

SIMSBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING  
January 25, 2022  
Squadron Line School  
Library Media Center  
6:30 p.m.  
AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. PUBLIC AUDIENCE
- III. COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOE COMMUNICATIONS
- IV. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
  - A. Approval of Minutes of January 11, 2022 Meeting EXHIBIT I
- V. INFORMATION AND REPORTS
  - A. Squadron Line School Report EXHIBIT II
  - B. 2022-23 Budget EXHIBIT III
    - Enrollment and Staffing
  - C. Policy First Reading EXHIBIT IV
- VI. PUBLIC AUDIENCE
- VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

It is anticipated the Board of Education will enter Executive Session to discuss a student matter.
- VIII. FUTURE BUSINESS
  - A. Next Board Meeting, Tuesday, February 8, 2022,  
BOE Conference Room

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**TOWN OF SIMSBURY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

January 11, 2022

Ms. Susan Salina called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. in the Board of Education conference room.

Roll Call:

**Members present:** Mmes. Susan Salina, Tara Willerup, Lydia Tedone, Jen Batchelar and Sharon Thomas. Messrs. Todd Burrick, Jeff Tindall and Brian Watson.

**Also present:** Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Assistant Superintendent Neil Sullivan, Director of Finance Amy Meriwether, BOE Student Representative Alex Picoult and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Public Audience

**Elizabeth Peterson**, 32 Fox Den Road, thanked the administration for engaging in conversation relative to discipline actions with students at SHS. She stated her son took a video of a violent attack at SHS. In speaking with the assistant to one of the Assistant Principals she was asked which attack. Ms. Peterson requested statistics on disciplinary actions at SHS and expressed concern that victims are being overlooked.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOE COMMUNICATIONS

Communications

Mr. Picoult reported that second semester at SHS ends on Friday and midterms will be held next week. He noted that the SHS musical production of Pippin will begin on January 28 and the HJ performance of Frozen Junior this spring. Mr. Picoult reported on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls in the Girls in Engineering program at SHS. He noted activities occurring at the elementary schools.

Ms. Willerup stated that MLK events are being postponed to March due to COVID. Ms. Tedone reported that the Equity Symposium and Advocacy Institute are being held next week in Washington D.C. both in-person and virtually. There will also be a meeting with policy makers and Commissioner Cardona. Ms. Tedone noted that the CT legislative session will run February 9 through May 4.

Ms. Lemke reported that Friday is an early release day for professional development. At the secondary level departments will meet to discuss their goal work. K-6 will have SEL (social/emotional learning) training.

Mr. Sullivan reported that there have been significant changes to COVID contact tracing and quarantines in the schools. He stated that the district now has self-test kits and masks available at the schools. Mr. Sullivan addressed attendance, stating that during the 6 days since our return from the holiday recess, the absence rate for staff has ranged between 9% and 13%. The district can weather absences at this rate. Mr. Sullivan stated that the Latimer Lane School renovation initial design plans were shared with the Latimer Lane community with a good number of parents in attendance. In response to Ms. Thomas, Mr. Sullivan stated that the student absentee rate has been around 15% since the holidays.

Ms. Salina thanked Tariffville School for the holiday cards provided to board members. She thanked the administration for their work during this peak in COVID.

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

#### A. Approval of Minutes of December 14, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Burrick: MOVED to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2021 meeting.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved. Ms. Thomas abstained.

#### B. Personnel

Ms. Tedone: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignations of Nicole Decker effective January 14, 2022 and Elizabeth Wojewoda effective January 28, 2022.

Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.

#### C. Approval of Karen McHose Memorial Scholarship

Ms. Thomas: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the Karen McHose Memorial Scholarship, to be disbursed in 2022.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

### INFORMATION AND REPORTS

#### A. Special Education Program Review

Katie Krasula, Director of Pupil Services, reviewed the mission statement for the department and noted that this year's department theme is Row the Boat. She stated that Simsbury has met the state requirements around the 16 indicators that create the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Ms. Krasula addressed reading/dyslexia stating that strategies and structures have been developed and are understood across the district.

Ms. Krasula discussed the district mental health data. 44% (312 out of 175) IEPs include social/emotional/behavioral goals and direct services. These students are seen regularly by a school psychologist or social worker. 70% (224 out of 318) 504 Plans are for students with a mental health/behavioral diagnosis. These include diagnosis such as anxiety, depression, ADHA and OCD. This has increased by more than 50% since the pandemic began. Ms. Krasula noted that there has also been an increase in reports of self-harm and suicidal ideation. When this occurs a clinical assessment is done for the student. Ms. Krasula addressed chronic absenteeism, noting that this is usually connected to mental health needs. Ms. Krasula reviewed the referral to special education over the past 6 years. She reviewed the mental health support staffing districtwide.

Mr. Burrick asked what progress we have made on the achievement gap. Ms. Krasula responded that our special ed scores are close to the regular ed scores for the state. Progress has been made with our ELA scores. Mr. Burrick asked what the

Approval of  
Minutes of  
December 14,  
2022

Personnel

Approval of  
Karen McHose  
Scholarship

Special  
Education  
Program Review

goal is relative to the data. Ms. Lemke responded that the goal is to work out of a gap in special ed. Ms. Krasula stated that individually we work to return students to regular ed. In response to Mr. Tindall, Ms. Lemke stated that the math gap in special ed is similar to the math gap in regular ed.

Ms. Krasula described the Pathways program at SHS. The program is designed to meet student needs, provide academic support and clinical support for mental health. She stated the Pathways team is comprised of a special ed teacher, regular ed content teachers and a social worker. There are currently 14 students in the program. Ms. Krasula introduced special ed teacher Will Wesley, social worker Jovin Girard, and regular ed content teacher Shira Flowers.

Mr. Wesley stated that the Pathways program is a team effort. It is not the standard approach to students and includes vocational training. He emphasized that relationships come first in the program. The program prepares students for what comes after high school. The program provides real life skills, training in areas such as how to write a resume, get an apartment, and financial readiness. Mr. Wesley stated that they are currently looking to provide more internship opportunities for Pathways' students. Ms. Krasula noted that the Pathways program is for regular ed students who need an alternate education.

Shira Flowers, SHS English teacher, spoke about the academic model and the three principals of the program: support, excellence and access. She stated that there are 5 subject teachers involved in the Pathways program. Ms. Flowers noted the types of courses that are given and stated that there is much project based learning. She stated the goal of the program is to give students an interest in further pursuing learning.

Jovin Girard, SHS Social Worker, stated that human beings thrive with relationships. He described how Pathways students are involved in individual, group and family relationships through the program. This includes quarterly meetings with families. Mr. Wesley noted the strong family engagement that takes place through the program. He stated that the program is planning to start providing a monthly newsletter, parent seminars, training and a support group for parents. Mr. Wesley introduced Jack who has been part of the Pathways program for a few years.

Jack stated that he had a very difficult freshman year. Once he entered the Pathways program he was able to work on assignments at his own pace, meet goals, get things accomplished and obtain good grades without struggling. Jack said he has friends in and outside the program to talk to, as well as teachers. Jack discussed his goals for the future. Mr. Wesley pointed out that Jack designed the logo for the Pathways program.

Ms. Krasula addressed the staffing and support needs for 2022-23. The Special Education Department is requesting an additional 2 social workers so that there is an elementary social worker in each building. A restructure of elementary special education leadership such that there is a special education department supervisor in each of the elementary schools that would result in the addition of 2 special education department supervisors. The addition of 1 special education teacher to be split evenly between Latimer Lane School and Squadron Line School to accommodate the increase in caseloads. Ms. Krasula also noted the need for increased school psychologist and speech and language contracted services to

provide additional support to the special ed department. She reviewed the special education program costs for 2021-22.

#### PUBLIC AUDIENCE

**Lori Boyko**, 15 Oak Hurst Road, discussed her personal observations as a SHS parent and pointed out the disproportionate response to varying discretions.

**Liz Peterson**, 32 Fox Den Road, expressed concern that there is a discrepancy between teacher detentions and administrator detentions. She suggested that teachers may be going rogue when it comes to issuing detentions. Ms. Peterson stated that in speaking with Chief Boulter he said that mask wearing in Simsbury is about educating individuals on the reason for mask wearing. She suggested that the discipline at SHS seem contradictory to that premise.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Thomas: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

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Jennifer Batchelar  
Secretary

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Katie Wilde  
Recording Secretary

Public Audience

Adjournment

## EXHIBIT II

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis, Superintendent of Schools

DATE: January 25, 2022

RE: Squadron Line School Report

Tonight the Board meets at the recently updated Squadron Line School Media Center. We will hear from Principal Meg Evans and Assistant Principal Nysheria Sims-Oliver. This administrative team will share the many ways the Squadron Line community continues to "shine" amid the pandemic.

This is a big year for Squadron as it celebrates its 50th birthday. We will get a glimpse at how that celebration was kicked off in September. Additionally, we will get to see pictures and videos from other Squadron Line celebrations like the Storybook Pumpkin Stroll, Veteran's Day, and the Connecticut Children's Medical Center PJ Day for Cancer Research. They will also share the new Squadron Line event - a book swap - where students and staff are encouraged to bring in their gently used books for others to enjoy and choose a new read in the process!

Their brief presentation will conclude by showing short video montages that highlight Squadron Line staff and students sharing their first-hand experiences on social emotional learning. Garnering the thoughts from a representative cross-section of the Squadron Line community, the Board will be provided accounts of social emotional skills and activities that are making a difference in the daily culture of our largest elementary school in Simsbury.

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew Curtis  
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: January 25, 2022

RE: Budget Review 2022-23

This evening, Assistant Superintendent for Administration, Neil Sullivan, will present an overview of staffing and enrollment considerations which will impact the Board of Education's 2022-23 budget. The presentation will include information regarding

- Historical enrollment
- Program enhancements
- Staffing proposals at the elementary and secondary level
- Fixed contractual costs
- Enrollment related reductions

This presentation is included in your budget development notebooks that were distributed this evening.

MC:kdw

## EXHIBIT IV

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis  
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: January 25, 2022

RE: Board of Education Policies – First Reading

As part of the Policy Committee's 10-year cycle to review full sections of the Policy Book, the Policy Committee this year reviewed the 1000 Community Series. No revisions to the existing 1000 Series are necessary at this time. The committee reviewed policies recommended by the CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE) for possible inclusion in our policy book. Policies related to our communication via automated calls and text messages are being reviewed further by our Technology Department and will be brought forward at a later time. At this time, the policies below are recommended for inclusion in our policy book.

- 1000 Community Series
  - 1100.7 Parent Portal Acceptable Use and Safety Policy
  - 1111 News Media Relationship
  - 1112 Distribution of Materials by Students
  - 1213 Conduct on School Property

A copy of the recommended policies has been provided to you this evening for your review. Following any discussion, these policies will be brought forward for a second reading at the next Board of Education meeting.

MTC:kdw



**SIMSBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
POLICY SERIES 1000, COMMUNITY RELATIONS  
DRAFT**

**1000 CONCEPT AND ROLES IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

The Board of Education recognizes that the community shapes the quality of local education. It is imperative that members of the community and the school personnel cooperate in planning, developing policy, implementing programs, and evaluating results.

School-community relations are not merely reporting and interpreting but part of a public enterprise in which community members and school personnel play their respective roles in the best interests of the school district.

The Board of Education establishes the following goals for the community relations program:

1. To increase public understanding of the school system.
2. To increase community confidence and interest in the school system.
3. To promote effective dissemination of information concerning school activities.
4. To solicit and consider community opinions about the school system.
5. To encourage the sharing of resources among civic and community organizations for the benefit of the school system.
6. To invite community participation in school activities.

Adopted February 9, 2010

**1100 COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC**

General. The Board of Education believes it is important to inform the public about school curriculum, programs, and activities so citizens can participate in these programs. Concurrently, the school staff, administration, and Board of Education should be aware of the community's goals and concerns for its children so they may be given consideration in curriculum, program, and activity revisions.

To this end, the Board supports and encourages various means such

as publications, press releases, open houses, and other public events to disseminate school district information and to hear from the community.

Administration of the Community Relations Program. The community relations program shall be a concurrent responsibility of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools shall work with members of the Board of Education to conduct an active and comprehensive informational program throughout the school district.

Staff members shall be kept informed of community relations efforts, and their support and participation in such efforts shall be sought.

News of Board of Education Meetings and Activities. The Board of Education believes in the widest possible dissemination of news concerning the school and shall cooperate fully with the press, radio, and television to assure that news coverage is complete, balanced, and accurate. Board minutes policy are referenced in Bylaw 409.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes  
10-13 Making of reproductions  
1-14 "Certified copy" defined. Evidence  
1-16 Reproductions  
1-17 Reproductions to serve purposes of originals  
1-18 Disposition of original documents  
1-200-1-241 Freedom of Information Act  
10-220 Duties of boards of education.

Adopted February 9, 2010

#### 1100.1 Parent Involvement

The Board of Education recognizes parents are important participants in the education of children. Parent involvement in a child's education is a major factor in improving school effectiveness, the quality of education, and a child's academic success. Therefore, the Simsbury Public School System will promote an environment in which parents are valued as primary influences in their children's lives and are essential partners in the education of their children.

Teachers, parents and administrators need to work together to ensure the success of all students. Communication is a key component in this collaboration. Thus, the Board of Education commits to the establishment of effective two-way communication between all parents/families and schools, respecting the diversity and differing needs of families.

Conditions in the home significantly influence a child's achievement in school. Parents and family members, as their primary teachers, play a vital role in the intellectual, social and emotional growth of their children. Thus, the Board of

Education is committed to support parent involvement programs, which include parent education, providing materials and activities that will assist parents/families in supporting classroom learning and their children's achievement. Assistance will be provided for parents in understanding the State's academic standards, assessments and how to monitor a child's progress.

Families need to be included in the workings of schools in many different ways, to make them feel an essential part of the educational process. Thus, the Board of Education will commit to seeing that the schools develop new and more meaningful ways for parents to be actively involved in their children's education.

Improved student achievement must be the shared responsibility and ultimate goal of parents, teachers, the school system as a whole and the community at large. The School System will follow a course of action that will make parent involvement an ongoing process that is viewed as a valuable resource in all children's education.

The District shall ensure that information communicated to parents is in an understandable format and is adaptable if needed. Parents will be consulted in order to achieve this goal.

\*Parent is defined as parent/legal guardian and/or other family members assuming responsibility for the student.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes  
10-221 Boards of Education to prescribe rule(s), policies, and procedures as amended by PA 97-290

#### 1100.11 Title I Parental Involvement

The Simsbury Board of Education endorses the parent involvement goals of Title I and encourages the regular participation of Title I eligible children in all aspects of the program. The education of children is viewed as a cooperative effort among the parents, school and community. In this policy, the term "parent" also includes guardians and other family members involved in supervising the child's schooling.

The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop jointly with and distribute to parents of children participating in the Title I program a written parent involvement policy.

At the required annual meeting of Title I parents, parents will have opportunities to participate in the design, development, operation

and evaluation of the program for the next school year. Proposed activities shall be presented to fulfill the requirements necessary to address the requirements of parental involvement goals.

In addition to the required annual meeting, at least two additional meetings shall be held (at various times in the day or the evening) for parents of children participating in the Title I program. These meetings shall be used to provide parents with:

1. Timely information about programs provided under Title I;
2. A description and explanation of the curriculum in use in the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet;
3. Opportunities to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children; and
4. The opportunity to bring parent comments, if they are dissatisfied with the school's Title I program.

Title I funding, if sufficient, may be used to facilitate parent attendance at meetings through payment of transportation and childcare costs.

The parents of children identified to participate in Title I programs shall receive from the school principal and Title I staff an explanation of the reasons supporting each child's selection for the program, a set of objectives to be addressed, and a description of the services to be provided. Opportunities will be provided for the parents to meet with the classroom and Title I teachers to discuss their child's progress. Parents will also receive guidance as to how they can assist in the education of their children at home.

Each school in the District receiving Title I funds shall jointly develop with parents of children served in the program a "School-Parent Compact" outlining the manner in which parents, school staff and students share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement in meeting State standards. The School-Parent Compact shall:

1. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment enabling children in the Title I program to meet the State's academic achievement standards;
2. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment enabling children in the Title I

program to meet the State's academic achievement standards;

3. Indicate the ways in which each parent will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, monitoring television watching, volunteering in the classroom, and participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to their child's education and positive use of extra-curricular time; and
4. Address the importance of parent-teacher communication on an on-going basis, with at minimum, parent-teacher conferences, frequent reports to parents, and reasonable access to staff.

Legal Reference: P.L. 107-110, "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001," Title I – Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged, Sec. 1118

Adopted June 14, 2016

#### 1100.2 Media Access to Students

The Board recognizes the important role the media serves in reporting information about the district's program, services and activities. Therefore, the district will make every reasonable effort to provide media access to students.

School administrators shall be authorized to grant permission and set parameters for media access to students in their respective schools. The media may interview and photograph students involved in instructional programs and school activities including athletic events provided their presence will not be unduly disruptive and shall comply with Board policies and district goals.

Media representatives shall be required to report to the administration for prior approval before accessing students involved in instructional programs and activities not attended by the general public.

Media representatives wishing to photograph or identify particular students, must obtain parental or guardian approval as well. Such permission shall not be required before photographs, videotapes, and/or articles referring to students involved in athletic events may be published.

Parents who do not want their student interviewed, photographed or videotaped by the media shall inform the school Principal accordingly and may direct their student accordingly.

District employees may release student information to the media only in accordance with applicable provisions of the education records law and Board policies governing directory

information and personally identifiable information.

Parents will be advised of the district's media access to students policy at the time of the student's registration and each fall in the student/parent handbook.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes  
1-213 Access to public records. Exempt records.  
10-209 Records not to be public.  
Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Sec. 438, 20 U.S.C. Sec 1232g (1988).  
Title I - Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Act. (PL 105-17)

1100.3 Photographing/Videotaping of Staff  
Videotaping and filming of school district employees shall have the prior written consent of the Building Principal and the participating employees. If film or videotape is to be used for any purpose other than the purpose set forth on the employee consent form, then release/waiver forms shall be obtained from each participating employee and his/her Principal.

Revised June 14, 2016

1100.4 Recognition of Students, Citizens, Staff Members, and Members of the Board of Education  
The Board of Education is committed to recognizing and honoring citizens, students, staff, and groups whose distinguished or exceptional achievements have benefited or which benefit the school system. Persons so honored shall include retiring staff and Board members. The Board may act through recognition at Board of Education meetings, letters of recognition, or other appropriate methods.

Adopted February 9, 2010

1100.5 Photographing/Videotaping of Students  
In relation to the district publications or website, when any student filmed or videotaped can be identified or is a primary subject of the filming or videotaping, the district will obtain prior written consent/release/waiver from the student's lawful custodian. (Reference Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C.)

The district understands and encourages parents to take pictures of important events and programs their children participate in while enrolled in the Simsbury Public Schools. Parents must understand, however, that photographing or videotaping school activities is only permitted at the discretion of the administration. Generally, recording a school event is permissible. If recording or picture taking is

prohibited at a specific event, the administration will make an announcement indicating picture taking and/or recording is not permitted.

If pictures are taken, parents should refrain from rebroadcasting images to a general audience or public posting to the Internet, as the administration and many parents have concerns about dissemination of children's pictures via electronic media, particularly public disclosure on the Internet. If parents have any questions concerning this issue, they should contact the Assistant Superintendent for Administration.

Adopted June 14, 2016

1100.6

Visitors to School Buildings

The Board of Education encourages visits by citizens, taxpayers, and parents to all school buildings if they have legitimate business in the schools, such as scheduled meetings, attendance at pre-planned school events, or other invitations from school staff. Upon arrival, all visitors must comply with any and all applicable building security procedures, including but not limited to utilizing security buzzers for access, complying with requests for photo identification, complying with background checks that utilize available public databases, reporting directly to and signing in and out at the visitors' reception area of the school office, prominently displaying visitors' badges or other identification required for visitors to the schools buildings, limiting access to those areas of the buildings and grounds for which the visitors have authorized access, and complying with directives of school officials at all times.

Educational Observations – In order to promote a safe and productive educational environment for all students and staff, the Board of Education requires all visitors, including parents, who wish to observe specific classroom practice to receive approval from the school Principal or his/her designee before being permitted to conduct such observations. The Board of Education reserves the right to limit visits in accordance with administrative regulations.

Revised March 23, 2021

1100.7

Parent Portal Acceptable Use and Safety Policy

The Simsbury Public Schools uses PowerSchool for student information management. This program has

developed a parent portal tool to allow parents/guardians to view the records of their child(ren) via the Internet. Simsbury Public Schools will provide parents/guardians of currently enrolled students the privilege of free access to the parent portal. Only parents or guardians of students enrolled in the district will be allowed access to the parent portal. The district reserves the right to deny or cease access to the parent portal due to the abuse of the portal, court orders, or any other legal proceedings that limit the availability of private educational data.

### **Purpose**

The district has opened the parent portal to enhance communication between the district and parents/guardians. Users of the parent portal will have access to the following information about their children:

1. Attendance
2. Student schedule
3. Grade book and assignments

The district reserves the right to add or remove any of the above functions from the parent portal at any time.

### **Use of the Parent Portal**

Access to the parent portal on the district's system is a privilege, not a right. Users of the parent portal are required to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Users will act in a responsible, legal, and ethical manner.
2. Users will not attempt to harm or destroy data, the school, or the District network.
3. Users will not attempt to access data or any other account owned by another user.
4. Users will not use the parent portal for any illegal activity, including violation of data privacy laws.
5. Users who identify a security problem with the parent portal must notify the District's Technology Department/Central Office Administration immediately without demonstrating the problem to someone else.
6. Users will not share their password with anyone, including their own children.
7. Users will not set their own computer to automatically login to the parent portal.
8. Users identified as a security risk to the parent portal



or district's network will be denied access to the parent portal.

Anyone found to be in violation of these laws may be subject to civil and/or criminal prosecution.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-15b Access of parent or guardians to student's records.

11-8a Retention, destruction and transfer of documents

11-8b Transfer or disposal of public records. State Library Board to adopt regulations.

46b-56 (e) Access to Records of Minors. Connecticut Public Records Administration Schedule V - Disposition of Education Records (Revised 1983).

Federal Statutes

Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (section 438 of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended, added by section 513 of P.L. 93-568, codified at 20 U.S.C.1232g.).

Dept. of Education 34 C.F.R. Part 99 (May 9, 1980 45 FR 30802) regs. implementing FERPA enacted as part of 438 of General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) parent and student privacy and other rights with respect to educational records, as amended 11/21/96.

Adopted February 23, 2022

1111 NEWS MEDIA RELATIONSHIP

Schools are public institutions serving the educational needs of the community. Therefore, it is important that information be disseminated concerning programs, activities, and significant school events. The Board recognizes the important role the media serves in reporting information about the District's program, services and activities. Therefore, the District will make reasonable efforts to provide media access to students.

To ensure that publicity is coordinated with a common effort and purpose, the following shall be followed with news media:

1. Media representatives shall be required to report to the administration for prior approval before accessing students involved in instructional programs and activities not attended by the general public.
2. School administrators are authorized to grant permission and set parameters for media access to students in their respective schools.
3. The media may interview and photograph students involved in instructional programs and school activities including athletic events if

authorized by the Principal provided that their presence will not be unduly disruptive.

4. If, in the judgment of the administration, the presence of any photographer, broadcaster, or news journalist causes such disruption that orderly conduct of the activity becomes unfeasible, access by these individuals may be limited to the extent necessary to remove disruption.

5. News media personnel who intend to photograph, broadcast, or record for broadcast student activities shall provide appropriate identification to the school administrator, if requested, prior to access.

6. Only news media personnel employed by a newspaper, radio or television broadcasting company, or personnel of a recognized student news medium assigned to cover the activity shall be permitted to photograph, broadcast, or record for broadcast, such activity.

7. Media representatives wishing to photograph or identify particular students, must obtain parental or guardian approval as well as school administrator permission.

8. In the case of photographs, videotapes, and/or articles referring to students involved in athletic events parental or guardian permission may be provided on an annual basis.

9. Parents who do not want their student interviewed, photographed or videotaped by the media shall inform the school Principal accordingly. Parents who do not want their student interviewed, photographed or videotaped by the media shall inform the school Principal accordingly. Parents who do not want their student interviewed or photographed by the media should direct their child accordingly.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-226 Recording, broadcasting or photographing meetings

Adopted February 23, 2022

#### 1112 DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS BY STUDENTS

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by students as inexpensive means of mass communications. At the same time this procedure can prove objectionable to parents and the school district if overdone.

To provide the most effective use of this technique without exploitation of staff or students, the Superintendent or his/her designee may approve such distribution providing:

1. The materials relate to the school, community, local recreational or civic activities.
2. The materials do not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain, or political position.

3. The materials do not promote any political party or candidate.

All requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to people in the community, with the exception of requests from school-connected organizations like parent-teacher organizations or Board appointed citizens' ad hoc advisory committees, will be referred to the office of the Superintendent to determine whether the requests comply with overall school purposes and policy.

#### **Use of Students**

The Board prohibits the use of students during normal school hours in activities which are not part of the normal educational and planned curriculum process. Permission for use of students in activities of a non-educational nature must be obtained from the Superintendent or his/her designee who will ensure that the student's rights in terms of voluntary activities are maintained and that students are not exploited either knowingly or unknowingly.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall interpret this policy strictly. In case of differences regarding the decision, the decision of the Superintendent will be final in order that the best interests of the students will be served.

#### **Budget/Referendum Materials**

Information concerning a budget or referendum, specifying only the time, date, location, and question or proposal may be disseminated through the students. This information may not contain statements, or be written in a manner which may advocate a position on the budget or on a referendum question.

#### **Advertising in the Schools**

No advertising of materials used for commercial purposes shall be permitted in the school buildings or on the grounds of the District without prior approval of the Superintendent. Advertising in student publications shall be regulated by rules and regulations developed by the Superintendent. Ads concerning drug paraphernalia and any controlled substance are prohibited in any school-sponsored publication.

#### **Dissemination of Religious Materials**

Materials that have a religious content may be made available to students during non-instructional time. The district shall impose content neutral, time, place, and manner restrictions on the dissemination of religious materials to ensure that students are aware that the materials are not being endorsed or sponsored by the district.

(cf. 3152 Spending Public Funds for Advocacy)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

9-369b Explanatory text relating to local questions.

## 1200 PARTICIPATION BY THE PUBLIC

### 1200.1 Community Organizations

The Board of Education encourages the creation of parent organizations such as PTA, PTO units and student, teacher, and parent councils as appropriate means of achieving effective and maximum parental involvement with the school system.

The Board encourages the Superintendent of Schools, other administrators, teachers, and other staff members to work closely with the officers and directors of parent organizations.

### 1200.2 Advertising and Promotion

Students must be protected from possible exploitation in advertising or promoting interests of any non-school agency or organization. Within that context:

1. The schools may cooperate in furthering the work of any non profit community-wide social service agency; provided that such cooperation does not restrict or impair the educational program of the schools.
2. The schools may use films or other media materials which include commercial messages providing such materials can be justified on the basis of their educational values.
3. The Superintendent may, at his/her discretion, announce or authorize to be announced, any lecture, play, film, or other community activity with educational merit.
4. The schools may, upon approval of the Board of Education, cooperate with any agency in promoting activities in the general public interest, and which promote the education and the best interests of students.
5. No advertising material may be posted or distributed to students which, in the opinion of school authorities, would contribute to the personal gain of an individual, business, or company except as follows:
  - a. Educational material used by staff for educational purposes.
  - b. Samples, calendars, supply catalogs, etc., distributed to staff for examination, testing or review or routine classroom use, with administrative approval.

1212 VOLUNTEER POLICY

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of school volunteers at all levels of schooling. Volunteers can enhance collaboration between the school and community, broaden the school's educational environment and ultimately enrich students' school experience. The Board encourages a volunteer program in the District and in its schools with suitable regulations and safeguards.

Volunteers must work under the supervision of Simsbury Public Schools staff. Volunteers may assist with tasks, including: chaperoning field trips, coaching, clerical support, mentoring and other appropriate assignments.

Volunteers are held to the same standards of conduct as school staff and must observe all Board of Education policies. This includes, but is not limited to: use of appropriate language, maintaining confidentiality, wearing appropriate attire, and exercising good judgment.

Volunteers may be required to submit to state and federal criminal record checks and a record check of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. No person who is a "sex offender" as defined by Public Act 98-111, An Act Concerning the Registration of Sexual Offenders, may volunteer in the Simsbury Public Schools.

Given the legal requirements, no employee of the Simsbury Public Schools shall serve as a volunteer in any capacity, except as may be approved by the Superintendent or his/her delegate based on the specific situation.

Persons interested in volunteering their services should contact the school principal.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-4g

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-235

Connecticut General Statutes § 54-254

Public Act 97-920

Adopted: March 26, 2013  
Effective: August 28, 2013

## REGULATION OF SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

### I. Sign In Procedure

All school volunteers must report to the school office upon arrival to sign in. All volunteers must report to the office prior to departure to sign out. A sign-in/sign-out log will be maintained in each school office. Volunteers should indicate the purpose of their visit. Additionally, volunteers will be provided with identification badges, which should be displayed during each visit.

### II. Screening Procedure

The following procedure has been established for screening volunteers beginning August 28, 2013. For the purpose of this procedure, volunteers are defined as those individuals who volunteer their time to assist in schools for the benefit of the study body with the expressed knowledge, consent and direction of a Simsbury Schools employee.

This procedure will identify those situations in which an individual may be required to submit to state and federal criminal record checks and a record check of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Abuse and Neglect Registry within 10 days of application to volunteer. All results must be received by the Human Resources Office before the volunteer may commence his or her services. No person who is a "sex offender" as defined by Public Act 98-111, An Act Concerning the Registration of Sexual Offenders may volunteer in the Simsbury Public Schools.

### Definitions

I. The District has identified two classifications of volunteers: Group I and Group II.

#### Group I

Volunteers will be classified in Group I when they engage in activities in the presence of a Simsbury Public Schools employee. Background checks will not be required of Group I volunteers. Group I volunteers are those who engage in the activities listed below:

- assisting in a classroom, cafeteria, or library when a staff member is present;
- accompanying a class on a field trip during the school day with a teacher;
- helping in the school office during regular school hours
- assisting in the cafeteria or library during regular school hours
- extra curricular events, i.e., dances, fairs, open house, etc.

#### Group II

Volunteers will be classified in Group II when they provide services to students when not in the direct presence of a Simsbury Public Schools employee. Group II volunteers will be required to complete a consent form regarding the release of information concerning any prior or pending criminal offenses, and such

volunteers will be required to submit to a record check of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Abuse and Neglect Registry. Group II volunteers are those who engage in the activities listed below:

- accompanying a class on a field trip in which the plans include that students be divided into small groups supervised solely by the volunteer chaperone for any length of time;
- chaperoning an overnight field trip;
- working in direct contact with students without the direct presence of a Simsbury Public Schools employee
- coaching

A list of all approved Group II volunteers will be maintained by the Superintendent or Designee. Only volunteers on the approved list may be utilized by the district.

Upon receipt of DCF Abuse and Neglect Registry results indicating that the volunteer is involved in an abuse or neglect investigation or that the volunteer is listed as a perpetrator of abuse or neglect on the Registry, the Superintendent or his designee will notify the volunteer in writing of the results of the Registry check and will provide an opportunity for the volunteer to respond to the results of the Registry check. If warranted by the results of the Registry check and any additional information provided by the volunteer, the Superintendent or designee shall not allow the individual to volunteer in the Simsbury Public Schools.

When a criminal record check of a volunteer reveals a criminal conviction, whether disclosed or undisclosed on the volunteer's consent form, the Superintendent will make a case-by-case determination as to whether to allow the individual to volunteer in the Simsbury Public Schools. Prior to any such decision by the Superintendent or designee, the Superintendent or designee shall inform the volunteer in writing and shall provide an opportunity for the volunteer to respond. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the falsification or omission of any information on a volunteer consent form, including but not limited to information concerning criminal convictions or pending criminal charges, may be grounds for the Superintendent or designee to prohibit the individual from becoming a volunteer.

II. The District will indemnify and hold harmless volunteers from civil liability in most situations as long as the volunteer is acting within the scope of his or her responsibilities in an activity approved by the Board of Education and is under the direction of a certified staff member. Willful and/or malicious conduct on the part of the volunteer is not covered under Connecticut General Statutes § 10-235.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-4g

Adopted March 26, 2013  
Effective August 28, 2013

1213 CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The Board of Education (Board) expects mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among all individuals on school property or at school events. District staff will treat parents and other members of the public with respect and expect the same in return. The Board is committed to maintaining orderly educational and administrative processes in keeping schools and administrative offices free from disruptions and preventing unauthorized persons from entering school/district grounds.

This policy promotes mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among Board members, district employees, parents and the public. It is not intended to deprive any individual of his/her right to freedom of expression, but only to maintain to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free environment for students and staff. Volatile, hostile or aggressive actions and words cannot be tolerated, and individuals who engage in these activities may face legal penalties.

In the interest of presenting Board members and District employees as positive role models to the students as well as to the community, the Board encourages positive communication and discourages volatile, hostile or aggressive actions. The Board seeks public cooperation with this endeavor.

Based upon the above, the Board expects that no person on school property or at a school event shall:

1. Injure, threaten, harass or intimidate a staff member, Board member or any other person;
2. Curse and use obscenities;
3. Disrupt or threaten to disrupt school or office operations;
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property;
5. Damage or deface district property;
6. Violate any Connecticut law or town/city ordinance;
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products;
8. Consume, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs, or possess dangerous instruments or weapons;
9. Impede, delay, or otherwise interfere with the orderly conduct of the



district's educational program or any other activity occurring on school property;

10. Enter upon any portion of the school premises at any time for purposes other than those which are lawful and authorized by the Board;

11. Operate a motor vehicle in a risky manner or in violation of an authorized district employee's directive; or

12. Violate other district policies or regulations or an authorized District employee's directive.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

1-225 Meetings of the government agents to be public.

1-232 Conduct of the meeting

10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rule(s), policies, and procedures.

10-238 Petition for hearing by board of education.

10-239 Use of school facilities for other purposes.

53a-185 Loitering in or about school grounds: Class C misdemeanor.

Adopted February 23, 2022

## 1250 OTHER SCHOOL-CONNECTED ORGANIZATIONS

### Booster Clubs

Parent organizations and booster clubs are invaluable resources to the District's schools. The Board of Education recognizes that parent organizations and extracurricular support groups, or "booster clubs" provide important support to District schools, and can be valuable means of stimulating community interest in the aims and activities of District schools. Support organizations may be defined in two ways:

1. an organization which is created to foster community support and provide resources for a particular sport or activity in the school or school system; or
2. an organization which is created to foster community support and raise funds for the school's general extracurricular program.

While parent organizations and booster clubs have no administrative authority and cannot determine District policy, the Board welcomes their suggestions and assistance.

Parent organizations and booster clubs are recognized by the Board of Education and permitted to use the District's name, a District school's name, or a District school's team name, or any logo

attributable to the District provided they first receive the Superintendent or designee's express written consent. Consent to use one of the above-mentioned names or logos will generally be granted if the organization or club has bylaws containing the following:

1. The organization's or club's name and purpose, such as, to enhance students' educational experiences, to help meet educational needs of students, to provide extra athletic benefits to students, to assist specific sports teams or academic clubs through financial support, or to enrich extracurricular activities.
2. The rules and procedures under which it operates.
3. An agreement to adhere to all Board policies and administrative procedures
4. A statement that membership is open and unrestricted, meaning that membership is open to parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school, district staff, and community members or an agreement not to engage in discrimination based on someone's innate characteristics or membership in a suspect classification.
5. A statement that the District is not, and will not be, responsible for the organization's or club's business or the conduct of its members
6. An agreement to maintain and protect its own finances. The group must maintain bank, financial, and tax exempt status separate from the school or District. The organization will provide to the Board annually or upon request a complete set of financial records or detailed treasurer's report
7. A recognition that money given to a school cannot be earmarked for any particular expense. Booster clubs may make recommendations, but cash or other valuable consideration must be given to the District to use at its discretion. The Board of Education's legal obligation to comply with Title IX by providing equal athletic opportunity for members of both genders will supersede an organization or club's recommendation

Parents and other interested community members who wish to organize a parent organization or booster club for the purpose of supporting a specific school program or activity are encouraged to do so as long as the activities of such organizations do not interfere unduly with the total educational program or disrupt District operations in any way. To this end, parent organizations/booster club/support organizations must follow these guidelines:

1. be voluntary;

2. submit an activity schedule in advance to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee for prior approval. Any time a booster club uses the name of the District or any language suggesting that the District has endorsed, sponsored or otherwise approved of the club's activities, there must be prior approval by the Superintendent or his/her designee;
3. seek advance approval for any use of school facilities and/or equipment and such use will comply with all policies and regulations established by the Board;
4. avoid interference with any previously approved student activity;
5. seek approval in advance of all fundraising activities by the Superintendent or building Principal;
6. understand and respect the authority of District employees in the administration of their duties; and
7. assume all financial responsibility for the booster club, including but not limited to the provision of adequate insurance coverage, as appropriate.

If a booster club wishes to make a contribution of money, service time or tangible property such as equipment or supplies, a representative of the organization should first meet with the Superintendent or his/her designee. The Superintendent or his/her designee must identify the District's terms and conditions of accepting such gifts in concert with the District's policy pertaining to gifts, grants and bequests.

Booster club proposed plans, projects and other activities must be evaluated and promoted in light of their stated contribution to the academic as well as the extracurricular school programs.

Careful consideration should be given to the total value of the contribution to all students, and not just to specific student groups.

The Board retains final responsibility and authority on all activities which have an impact on students, school programs and/or school owned property.

Further, the Board recognizes its responsibility to ensure that equivalent benefits and services are provided to members of both sexes. Therefore, if booster clubs provide benefits, services or tangible property that assist only teams or programs of one gender, the Board shall ensure that teams or programs of the other gender receive equivalent benefits, services or tangible property. If a booster club provides benefits, services or tangible property which are greater than that which the District is capable of providing to the athletes or programs of the other gender, the administration shall take action, within policy parameters, to ensure equivalency for both sexes.

Adopted February 9, 2010

1300 POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

The Board of Education recognizes the right of its employees, as citizens, to engage in political activity. However, the Board recognizes that school property and school time are paid for by all the people of the District, and should not be used for partisan political purposes, except as provided for in policies pertaining to the use of school facilities by civic and political organizations.

Prohibited activities include the posting of political circulars or petitions, collection or solicitation of campaign funds, solicitations for campaign workers, the use of students in writing or addressing campaign materials, and the distribution of campaign materials to students on District property or during school time in any manner which would indicate that a school employee is using a position in the school to further personal partisan views on candidates for public office or questions of public property. When acting pursuant to their official duties, teachers and other District employees will not attempt to influence students concerning political party affiliations and will not praise or denigrate any particular political party.

Nothing in this policy will be interpreted as prohibiting teachers from conducting appropriate activities that encourage students to become involved in the political processes of the party of the students' choice or as independents; nor does it prohibit the use of political figures as resource persons in the classrooms.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

7-421 Political activities of classified municipal employees.

7-421b Limitation on restriction of political rights of municipal employees.

9-369b Explanatory text relating to local questions

10-156e Employees of boards of education permitted to serve as elected officials; exception

10-239 Use of school facilities for other purposes

31-51q Liability of employer for discipline or discharge of employee on account of employee's exercise of certain constitutional rights

*Keyishian v. Board of Regents* 395 U.S. 589, 603 (1967)

Academic Freedom Policy (adopted by Connecticut State Board of Education, 9/9/81)

Equal Access Act, 20 U.S.C. ss 4071-4074

Adopted February 9, 2010

1400 RELATIONS BETWEEN OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND THE SCHOOLS

1400.1 Law Enforcement Agencies

1. The Board of Education recognizes that district-wide cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of staff and students, for maintaining a safe environment in district schools and for safeguarding district property.
2. Schools are responsible for students during school hours which includes protecting each student's Constitutional rights. When police are investigating possible criminal acts which have occurred, or may have occurred, on school property, or while under the jurisdiction of the school district, they may question students at school, provided every reasonable effort is made to observe the following procedures:
  - a. Students will be questioned as confidentially and inconspicuously as possible.
  - b. An attempt will be made to notify the student's parents/guardians so that they may be present during the questioning. The school principal, or his/her designee, will be present.

The Board of Education supports the best possible relationship with the Simsbury Police Department consistent with district responsibilities to protect the legal rights of staff and students.

3. Simsbury Police Department's School Resource Officers participate/conduct programs and activities designed to enrich district curriculum and to develop and promote good citizenship and a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and officials.
4. School Resource Officers may assist if a crime has been committed on district property in investigating related matters concerning staff and students upon request initiated by either district administrators or by law enforcement officials.
5. The superintendent or designee is directed to establish lines of communication with Simsbury Police Department to effect necessary cooperation toward ensuring the security of the school facilities, the safety of the students

and staff, and for student education about law enforcement agencies.

#### 1400.2 Fire Department

Members of the Volunteer Fire Department and the Town Fire Marshal play a vital role in the school safety program. The Superintendent of Schools and administrative staff shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Establish and maintain relationships with the local Fire Marshal and Fire Departments.
2. Work with the faculty in determining the nature and timing of the Department's participation in the school program.
3. Coordinate and supervise planned activities

As necessary or appropriate administrators shall seek the advice and cooperation of the Fire Marshal and Fire Department in:

1. Planning and conduct of fire drills and crisis response drills
2. Fire prevention education
3. First aid, especially in fire related incidents
4. Conforming to state and local fire codes

Adopted February 9, 2010

**2009-2010 / Grades K-6**  
**PERMISSION FORM FOR PUBLISHING STUDENT WORK\*, NAME AND PHOTO**

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that my child's class work, name and/or photo may be considered for posting to his/her teacher's classroom page on the Simsbury Public Schools website. I further understand that said child's work, name and/or photo will be posted to a password protected area that is accessible only to the parents/guardians and students of this year's class.

I understand that I maintain the right to contact my child's classroom teacher to request removal of said child's published work, name and/or photo from the teacher's website at any time.

I understand that my child's work, name and/or photo may be considered for publication in print (e.g., *The Communicator*), which may or may not be made available online in a non-password-protected area.

*\*Please note: Student work is defined as class work including any audio and/or video file produced by the student as well as content posted on online discussion forums (e.g., blogs, wikis).*

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Check Yes or No for the different permissions being requested below and then sign and date.

I grant permission to publish my child's name (first name and last initial), Yes      No  
 student work, and photo to a password protected section of a classroom page.

I grant permission to publish my child's name and photo Yes      No  
 in a district publication or to the district website  
 (not password protected) for recognition of an accomplishment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Student name/signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

**2009-2010 / Grades 7-8**  
**PERMISSION FORM FOR PUBLISHING STUDENT WORK\*, NAME AND**  
**PHOTO**

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Team \_\_\_\_\_

During the school year, Simsbury Public Schools may produce, reproduce, broadcast, or publish student names, photos and/or student work, including but not limited to:

- Written publications (e.g., *The Communicator*)
- District website
- Teacher websites

All printed and online documents are required to conform to school board policies.

If the parent/guardian of a student objects to the use of a student's name, work, or image in published content, all reasonable effort will be made to remove the material.

If parent/guardian or student wishes to rescind this permission, he or she may do so at any time with written notice.

*\*Please note: Student work is defined as class work including any audio and/or video file produced by the student as well as content posted on online discussion forums (e.g., blogs, wikis).*

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Please sign and date below.

**I grant permission to use the above student's name, photo and/or student work in the manners described above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or guardian's signature (if student is under 18)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**2009-2010 / Grades 9-12**  
**PERMISSION FORM FOR PUBLISHING**  
**STUDENT WORK\*, NAME AND PHOTO**

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

During the school year, Simsbury Public Schools may produce, reproduce, broadcast, or publish student names, photos and/or student work, including but not limited to:

- Written publications (e.g., *The Forum*, *The Communicator*)
- District website
- Teacher websites

All printed and online documents are required to conform to school board policies.

If the parent/guardian of a student objects to the use of a student's name, work, or image in published content, all reasonable effort will be made to remove the material.

If parent/guardian or student wishes to rescind this permission, he or she may do so at any time with written notice.

*\*Please note: Student work is defined as class work including any audio and/or video file produced by the student as well as content posted on online discussion forums (e.g., blogs, wikis).*

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Please sign and date below.

**I grant permission to use the above student's name, photo and/or student work in the manners described above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or guardian's signature (if student is under 18)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date