made in writing.
2. There are sufficient educational or financial benefits which will accrue to the school and/or students, either directly or indirectly, from the activity.
3. The mechanics or procedures of fund-raising will neither be an unacceptable burden to teachers or other school staff members nor subject LEARN to inappropriate risks or responsibilities in handling funds.

There shall be no direct solicitation of funds by outside organizations from students except on specific approval of the Board of Directors.

Use of Beeper (Paging Devices)/Cellular Telephones (#5151)

Students shall not possess or use a remotely activated paging device or use a cellular mobile telephone during school hours.

The Program Administrator may grant written permission for possession and use of a paging device or use of a cellular telephone by a student or his/her parent or guardian established to the satisfaction of the Administrator that a reasonable basis exists for the possession and use of the device.

A person who discovers a student possessing or using a paging device or using a cellular telephone without the written permission of the Program Administrator shall report the violation to a Program Administrator who shall confiscate the device and contact the parent/guardian.

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention (#5114)

Promotion, acceleration, and retention of a student to a particular grade shall always be made in the best interest of the student.

Teachers shall recommend promotion or non-promotion of pupils. When necessary, administrators shall review a recommendation and after consultation with the parent, make a decision on placement for the child. In case of a special education student, decisions would be based on PPT recommendations.

Promotion and retention from grade to grade in the elementary school shall be based on the following:

1. The achievement of the student in the present grade.
1. The ability of the child to do work in the succeeding grade.
2. Recommendations and information provided by the professional staff.
3. Input from the parent/guardian.
4. Other data relevant to the decision.

Searches (#5152)

Desks and school lockers are the property of the school. The right to inspect desks and lockers assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property with reasonable care for the privacy rights of students.

The exercise of the right to inspect also requires protection of each student's personal privacy and protection from coercion. An authorized school administrator may search a student's locker or desk under two (2) conditions.

1. That the student's desk or locker contains illegal items, which would, if present pose a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in the school. Such items would include, but not be limited to, chemicals, ammunition, weapons, drugs, and alcoholic beverages.
2. The student(s) have been informed in advance that Board policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are contained therein.

Use of drug-detection dogs and metal detectors, or similar detective devices may be used only with the express authorization of the Executive Director.

District officials may seize any item which the possession of or use of is evidence of a violation of law, Board policy, administrative regulation or school rule, or is prohibited by such law, policy, regulation or rule.

A student and his/her belongings may be searched with a Director or Director's designee's permission if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The scope of the search must be reasonable related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the suspected infraction.

Proper standards for conducting student searches shall consist of, but not be limited to, the following procedures:

All student searches must be conducted in the presence of two (2) faculty members. It is recommended that one faculty member be an administrator or an administrative designee. One faculty member will properly search the student/suspect while the second faculty member will serve as a witness to the procedure.

1. Female students should be searched by female faculty members.
2. Male students should be searched by male faculty members

The LEARN Board of Directors authorizes the search of student lockers, desks, and other school property used by students for the presence of weapons, contraband, or the fruits of a crime if the:

1. Search is justified at its inception, and
2. Search as actually conducted is reasonable related in scope to the circumstances which justified it in the first place.

A search is justified at its inception when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. A search is reasonably related in scope when the measures adopted are reasonable related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.

Whenever it is necessary for law enforcement officials to execute a search or arrest warrant on school grounds, the administration shall attempt to notify the student's parent or guardian and refer him/her to the police. In addition, that the administration should make reasonable efforts, in cooperation with the participating law enforcement officials to ensure that student searches or arrests conducted pursuant to a warrant are conducted with as much respect for the student's privacy as possible.

As used in this policy, the term "parent" means either the parent or guardian of a student. The term "student" or "pupil" refers to a student enrolled in a LEARN program. Students who have reached the age of legal majority may have the right to consent to a certain involvement with law enforcement officials which would normally require parental consent. However, even when dealing with a student who has reached the age of legal majority, the procedures set forth above should be followed.

Bullying (#5007)

Hazing, bullying, menacing or abuse of students or staff members will not be tolerated. Any staff member, employee or student who engages in an act that injures, degrades, or disgraces another student or staff member, disrupts the educational process or interferes with a student's opportunity to obtain an education shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Bullying can be defined as repeated and systematic harassment and attacks on others, perpetrated by individuals or groups. Bullying takes many forms and can include many different behaviors, such as but not limited to:

1. physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethically-based verbal abuse and gender-based put-downs
3. threats and intimidation
4. extortion or stealing of money and possessions
5. exclusion from the peer group

A student who engages in any act of bullying is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including suspension, expulsion or referral to law enforcement officials.

A bullying prevention program shall be implemented which strives to develop a school and home environment:

- characterized by warmth, positive interest and involvement by adults;
- firm limits to unacceptable behavior
- where non-hostile, non-physical negative consequences are consistently applied in cases of violation of rules and other unacceptable behaviors;
- where adults act as authorities and positive role models; and
- where students are included in efforts to improve school climate.

The Executive Director shall develop rules and procedures which carry out the provision of this policy. In addition, the Executive Director shall provide that students and parents of student are notified of this prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by ensuring the posting of such information at each school and by ensuring inclusion of such information in student and parent handbooks.

**Pesticide Applications at Schools
letter/Application**

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff:

In compliance with The Act Concerning Notice of Pesticide Applications at Schools and Day Care Centers, LEARN has implemented the following procedures:

- LEARN will work closely with any Pest Control Vendors and Landlords (at our rental sites) to use control techniques that use the least amount of pesticides as possible to control any pest problems at LEARN sites and that any necessary pesticide use be conducted outside of school hours.
- LEARN will establish a registry of parents, guardians, and staff who want notice of pesticide use in advance.
- LEARN will provide notice of pesticide application to those on the registry list by mail at least 24 hour in advance, except in emergency situations.
- LEARN will maintain pesticide application records for five years after each application.

Attached please find a Request form that should be completed and returned to LEARN, should you wish to be placed on the registry for advance notice of pesticide application.

Sincerely,

Virginia Z. Seccombe
Executive Director

**REQUEST TO BE PLACED ON THE
LEARN REGISTRY FOR ADVANCED
NOTICE OF PESTICIDE APPLICATION**

I am requesting that my name be placed on the LEARN registry for advanced notice of pesticide application. I understand that I will be sent a notice by mail at least 24 hours in advance of pesticide application, except in emergency situations.

NAME

MAILING ADDRESS

LEARN SITE WHERE I AM EMPLOYED
OR MY CHILD ATTENDS SCHOOL:

SIGNED

DATE

Please return this form to:

**LEARN
Attn: Facilities Maintenance
44 Hatchedts Hill Road
Old Lyme, CT 06371**