



**STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**  
**2023- 2024**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Connecticut Education Center provides opportunities to maximize the quality of life for children and young adults who are faced with significant challenges while providing unconditional positive regard in a diverse environment. To ensure the well-being of students, The Connecticut Education Center assists schools, agencies, families, and communities. The Connecticut Education Center provides considerable resources to staff in order to meet the needs of the individual students.

Our goal is to help and work with you and your family, public school districts and human service agencies toward your goals and vision for your future. The Connecticut Education Center maintains a copy of its policies and procedures manual on site. Additionally, the Connecticut Education Center mails written notice annually to the parents and guardians of enrolled students that our policies and procedures are available to review at the school as well as posted on our website.

**Connecticut Education Center**

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Enfield, CT 06082

[www.positiveregard.com/connecticutec](http://www.positiveregard.com/connecticutec)

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## **SCHOOL SERVICES**

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

#### **Our Students**

Connecticut Education Center (CEC) serves students ranging from 1st to 8th grade with all facets of intellectual/developmental disabilities, mental health diagnoses and/or social and emotional limitations which also may be accompanied by behavioral challenges.

#### **Our Program**

CEC is an intensive highly structured therapeutic private day school that operates 12 months from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. CEC provides a comprehensive behavior management system based on natural and logical consequences that encourages and facilitates youth to accept responsibility for their actions. Students are under constant supervision with a staff to student ratio of up to 1:3. Program routines and limits are clearly outlined and enforced to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the program. Physical restraints are performed when students demonstrate serious imminent harm to themselves or others in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations.

#### **Student Integration**

At CEC we are pioneering a fully integrated educational model serving both general and special education students. We believe that integrating educational paths allows students to facilitate each other's education and personal growth. Students participating in the program are immersed in a daily, highly structured educational and clinical program with collaborative problem solving that includes tutoring and 1:1 assistance as identified on the IEP. In addition to traditional academic instruction CEC students participate in structured outdoor activities, gardening, art, music, yoga, along with sensory integration and movement being incorporated into daily routines.

### **SERVICES**

Connecticut Education Center provides Academic, Behavioral, and Case Management services to each admitted student. Speech and Language Therapy, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, health and wellness programming along with comprehensive social-emotional education and training is also provided per each individual student's needs and IEP goals.

#### **Education**

The academic program consists of Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Health, Character Education and Physical Education in accordance with Common Core. Emphasis is placed on providing comprehensive instruction so that students may be successful on the Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment. A variety of electives are continuously offered and may include: outdoor adventure, gardening, community-based education, art instruction, music instruction, hygiene education, computer instruction, as well as a variety of recreational and leisure skill activities.

#### **Behavior Management**

Connecticut Education Center's therapeutic milieu consists of clear routines and limits as we promote prosocial behaviors, responsible decision-making and personal self-respect. We work with students towards diminishing disrespectful, dangerous and/or anti-social behaviors and attitudes. Connecticut Education Center's therapeutic milieu is rooted in cognitive-behavioral programming that teaches students to understand their actions to the fullest extent possible. Connecticut Education Center utilizes the Crisis Prevention Institute de-escalation program and Collaborative Problem Solving techniques to significantly reduce the need for physical restraint and increase total communication of frustrations and anxieties. Connecticut Education Center's behavior management principles include:

- Interpersonal skills development
- Conflict resolution education
- Mediation training
- Violence prevention
- Pro-social skills development

### **Clinical Case Management**

Connecticut Education Center provides a comprehensive clinical services department including individual psychotherapy by licensed clinicians, group therapy, psycho-education, family therapy as needed. Psychiatric consultation is provided as needed. On-site nursing and clinical services are available at all times for psychiatric emergency and support services.

Connecticut Education Center provides extensive case management and advocacy services for all students. Upon enrollment to the school, the assigned Clinical Case Manager follows all the needs of the student. Clinical Case managers work closely with parents and other providers to ensure that communication between the school, home and other community environments is as seamless as possible.

Some of the psycho-education and specialty therapy groups offered include but are not limited to:

- pro-social skills development
- conflict resolution
- cognitive restructuring
- violence prevention/anger management
- health and hygiene
- social pragmatics
- animal care
- life skills

### **PROGRAM GOALS**

- Provide instruction consistent with Common Core to facilitate academic achievement at the highest level possible.
- Provide students with educational, psycho-educational, clinical, pre-vocational, transitional and recreational activities to facilitate an increase in their repertoire of personal resources.
- Prepare students for successful participation in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).
- Prepare students for reintegration to their programmatic district or residential community whenever possible.
- Prepare students with skills that facilitate successful community living.
- Provide a variety of services to students and families which enhance positive mental health, positive family values and positive communication skills.
- Provide students with knowledge and skills to disrupt and replace anti-social, inappropriate and/or abusive coping responses and behavior patterns.
- Provide outreach, case management, advocacy, and clinical services to the families of Connecticut Education Center students to maximize community safety and family stability.

### **SCHOOL GOALS**

1. Connecticut Education Center will provide instruction consistent with Common Core to facilitate academic achievement at the highest level possible.
2. Connecticut Education Center will provide students with educational, clinical, pre-vocational and recreational activities to facilitate an increase in their repertoire of personal resources.
3. Connecticut Education Center will provide outreach, case management, advocacy, and clinical services to the families of Connecticut Education Center students to

maximize community safety and family stability.

## **STUDENT ADMISSIONS**

### **Admissions Policy**

Connecticut Education Center has an accelerated referral and admissions procedure. All referrals are made through the student's Local Education Authority (LEA). A valid, signed Individualized Education Program (IEP) is required. Connecticut Education Center's Admission Director facilitates the referral process with assistance from the program's clinical case managers. The Connecticut Education Center maintains a copy of our policies and procedures manual in the main office as well as providing written notice to the parents of the enrolled students that copies of its policies and procedures manual are available upon request.

### **Admission Procedure**

Students are referred to Connecticut Education Center through their Local Educational Authority (LEA). Once Connecticut Education Center receives written notification of referral with a packet of information minimally containing a current Individualized Education Program, names, addresses and telephone numbers of guardians and essential service providers, health/immunization record and documentation identifying the responsible programmatic school district(s), Connecticut Education Center Admissions Director contacts the parent/guardian to arrange an admissions interview and tour of the school. The Admissions Director's contact with the parent/guardian can occur by phone, email, or home visit depending on the nature of referral information. The LEA is notified of the admissions interview and invited to attend. During the admissions interview and tour, the parent/guardian is given program policy and procedures, including the parent's rights brochure with an opportunity to meet the staff. With the LEA present or via telephone, placement can be made and an intake package can be completed with an admission date determined for the student. At this time Connecticut Education Center staff will collaborate with the LEA and family to discuss the criteria for transition to a less restrictive environment. Transportation is then arranged by the LEA. If needed, the LEA in conjunction with Connecticut Education Center makes arrangements to convene a meeting to insure that all IEP and paperwork is signed. No student may start without signed documentation in the intake packet regarding Connecticut Education Center's behavior management policy, release of information, etc. Connecticut Education Center staff make any accommodations possible to assist in starting the student as early as possible as per parent/guardian wishes. Connecticut Education Center provides interim transportation as needed until the LEA sets up transportation to minimize missed school days. The parent/guardian is provided with school calendars, student handbook and school contact information when placement occurs.

### **Admission Criteria**

Connecticut Education Center enrolls youth between *the ages of 5 and 15 years of age* with primary IDEA disabilities types of intellectual, autism, neurological, developmental delay, sensory, physical, health, communication, specific learning with a current comorbid presentation of emotional disability. Admitted students have varying disabilities and diagnoses but all share a qualifying primary or secondary disability of Emotional Disturbance for special education services. Additionally, Connecticut Education Center students may be working below grade level with multiple learning disabilities. As a result, admitted students may require specialized and ancillary services such as Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, remedial Reading, Adaptive Physical Education, pragmatic social skill coaching, and/or school-based psychotherapy.

## **INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION**

Any potential referral to the Connecticut Education Center requires the following paperwork prior to admissions:

- current Individualized Education Program
- names, addresses and telephone numbers of guardians
- addresses and telephone essential service providers
- health/immunization record

- documentation identifying the responsible school district(s)

### **MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION PRIOR TO ADMISSION**

Prior to admission, documentation of a complete physical examination needs to be provided to the Connecticut Education Center. The physical exam needs to have occurred within 12 months of the referral.

### **HOURS**

Connecticut Education Center is open Monday through Friday except holidays. Student hours are from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM for grades pre-k through 8. Staff work day hours from 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM. Front office hours are 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM to field parent and transportation calls. Parent(s) may contact the school at any time during staff hours. After hours phone service is also available to contact administrators during non-school hours. Telephone numbers for emergency contacts are provided by calling the main school number, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### **BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROGRAMS**

Breakfast is provided to all students upon their arrival to school. Lunch is provided for all students at Connecticut Education Center *via the School Department School Breakfast and Lunch Program*. Students may bring their own lunch. *Parent(s) must fill out application forms for Free and Reduced Breakfast and Lunch*. For those who are eligible, students will receive lunch at no cost. For those students not eligible for free lunch, students are not required to pay. No student is denied breakfast, snack or lunch for any reason.

### **PARTICIPATION OF CONNECTICUT EDUCATION CENTER AT MEETINGS**

Connecticut Education Center teachers, administrators and/or clinical case managers will attend PPT meetings, TEAM meetings, reviewing/revising IEP meetings, progress meetings, or any other meeting called by the Connecticut Education Center, the sending school district, or parent/guardian. Connecticut Education Center professional staff often set up meetings with LEA notification to address specific goals in the IEP such as the social/emotional or speech/language goal with parent/guardian and/or outside service providers to ensure uniform application of skills and clear communication.

### **SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS**

Students are under constant supervision with a staff to student ratio of up to 1:4. Students that enter the school are placed on eye-watch supervision. Students are checked daily upon entrance and exit from the school for contraband. The purpose for the daily check assures each student that all students are safe as well as school practices is fair and equitable. Staff utilizes a hand held metal detector for searches, as well as, a physical search of student property and person. Consent for these searches is signed by parent/guardian prior to intake. If a student is found carrying contraband or a weapon, the item(s) are confiscated and state regulation followed as to the disposition of the items and treatment of the students. Additionally, parent/guardian is notified and a more thorough search is conducted daily by staff.

Based on student history and staff determination, a student may not be allowed to be alone with staff. This determination is tracked via daily notes and/or treatment plans. While in the community, the staff utilizes the same ratio and supervision methods when possible. Alternative methods of supervision are employed to ensure that students can participate in events including field trips, snowboarding, physical education, etc.

Grades pre-K – 8 staffing: No student may be out of staff sight with the exception of use of the bathroom unless the student has a toileting plan requiring staff assistance. Otherwise, all students are under the visual control/sight of staff at a no less than 1 staff: 3 student ratio.

During community or outside recreational or educational activities, NO student regardless of age may be out of staff sight at no less than a 1 staff: 3 student ratio.

All students must be accounted for at all times. The Site Administrator is required to know the location of all students throughout the day. When students are off-site, an Off-Grounds Checklist form is completed and given directly to the Site Administrator and the Floor Manager for the Program Director's access.

### **EQUAL ACCESS/ EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Connecticut Education Center provides all students with equal access to services, facilities, activities and benefits regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness.

Connecticut Education Center provides equal opportunity for all students to participate in intramural and interscholastic sports.

Extracurricular activities or clubs sponsored by the school do not exclude students on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness.

Connecticut Education Center currently does not use any separate facility to accommodate any student based on disability. Connecticut Education Center assures that should a separate facility be required based on disability, such facility, activity or service would be comparable to other facilities, activities or services provided by the district or school, including those provided to students without disabilities.

Connecticut Education Center students have access to extracurricular activities offered by their sending district. Students access these activities via an IEP Team and/or Connecticut Education Center/District contact via Guidance Counselor or Case Manager. Participation in In-District extracurricular is reflected in a student's IEP document.

All sports programs are available to all enrolled Connecticut Education Center students.

Physical recreation offerings at Connecticut Education Center may include but are not limited to:

Basketball	Baseball
Softball	Soccer
Snowboarding	Sledding
Horseback riding	Wallyball
Walking/Jogging	Tennis
Bicycle instruction/riding	Wii Fitness, Tennis and Golf
Swimming	Swimming instruction
Frisbee	Cardio Fitness Training

Connecticut Education Center uses the following community facilities (but is not limited to) for all students:

- The YMCA
- The Boys and Girls Club
- Healthtrax Health Club, Enfield, CT
- The track at the Community College
- Local snowboarding mountains, e.g. Butternut, Berkshire East, Jiminy Peak

### **EVACUATION AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Every employee will be oriented and trained annually on the policy and procedure for preparing and responding to evacuation drills maintaining the safety of staff and students. Students are prepared for drills as part of an introduction to the building and classroom orientation. Practicing evacuation by following posted routes and reviewing rules of behavior is included in the student preparation session(s).

Special provisions are planned for student response to the drill as well as evacuation of mobility impaired individuals. Students who are sensitive to the noises are escorted to the meeting area prior to the alarm sounding. Training for use of an evacuation chair is

included in the annual training calendar. A written documentation log is completed by the Program Administrator and housed in the Front Office.

The Educational Administrator and Program Coordinator work with the Director as Site Emergency Supervisors to lead logistic and communication procedures of emergency and evacuation drills.

- Site Emergency Supervisors are responsible for supervision of all emergency/emergency/disaster operations and shall remain at the command post to observe and direct all site operations.
- Assess type and scope of emergency involving Public Safety agencies as needed.
- Determine nature and level of emergency as well as threat to human life and structures.
- Develop and communicate an action plan for the event.
- Ensure the safety of students, staff and others on campus.
- Implements emergency/disaster plan and hazard specific procedures and
- Initiates communication with Public Safety as needed
- Confirms "All Clear" with Public Safety for re-entry.

Employees are instructed in policy and procedure of the evacuation and emergency drills at the time of orientation. Evacuation drills are conducted twice per school calendar year and reviewed by a group charged with emergency response planning and review. Posted evacuation routes are reviewed with employees. Posted floor plans include the evacuation routes, location of the alarms, fire doors, stairwells and building exits. Location and operation of alarm systems and signals are included in the facility walk through at time of employee orientation.

Connecticut Education Center Evacuation Procedures:

- Floor plans are posted in each room, including bathrooms, with a color coded primary and secondary routes out of the building from the location the floor plans are posted,
- Two evacuation drills are conducted during the school year in conjunction with the Fire Department;
- All students are assisted in understanding the nature of the drills via Community Safety lessons, visits by Community Safety personnel to explain the nature of the drills and actual emergencies; pre-teaching of routes and sensory changes in the environment during drills and emergencies to students and staff,
- On premise evacuation meeting locations:
  - If exited building by Front Door – the Connecticut Education Center sign on front lawn,
  - *If exited building by rear east parking lot near basketball hoops*
  - If exited building by northern side door, front lawn by school entrance
  - If exited building by 1<sup>st</sup> floor rear door, front lawn by school entrance
- Off premise evacuation meeting locations, in event that deems the school campus unsafe, such as a gas leak:
  - *Primary location: Mansion on first floor*
  - *Secondary location: Across the street to Montessori School*
- Special provisions for the evacuation of any mobility-impaired student in the facility including the use of an evacuation chair for wheelchair bound students and staff carrying students who have identified mobility deficits that impede a safe, efficient evacuation.
  - School nurses development evacuation plans for mobility-impaired students and train staff in the individual plans,
- A written log of each evacuation drill that includes date, time elapsed, participants (students and staff), witnesses, is attached.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS**



- The assignment of personnel to specific tasks and responsibilities in emergency situations are listed in the Emergency Response Manual,
- Keys for the Fire Department knock box and general alarm box, located in the front vestibule of the Connecticut Education Center , are in the Front Office's secure key box with copies to the Fire Department, Connecticut Education Center Project Manager and Maintenance Supervisor.
- The Fire Department works with the Connecticut Education Center to arrange drills at least bi-annually without giving prior notice to staff to time and test Evacuation Procedures.
- The Connecticut Education Center Nurse provides listing of students having specific evacuation accommodations to the Program Administrator, Education Administrator and Project Manager.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS AND INTERVENTION**

The goal of our behavior management policy is to create a safe learning environment where communication replaces behavior that disrupts learning and the pro-social development of each student grows.

The objectives of the behavior management policy are to:

- assist students in developing an expanded repertoire of adaptive coping skills
- coach students through collaborative problem solving techniques
- assist students in developing age appropriate peer and pro-social skills
- teach students the skills of negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution
- use narrative play to teach students communication tools to displace disruptive behaviors
- assist students in developing study skills
- guide to their intellectual and social potential.

Connecticut Education Center adopts a zero tolerance strategy to violence, racism, sexism, ageism, and other acts of human rights violations and self-injurious behaviors.

Connecticut Education Center uses a psycho educational model of behavior management that includes, but is not limited to:

- Cognitive-behavioral programming (i.e. the use of theory including thinking errors, seemingly unimportant decisions, compromising situations, high risk situations, adaptive coping skills, etc.)
- Collaborative Problem Solving
- Discrete Data Trials
- Narrative Play Therapy
- Responsive Classroom technique
- Behavioral Intervention Plans
- The use of natural and logical consequences
- Self efficacy and fostering responsibility and accountability
- Crisis Prevention Institute De-escalation 7 steps
- Verbal redirection to new task or topic
- Peer mediation
- Adjustment Counseling
- Functional Behavioral Analysis
- Group Social Skill Counseling
- Pragmatic Speech Therapy

These interventions take place within a framework of classroom visual schedules that are

timed out in fifteen minute intervals, with predictable routines around academics, meals, and transitions in order to provide an environmental structure and basis for healthy relationship building. The consequences when the visual schedules are not followed are logical, based in reasonable social expectations for school and community settings. Incentives are given when expectations are learned and met but never taken away when not obtained. The concept is that an expectation not reached must be broken down further to be obtained by a student to be learned and met. Each day is a new day at the Connecticut Education Center – consequences for expectations not met are not held over to the next day unless there is a concern for the student’s safety in an environment that staffing cannot solve. Connecticut Education Center is highly structured so as to facilitate learning in a safe, positive environment. Connecticut Education Center has clear program limits and rules that result in the application of a natural or logical consequence if and when breached – breaching is defined by lack of safety to self or others, not by refusal. Connecticut Education Center asserts that any behavioral interventions are subject to review by a student’s PPT and do not prescribe the use of procedures such as restraint or seclusion as an intervention. Connecticut Education Center maintains thorough documentation of any behavior interventions described in the student’s IEP /behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). Interventions are documented and discussed during the PPT and revised as needed. Connecticut Education Center reviews the effectiveness of school-wide behavioral approaches quarterly and adjusts as the needs arise.

### **Natural and Logical Consequences**

Connecticut Education Center uses a system of natural and logical consequences regarding all deviation by students of school and community rules. Where a natural consequence would result in injury or emotional harm to the student or another person, Connecticut Education Center staff will intervene and determine a logical consequence, if possible with the student. The purpose of this system of natural and logical consequences is to teach students accountability and responsibility as well as to foster self-monitoring and regulation. All acts of anti-social, aggressive, illegal behaviors, suspected or actual illicit drug or alcohol use, suspected or actual dissemination of illegal substances, or suspected or actual gang involvement will be promptly reported to any of the appropriate agencies, including but not limited to: police, gang task force, District Attorney, DCF, etc. and appropriate intervention will be applied including criminal charges in consultation with the educational team.

Connecticut Education Center attempts to defuse and/or de-escalate potential high-risk situations with a variety of verbal and diversionary interventions prior to any physical restraint. These techniques may include, but are not limited to, the following methodology:

- One-on-one discussion with staff
- Clinical intervention with therapist
- Peer mediation
- Consult with the nurse
- Removal of the student or the other students from the classroom until physical control/and or safety of others until the risk of serious imminent harm is not apparent.

### **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION**

**The Connecticut Education Center incorporates the following principle regarding physical restraints:** CEC follows Public Act 18-51 where physical restraints are utilized ONLY in *emergency situations*. Therefore, students are only physically restrained by CEC staff when engaging in any acts that pose a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others.

Physical restraints are used as a last resort to ensure the student’s and/or the community’s safety, using the least amount of force necessary for the least amount of time possible.

Safety requirements regarding restraint includes the following:

- No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration.
- Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
- If a student is restrained for a period **longer than 15-minutes**, program staff shall obtain the approval of (1) an administrator, as defined in CGS Section 10-144e or such administrator's designee, (2) a school health or mental health personnel, as defined in the CGS subsection (a) Section 10-212b, or (3) a board certified behavioral analyst, who has received training in the use of physical restraint. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation/escalation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint. Upon determination that such continued physical restraint is necessary, such individuals must make a new determination every 30-minutes thereafter.
- After the release of a student from a restraint, CEC will implement follow-up procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student (when appropriate) to address behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

**The Connecticut Education Center incorporates the following principle regarding exclusionary time out:** CEC follows Public Act 18-51 where exclusionary time out is not used as a form of discipline. Therefore, students who are placed in exclusionary time out have at least one school employee and they are immediately available to the student and are able to communicate with staff throughout the duration of the exclusionary timeout. Any spaces used for the exclusionary time out are clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming students and/or de-escalation of student behavior. The exclusionary time-out period terminates as soon as possible, staff are trained to request the student follow one or two simple instructions to show their readiness to return to the scheduled activities. If student is a child requiring special education, as defined in Section 10-76a or a child being evaluated for special education, pursuant to Section 10-76d and awaiting a determination; and the interventions or strategies are unsuccessful in addressing such student's problematic behavior, such student's PPT shall convene as soon as practicable to determine alternative interventions or strategies.

**The Connecticut Education Center incorporates the following principle regarding seclusion:** CEC follows Public Act 18-51 where seclusion is utilized *ONLY* in *emergency situations*. Therefore, students are only placed in seclusion by CEC staff when engaging in any acts that pose a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others.

Seclusion is defined as the confinement of a student in a room where they are being physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion DOES NOT pertain to an Exclusionary time-out where a student is temporarily separated in a non-locked setting, for the purpose of calming or de-escalation. An exclusionary time-out will become a reportable seclusion IF or WHEN a student is *physically or otherwise prohibited from leaving the space*.

Seclusion is not necessarily a defined space, however; the space designated for the purpose of seclusion at CEC includes the following:

- A half-door room and a full door room, with observation window, that allows for direct observation throughout the incident of seclusion
- It is the size that is appropriate to the chronological and developmental age, size,

- and behavior of the student at risk,
- It has a ceiling height that is comparable to the ceiling height of the other rooms in the building
- Is equipped with heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting systems that are comparable to the systems that are in use in the other rooms of the building
- Is free of objects that pose a danger to the student at risk
- Conforms to applicable building code requirements

If a student is secluded for a period **longer than 15-minutes**, program staff shall obtain the approval of (1) an administrator, as defined in CGS Section 10-144e or such administrator's designee, (2) a school health or mental health personnel, as defined in the CGS subsection (a) Section 10-212b, or (3) a board certified behavioral analyst, who has received training in the use of seclusion. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation/escalation during the seclusion justifying the need for continued seclusion. Upon determination that such continued seclusion is necessary, such individuals must make a new determination every 30-minutes thereafter.

**CEC engages parents and students in the following way regarding the use of restraint and seclusion:** CEC designated staff will inform parent/guardian of the restraint and/or seclusion with all relevant information within 24 hours of the occurrence. Parents are encouraged to provide feedback regarding the use of restraint and/or seclusion as well as any concerns they may have.

Following the use of restraint and/or seclusion, student's engage in processing the event with staff (when applicable and appropriate). During this processing, students and staff devise a plan to prevent the use of future restraint and/or seclusion that may include what strategies a student can use, what a staff can do to assist a student when they struggle, etc.

**CEC utilizes Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) methods when engaging in physical restraint:** All CEC staff, including teaching, janitorial, administrative, etc., is certified in verbal de-escalation and physical intervention techniques by Crisis Prevention Institute™ (CPI) trainers on site upon hire. Recertification occurs every two-years with re-fresher and role-play training occurring during onsite training throughout the school year. CPI training is also a part of new employee orientation. The Positive Regard Network sends experienced staff to the CPI *train the trainer* conferences to have CPI advanced level trainers that are available to assist staff in de-escalation techniques. Training and effort is given towards limiting the time of any physical restraint, as the goal of the restraint is to assist the student to regain physical control as soon as possible. The topics covered during this training include: *Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint; (b) A description and identification of dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted; (c) The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance; (d) Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints; and (e) Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint.*

**CEC prohibits the following practices:**

- Mechanical restraint:
  - A device that is recommended by either a concerned parent or a physical therapist used for purposes of posture/safety would not be considered a mechanical restraint subject to our restraint regulations. The regulations regarding mechanical restraints were meant to address the use of restraints for behavioral issues not the use of a device for safety or due to the need for physical positioning that the student on their own is unable to achieve because of their disability.

- The use of a Psychopharmacological agent on a student without the student's consent, except:
  - As an emergency intervention to prevent immediate or imminent injury to the student or to others, or
  - As an integral part of the student's established medical or behavioral support or educational plan, as developed consistent with section 17a-543 or,
  - If no plan has been developed, as part of a licensed practitioner's initial orders.
    - The use of psychopharmacological agents, alone or in combination, may be used ONLY in doses that are therapeutically appropriate and NOT as a substitute for other appropriate treatment
- Prone Restraint is prohibited at CEC

**CEC engages in physical restraint ONLY when:**

- All other less intrusive and legal measures have been tried to de-escalate a student. CEC tries some of the following, but not limited to, less intrusive measures:
  - One-on-one discussion with staff
  - Clinical intervention with clinician/counselor
  - Peer mediation
  - Consult with the nurse
  - Removal of the student or the other students from the classroom until physical control/and or safety of others is re-established.
  - Implementation of incentive plans to deter students from engaging in high-risk behaviors.
  - Redirecting the student's attention to a task.
  - Taking student for a walk or to access break spaces or sensory items.
- When these alternatives fail and the student still poses imminent threat to harm themselves or someone else, staff will engage in the use of physical restraint

**CEC reviews the use of physical restraints and seclusion in the following ways:**

Incident Report of Physical Restraint and Incident Report of Seclusion are filed in each student's record. The use of restraint and seclusion is reviewed in classroom meetings that occur weekly at CEC. When a student has had four or more uses of restraint and seclusion within twenty school days, the following occurs:

- An administrator, one or more of such student's teachers, a parent/guardian of the student, and, if any, mental health professions, as defined in section 10-76t, shall convene a meeting for the purpose of:
  - Conducting or revising a behavioral assessment of the student
  - Creating or revising any applicable behavioral intervention plan
  - Determining whether such student may require special education pursuant to section 10-76ff, or

If such student is a child requiring special education, as described in subparagraph (A) of subdivision (5) of section 10-76a, or a child being evaluated for eligibility for special education pursuant to section 10-76b and awaiting a determination, such student's Planning and Placement Team (PPT) shall convene for the purpose of:

- Conducting or revising a behavioral assessment of the student
- Creating or revising any applicable behavioral intervention plan, including, but not limited to, such student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

**CEC's reporting requirements and follow-up procedures for reports to**

**parents/guardians and to the department:** Any restraint and/or seclusion that occurs to a student at CEC, designated staff inform parents within *24 hours* of the incident. Staff who engaged in the restraint and/or seclusion are required to fill out the *Incident Report of Physical Restraint* and/or the *Incident Report of Seclusion* within 24 hours of the occurrence. When the form is completed, it is mailed to the parent/guardian within **2 school days**. The

sending school district will receive the report via mail or fax within 24 hours of the occurrence, this allows the sending district appropriate time to upload the report to CSDE.

- The Incident Report of Physical Restraint includes the following information: Name of student, date, start time, end time, reason if the restraint exceeded 15-minutes, names of staff and job title of staff involved in restraint, name of observer and job title that witnessed and watched the restraint in its entirety, where the restraint took place, what time of day in the schedule the restraint took place, what type of restraint was utilized, antecedent activity, what de-escalation strategies were used prior to restraint, what restraint method was used and why, what behaviors were demonstrated that required restraint, how was the student observed during the restraint, how did the student react to the restraint, and how did the restraint end, what was the consequence to the restraint, when was the parent notified - by whom- and what feedback did the parent provide, was there anyone injured during the restraint - if so they must complete an Injury Report, if a restraint exceeded 15-minutes staff are to write which administrator/designee approved the extension, which administrator/designee that was informed of the restraint, and Program Director's name and phone number is attached to all restraint forms if any parent/guardian, student, or district has concerns regarding the incident.

**CEC will do the following if a restraint-related injury or seclusion-related injury occurs:** The following will take place when there is a SERIOUS INJURY which is an injury that requires medical attention beyond that which would be included in the category of "routine first aid." Examples of such medical attention include an emergency department visit, an emergency medical technician call, sutures, diagnostic x-rays to determine fractures, placement in casts, etc.

- Staff will inform the Nurse, Program Director/Administrator immediately.
- The Nurse will then take whatever necessary medical steps are required
- The Nurse/designee will contact the student's parent/guardian immediately
- A Report of Injury and Restraint/Seclusion form will be completed within 24 hours of the incident.
- The Program Director/Administrator will immediately notify the referring school district and supply the Restraint/Seclusion Report and Report of Injury in order for the district to put the information in the online data submission system.
- The Program Director/Administrator will work with the referring district to assign who will mail the Restraint/Seclusion Report and Report of Injury to the commissioner of education and CSDE within TWO BUSINESS DAYS.
  - Reports of serious injuries are, per statute, forwarded to the Office of Disability Rights, Inc., by the Bureau of Special Education

**CEC does the following regarding complaints received about its restraint practices:**

CEC follows its Complaint Procedure in investigation of complaints regarding restraint practices: The Chief Administrator, Angela Foley, is responsible for investigating and resolving complaints made on behalf of students and/or parent/guardians as well as complaints regarding students' education and care. The Chief Administrator's contact information is provided on each Restraint Report Form that is mailed to the parent/guardian as well as LEA. Parents can also file a complaint with their student's Clinician/Case Manager who will then inform the Chief Administrator. Every received concern and/or complaint is taken very seriously and is investigated by the Chief Administrator or designee expeditiously. The findings of any investigation will be communicated to the complainant in writing and/or verbally within 10 school days from the receiving of the complaint or concern.

- If the student or any member of the student's educational team is not satisfied with the Director's findings, they may contact The Director of Operations for the Positive Regard Network at 413-533-9500 or in writing at 1913 Northampton Street, Holyoke, MA 01040.

**All Restraint Records are maintained within the Program Administrator's office. Restraint Forms are also filed in individual student files. Parent/Guardian, LEA's, and/or the Department can access the above files upon request.**

## **Student and Guardian Complaint and Problem Resolution Process**

All Connecticut Education Center staff strives to provide a safe, rich learning environment for all students and their families as directed by the student's Individualized Education Program. The Connecticut Education Center strongly encourages students and members of the educational team to bring forward any concerns to the immediate attention of your Case Manager in order to resolve the matter as quickly as possible, including those specifically regarding restraint practices.

If any student or member of a student's educational team believes that the Individualized Education Program is not being followed or restraint is being used against protocol, they may file a concern or complaint with the Executive Director of the Connecticut Education Center. Concerns and complaints may be filed by calling the Connecticut Education Center's main office at 413-533-9500 and asking for the Director. A verbal concern or written complaint may be given, or an appointment can be made with the Director to discuss the concern or complaint. Written concerns or complaints may be addressed to Director, Connecticut Education Center, 1370 Enfield St. Enfield, CT 06082. Every received concern and/or complaint is taken very seriously and is investigated by the Director or designee expeditiously with written findings to the complainant within 10 school days from the complaint or concern is received by the Director.

If the student or any member of the student's educational team is not satisfied with the Chief Administrator's findings, they may contact Chris Duff, Director of Program Operations of the Positive Regard Network at 413-533-9500 or in writing at 1913 Northampton Street, Holyoke MA 01040.

## **SEARCHES AND CONTRABAND**

Upon arrival at the school, all students undergo a metal check with the use of a Connecticut Education Center metal detector wand. Students must also display their possessions and staff will check pockets, handbags, backpacks, and other articles of clothing or work brought in by students. No student will be required to expose their primary layer of clothing. Items such as personal cell phones, stereos, keys, music CD's and/or any other electronics are placed in a container, clearly marked with the student's name. At the end of the day, students retrieve their personal belongings before exiting the building. Any student who refuses to submit to such searches remains in a designated area with staff only and is not allowed to enter the classrooms or space where other students congregate. Clinical Case Managers notify parents/guardians and or any other appropriate persons regarding the incident.

The following is a list of items that will be confiscated from students along with the consequences of bringing in such items.

- BEEPERS, CELL PHONES, AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES
- DRUG PARAPHERNALIA
- ALCOHOL
- DRUGS
- FIREARMS
- KNIVES
- SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MATERIAL:
- GANG PARAPHERNALIA
- MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS: Any item brought to the school by students that could be used to create an unsafe situation will be subject to confiscation by staff and may not be returned to the student. These items include but are not limited to: lighters, pepper spray, clubs or club-like objects, toy guns, etc.

## **SUSPENSION POLICY**

Connecticut Education Center exists to serve the needs of the emotionally disturbed

students referred by LEA's who at time of referral cannot educate the student in a less restrictive setting. Suspending a student from Connecticut Education Center contraindicates the goals and benchmarks of the IEP. Connecticut Education Center will notify the LEA, parent/guardian of events that question placement appropriateness, change routine, teacher, form of assignments and staff to continue to meet the student's IEP. But Connecticut Education Center does not hold the position that an IEP is met by suspending a student from their school program. The Connecticut Education Center will follow by regulation the LEA's placement decision and ESE regulations in the case a suspension of any length is necessary. In the case of a suspension of any length, such suspensions would be logged in Suspension Log that is located in the school's Front Office.

### **3 to 5 DAY SUSPENSION POLICY**

No student will be suspended or expelled for 3 to 5 days from Connecticut Education Center for failure to abide by the rules and structure of the program or for any reason during the school day. The only time a student would be sent home would be for a medical emergency. However, in the case of such an action, if a student was suspended, the Connecticut Education Center shall immediately notify the parents and the public school or human service agency responsible for the placement. Within 24 hours, the school shall send a written statement explaining the reasons for suspension to the parents and public school district. The Connecticut Education Center will use the Non-Physical Incident Report form to document such action with time out of learning programming will be documented on the daily student note in the student's chart. In addition to the student chart, all incident reports are logged in a master binder by date in the front office which record interventions and suspensions. In the case of a student being suspended or excluded from transportation, the Connecticut Education Center will provide transportation until the transportation suspension is completed or the LEA arranges alternative transportation.

No student will be suspended and sent home unless a responsible adult is available to receive the student. If a student has been suspended for three (3) consecutive school days or five (5) non-consecutive school days in a school year, the school, parents, and public school district, consistent with federal requirements, shall explore together all possible program modifications within the school in an attempt to prevent more lengthy suspension of the student from the program. Connecticut Education Center Case Managers will contact parents/guardians and the LEA to facilitate the scheduling of the placement meeting.

### **10 DAY SUSPENSION POLICY**

No student will be suspended for 10 plus school from Connecticut Education Center for failure to abide by the rules and structure of the program or for any reason during the school day. The Connecticut Education Center will use the Non-Physical Incident Report form to document such action with time out of learning programming will be documented on the daily student note in the student's chart. In addition to the student chart, all incident reports are logged in a master binder by date in the front office which record interventions and suspensions. The only time a student would be sent home would be for a medical emergency. The Connecticut Education Center will follow by regulation the LEAs placement decision and ESE regulation if the case that a student 's actions necessitate a suspension of ten or more school days. In the extreme circumstance a student was suspended for 10 or more days, the Connecticut Education Center would consider such suspension a change of placement when: 1) it exceeds 10 consecutive school days or 2) it is one of a series of suspensions that constitute a pattern. Furthermore, Connecticut Education Center would facilitate via the Case Managers and Educational Administrator,

- A request made of the student's responsible school district to convene a PPT meeting prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities.
  
- The Connecticut Education Center would participate in the Team meeting:
  - To develop or review a functional behavioral assessment of the student's behavior and to develop or modify a behavior intervention plan;
  - To identify appropriate alternative educational setting(s); and
  - To conduct a manifestation determination (i.e. to determine the relationship



- between the disability and the behavior).
- If the Team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, the school may suspend or terminate the student consistent with policies applied to any other student in the program. The responsible school district must, however, offer an appropriate education program to the student that may be in some other setting.
- If the TEAM determines that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, the TEAM, takes steps to modify the IEP, the behavior intervention plan, and/or the placement.

### **TERMINATION POLICY**

The Connecticut Education Center seeks to provide a stable placement for the student, parent/guardian as well as referring school district. Therefore, no student will be terminated from The Connecticut Education Center on an emergency basis by The Connecticut Education Center but will follow the LEAs direction under regulation. The Connecticut Education Center would seek change in classroom, delivery of curriculum, and change in staff ratios in continuing to educate the student. The program would also consider scheduling and conveying a multidisciplinary meeting to discuss and plan alternatives to support student progress. Students will remain enrolled in and continue to attend The Connecticut Education Center, regardless of difficult or criminal behavior. Appropriate interventions would occur as indicated by the student's presentation. The Connecticut Education Center works collaboratively with the LEA and parent/guardian to help resolve any difficulty. In the event of a planned discharge, The Connecticut Education Center School's case management, clinical and guidance departments work collaboratively with the school district and any future placements to insure a proper and timely transition plan – no less than 30 days - and a smooth transition to the student's next less restrictive placement or return to the community.

The Connecticut Education Center provides LEAs with the option of transitional visits for a student to go with a familiar staff to a new placement. The Connecticut Education Center, at the LEAs request, provides a familiar staff to assist with the transition to the next placement.

If the LEA so determines to proceed under regulation with a planned or emergency termination the following procedure will be followed:

a) Planned Terminations: The private special education program shall notify the public school district of the need for an IEP review meeting and provides notice of this meeting to all appropriate parties ten (10) days in advance of the intended date of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to develop a clear and specific termination plan for the student that shall be implemented in no less than thirty (30) days unless all parties agree to an earlier termination date.

b) Emergency Terminations: In circumstances where the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others, the program shall follow the procedures required under Connecticut and Federal Special Education laws and immediately notify the Connecticut State Department of Education. The special education school shall not terminate the enrollment of any student, even in emergency circumstances, until the enrolling public school district is informed and assumes responsibility for the student. At the request of the public school district, the special education school shall delay termination of the student for up to two calendar weeks to allow the public school district the opportunity to convene an emergency Team meeting or to conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student's termination from the special education school program. With the mutual agreement of the approved special education school and the public school district, termination of enrollment may be delayed for longer than two calendar weeks.

### **PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE**

Connecticut Education Center requires that all students enrolled have the necessary immunizations as required by the Department of Public Health or have the proper forms for

abstention.

Connecticut Education Center Schools nurses screen for general health issues when taking height and weight measurements. The school nurses oversee hearing and vision screenings in conjunction with the Department of Public guidelines.

Any student who has a reported communicable disease must be authorized by a physician to continue to be present within the school. The school will notify all parents of the introduction of a reported communicable disease into the school. The local Board of Health will be notified

No student will be required to receive medical treatment to which a parent objects on the grounds that such treatment conflicts with religious beliefs with a detailed written statement from the parent/guardian to that effect.

### **REPORTING STUDENT ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

Connecticut General Statutes §17a-101, as amended by Public Act 02-138 and 11-93, requires certain school employees who have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused, neglected, or placed in imminent risk of serious harm to report these suspicions in compliance with applicable state statutes. These employees are mandated reporters. The following school employees are mandated reporters:

"A teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or a private elementary, middle or high school or working in a public or private elementary, middle or high school; or (B) any other person who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in (i) a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of education, or (ii) a private elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the supervisory agent of such private school."

**Mandated reporters will use the Report of Suspected Child Abuse form (DCF-136) to report child abuse or neglect. Please consult**

**<https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/1-DCF/Child-Abuse-and-Neglect-Definitions> for definitions and indicators of child abuse and neglect.**

An oral report by telephone or in person shall be made as soon as possible but no later than 12 hours to the Commissioner of Children and Families or an appropriate law enforcement agency, and to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee followed within 48 hours by a written report to the Department of Children and Families. The oral report to DCF shall be made on the DCF 24 hour Careline. 1-800-842-2288. The written report shall be submitted on the DCF-136 or any form for that purpose.

Reporting suspected abuse and/or neglect of children, in addition to the requirements pertaining to staff training, record keeping and dissemination of this policy, shall be in accordance with the procedures established and set forth below.

**Reporting of Child Abuse/Neglect -What Must be Reported:** A report must be made when any mandated reporter employed by the school district, in his/her professional

capacity, has reasonable cause to suspect or to believe that a child under the age of eighteen.

**Reporting Procedures for Statutory Mandated Reporters:** The following procedures apply only to statutory mandated reporters, as defined above.

When a school employee suspects or believes that a child has been abused, neglected, or has been placed in imminent risk of serious harm, the following steps shall be taken:

(a) The employee shall immediately, upon having reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused, neglected, or placed in imminent risk of serious harm, or has had non-accidental physical injuries or injuries which are at variance with the history of such injuries, and in no case later than twelve (12) hours after having such a suspicion or belief, make an oral report by telephone or in person to the Commissioner of Children and Families or the local law enforcement agency.

(b) The employee shall also immediately make an oral report to the Program Administrator or his/her designee. If the Program Administrator or his/her designee is the alleged perpetrator of abuse/neglect, then the employee shall instead notify the Executive Director.

(c) If a report prepared in accordance with Section (a) above concerns suspected abuse or neglect by a school employee, the Program Administrator or his/her designee, shall immediately notify the child's parent or guardian that such a report has been made.

(d) Within 48 hours of making an oral report, the employee shall submit a written report to the Commissioner of Children and Families, or his/her representative, containing all of the required information.

(e) The employee shall immediately submit a copy of the written report to the Program Administrator or designee.

(f) If a report prepared in accordance with Section (c) above, concerns suspected abuse or neglect by a school employee who possesses a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the State Board of Education, the Program Administrator shall submit a copy of the written report to the Commissioner of Education, or his/her representative

**Contents of Reports:** Any report made pursuant to this policy shall contain the following information, if known:

- the names and addresses of the child and his/her parents or other persons responsible for his/her care;
- the age of the child;
- the gender of the child;
- the nature and the extent of the child's injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
- the approximate date and time the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect occurred;
- information concerning any previous injury or injuries to, or maltreatment or neglect of, the child or his/her siblings;
- the circumstances in which the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect came to be known to the reporter;
- the name of the person or persons suspected to be responsible for causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
- the reasons such person or persons are suspected of causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
- any information concerning any prior cases in which such person or persons have been suspected of causing an injury, maltreatment or neglect of a child; and

- whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, provide shelter or otherwise assist, the child.

### **Investigation of the Report**

The Program Administrator shall permit and give priority to any investigation conducted by the Department of Children and Families or the appropriate local law enforcement agency of a report that a child has been abused or neglected. If the suspected perpetrator of abuse or neglect is a school employee, CEC may conduct its own investigation and take any disciplinary action, in accordance with the provisions of section 17a-101i of the general statutes, as amended, upon notice from the DCF or the appropriate local law enforcement agency that the Board's investigation will not interfere with the investigation of DCF or such local law enforcement agency.

To the extent feasible, this investigation shall be coordinated with the Department of Children and Families or the police in order to minimize the number of interviews of any child and to share information with other persons authorized to conduct an investigation of child abuse and neglect. When investigating a report, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall endeavor to obtain, when possible, the consent of parents or guardians or other persons responsible for the care of the child, to interview the child, except in those cases in which there is reason to believe that the parents or guardians or other persons responsible for the care of such child are the perpetrators of the alleged abuse.

The investigation shall include an opportunity for the suspected perpetrator to be heard with respect to the allegations contained within the report. During the course of an investigation of suspected abuse by a school employee, the Program Administrator may suspend the employee with pay or may place the employee on administrative leave with pay pending the outcome of the investigation.

A person reporting child abuse or neglect shall provide any person authorized to conduct an investigation into such claim with all information related to the investigation that is in the possession or control of the person reporting child abuse or neglect, except as expressly prohibited by state or federal law.

The Program Administrator shall disclose records received from the Department of Children and Families to the Commissioner of Education and the Executive Director, for the purposes of review of employment status, certification, permit or authorization. Any decision of the Program Administrator concerning such suspension shall remain in effect until the Executive Director acts, pursuant to the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes. The Commissioner of Education shall also be notified if such certified person resigns from his/her employment at CEC.

Regardless of the outcome of any investigation by DCF and/or the police, the Program Administrator and/or Executive Director, as appropriate, may take disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment in accordance with the provisions of any applicable statute, if the Program Administrator's investigation produces evidence that a child has been abused by a certified, permit or authorized school staff member.

If the contract of employment of a certified school employee holding a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the State Board of Education is terminated as a result of an investigation into reports of child abuse and neglect, the Program Administrator shall notify

the Commissioner of Education, or his/her representative, within 72 hours of such termination.

CEC shall maintain records of allegations, investigations and reports that a child has been abused or neglected by a school employee. Such records will be maintained in the Human Resources office. The records shall include any reports made to the Department of Children and Families. Such Department is to have access to all such records.

The Board shall provide to the DCF commissioner or designee, upon request for the purposes of an investigation by DCF of suspected child abuse or neglect by a teacher employed by the Board, any records maintained or kept in District files. Such records shall include, but not be limited to, supervisory records, reports of competence, personal character and efficiency maintained in such teacher's personnel file with reference to evaluation of performance as a professional employee of such board of education, and records of the personal misconduct of such teacher. ("Teacher" includes each certified professional employee below the rank of Superintendent employed by a Board of Education in a position requiring a certificate issued by the State Board of Education.)

### **STUDENT LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS WITHOUT PERMISSION**

Leaving school grounds ("running away") is breaking a Program Limit at Connecticut Education Center . . . *(A student is not considered truly a run-away unless out of staff supervision while outside the grounds of the school and intently moving away from staff supervision.)* Thus, immediate logical consequences may include (but are not limited to):

- Physical Restraint under CSDE guidelines if student is demonstrating serious imminent harm to self or others
- Immediate phone call to parent/guardian
- Immediate phone call to public safety officials and/or crisis services, if student's affect and/or behavioral presentation is deemed within the crisis range by a clinician, nurse or administrator
- Phone call to other service providers involved in the student's case

Upon return, the student may have one or more of the following consequences:

- Review of off-school grounds trips for safety reasons
- Search of person and/or property (if returning the same day)
- Staffed transitions
- Ad-Hoc meeting with Clinical Staff to process, de-brief event

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

Only Connecticut Education Center 's School Nurse or designee administers prescription medication and over the counter medication to any student who requires medication. Connecticut Education Center will not administer any medication to a student without the written order of the physician prescribing the medication and written authorization from a parent/guardian. No changes in medication or dosages can be made without the authorization in writing from the physician. No student may carry any prescription drugs with them (with the exception of inhalers for asthmatic conditions). Students are not allowed to carry, possess, ingest, or disseminate any over-the-counter medications at the school. All medications at Connecticut Education Center are distributed by a Registered Nurse or under the direct supervision of the Registered Nurse. The Registered Nurse(s) is trained and certified under the guidelines of the State of Connecticut's DPH.

### **DIVERSITY/ RELIGIOUS PRACTICES/ MULTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

Connecticut Education Center is non-denominational and does not engage in any regular religious practices. However, Connecticut Education Center values cultural diversity and respect for all peoples and celebrations and relevant curriculum offerings regarding various holidays, both Connecticut Education Center and religious, (i.e. Christmas, Chanukah, All

Saints' Day, Kwanza, Martin Luther King Day, Three Kings' Day, etc.) which occur throughout the year.

## **PARENT POLICIES**

Parental Involvement.

(a) The school shall have a written plan for involving parents, and shall have a Parents' Advisory Group. The Parents' Advisory Group shall advise the school on matters that pertain to the education, health, and safety of the students in the program.

(b) The school shall have a procedure for assuring that it is informed by a parent or guardian of any changes in a student's legal status and of the results of all judicial and administrative proceedings concerning the student, and for disseminating this information to appropriate personnel.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Connecticut Education Center seeks to involve the student's parent(s), guardian(s), and/or other caregivers in the activities and programming to the greatest extent possible. They are encouraged to take an active role in the education and services offered at Connecticut Education Center. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to visit the school and view the learning environment and learning activities at any time.

Parents/guardians are invited to events at the school during the year including but not limited to:

- Connecticut Education Center 's open house in October and April
- School community meals
- Student Talent Show
- Annual parent education meetings
- End-of-the-year and/or transition event

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are also encouraged to contact the School administrators or case managers at any time regarding any questions, comments or disputes. They are also encouraged to provide suggestions for improvement at the school.

## **PARENT ADVISORY GROUP**

The Connecticut Education Center Clinical Director is responsible for the organization and agenda development of the Parent Advisory Group. The Parent Advisory Group provides an informational forum pertaining to the education, health and safety of the students in the Connecticut Education Center.

The Connecticut Education Center 's Case Managers and Clinicians co-lead a Parent Advisory Group (PAG) via open invitation for all Connecticut Education Center 's parents during both fall and spring Open Houses. Notifications are disseminated via mail with follow up phone calls from Case Managers.

In case of emerging issues requiring PAG input, the Director initiates a meeting via Case Managers. Specific phone follow-up is done by Case Managers in order to have all age ranges and student's primary disabilities represented.

## **ORIENTATION OF NEW STUDENTS AND PARENTS**

Prior to the PPT that places a student at Connecticut Education Center, students and parents are given a tour of the school and met with by a Connecticut Education Center Director of Admissions. The tour and meeting allows parents and students to ask questions and get a general outline of the program structure and services. A program description and other relevant documentation are given to the parents and student. On an emergency

basis, Connecticut Education Center may receive a student without this process taking place. In these instances, the Admission Director ensures that a tour and meeting occurs post admittance.

Clinical, educational and support groups for parents and other family members are offered as needed. Outreach services are continuously available to family members. Case managers call the student's parent/guardian at least weekly to update them on the student's experience at school as well as hear the parent/guardian's comments. Extensive case management is provided to ensure appropriate ancillary services for youth and for effective communication between the school and family members as well as service providers.

### **OBTAINING PARENTAL CONSENT**

Prior to entry into the program, parents/guardian is required to sign the following consents and give ongoing consent annually:

- In coordination with the responsible school district, any evaluations of the student and/or acceptance of the IEP
- Emergency Medical Care Authorization
- Over-the-Counter Medications
- Consent on the Medical Order for Prescribed Medication sent to the Physician prescribing
- Connecticut Education Center Authorization of Participation
- Behavior Management Policy including use of Separation and Physical Intervention
  - Including Parental Consent for Physical Intervention
- Field Trip Participation – specific to each trip off grounds
- Field Trip Medication Administration – specific to each trip off grounds
- Release of Information to/from Connecticut Education Center
- Any Research, Experimentation, Fundraising, Publicity, and/or Observation
- Consent for photos and videotaping to document the student's participation in the curriculum
- School photos – annual event

The Admissions Director, in cooperation with the case managers, ensures that the parents understand and sign the above forms. Connecticut Education Center Case Managers are responsible to insure that forms have been disseminated, parents/signers are informed of their intent and that forms are returned timely to the school. All contacts are recorded in the student's case log.

Connecticut Education Center Case Managers will notify the sending school district when multiple efforts have been made, yet have failed to involve the parent and obtain necessary, current parental consent as it prohibits a student's participation in the school as described in their IEP.

### **REGISTERING COMPLAINTS**

The Chief Administrator is responsible for investigating and resolving discrimination complaints made on behalf of students as well as complaints regarding students' education and care.

### **Student and Guardian Complaint and Problem Resolution Process**

All Connecticut Education Center staff strives to provide a safe, rich learning environment for all students and their families as directed by the student's Individualized Education Program. The Connecticut Education Center strongly encourages students and members of the educational team to bring forward any concerns to the immediate attention of your Case Manager in order to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If any student or member of a student's educational team believes that the Individualized Education Program is not being followed, they may file a concern or complaint with the Executive Director of the Connecticut Education Center . Concerns and complaints may be filed by calling the Connecticut Education Center 's main office at 860-698-6307 and asking for the Director. A verbal concern or written complaint may be given, or an appointment can be made with the Director to discuss the concern or complaint. Written concerns or complaints may be addressed to Director, Connecticut Education Center , 1370 Enfield St. Enfield, CT 06082. Every received concern and/or complaint is taken very seriously and is investigated by the Director or designee expeditiously with written findings to the complainant within 10 school days from the complaint or concern is received by the Director.

If the student or any member of the student's educational team is not satisfied with the Director's findings, they may contact John A. Foley, Jr., Executive Director of the Connecticut Education Center at 860-698-6307 or in writing at 1370 Enfield St. Enfield, CT 06082.

If a student, if their own guardian, or member of the student's team is not satisfied with the Connecticut Education Center 's internal response to a concern or complaint, they may contact the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) at the below address:

Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)

450 Columbus Boulevard

Hartford, CT 06103

860-713-6543

Website: <http://www.ct.gov/sde/>

**The Student Complaint and Problem Resolution Process listed above reflects the process for parents to resolve complaints as well as students.**

### **Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Statement**

It is the continuing policy of the Connecticut Education Center to provide equal opportunity and recruit and employ the best qualified individuals without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, handicap, Veteran or military status, or genetic information status as defined and required by federal and state laws and regulations. Equal employment opportunity applies to all personnel actions such as recruiting, hiring, compensation, benefits, promotions, overtime distribution, transfers, terminations, opportunities for training, and any bonuses or other incentives made available to staff.

We strongly support our non-discrimination policy. Personnel actions will be analyzed to ensure that this policy is being properly implemented.

The circumstances of any reported incident will be fully examined by our organization and any person found violating the policy will be subject to disciplinary action as appropriate, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Unlawful Harassment Prevention Policy**

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is illegal under Connecticut state law and federal law. CEC recognizes that sexual harassment undermines the integrity of employer-employee and staff-staff relationships and interferes with the right of all members of the school community to work in an environment free from harassment. Such conduct will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment may be described as: Any unwelcome sexual advance or request for sexual favors, or any conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2)



submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting the individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment environment.

Sexual harassment may be verbal, visual or physical. It may be overt or implicit and may, but need not, have tangible adverse effects on the victim's employment or learning experience.

- Examples of conduct which may constitute sexual harassment include but are not limited to:
- sexual flirtation, touching, advances or propositions
- verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- pressure to engage in sexual activity
- graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or appearance
- use of sexually degrading words to describe an individual
- display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures or photographs
- sexual jokes
- stereotypic comments based upon gender
- threats, demands or suggestions that retention of one's employment or educational status is contingent upon toleration of or acquiescence in sexual advances.

The perpetrator of sexual harassment, like the victim of such conduct, may be male or female and sexual harassment may involve individuals of the same or opposite sex. Harassment in any of these relationships is a violation of CEC's policy.

Because of the power-relationship between supervisor and subordinate employee, freedom of choice may be compromised in such relationships. Romantic or sexual liaisons between supervisors and subordinate employees, while not prohibited, are strongly discouraged.

It should be noted, additionally, that retaliation against a person for complaining or being associated in any way with the resolution of a complaint of sexual harassment also violates company policy.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

In Connecticut, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this:

"sexual harassment" means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a. submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; or,
- b. such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment constitutes sexual harassment. The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a workplace environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not;

- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

### **Harassment Investigation**

When we receive the complaint, we will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner, with the investigation proceeding and ending in a reasonable amount of time under Commonwealth regulation and statute. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Our investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. We will also interview the person alleged to have committed harassment. When we have completed our investigation, we will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.

### **State and Federal Remedies**

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to any form of harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using the Connecticut Education Center complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC- 300 days; MCAD- 6 months).

1. **The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")**

Renee LaBarge  
 Equal Employment Opportunity Director  
 460 Capitol Avenue  
 Hartford, CT 06106  
 Tel: (860) 418-6022  
 Right Fax: 860-706-5855

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

#### **FERPA**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, commonly known as FERPA, is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Students have specific, protected rights regarding the release of such records and FERPA requires that institutions adhere strictly to these guidelines. Therefore, it is imperative that the faculty and staff have a working knowledge of FERPA guidelines before releasing educational records.

**SAFE SCHOOL CLIMATE PLAN** CEC is committed to creating and maintaining a physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe educational environment free from bullying, harassment and discrimination. In order to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, CEC has developed the following Safe School Climate Plan, consistent with state law. This Plan represents a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying and sets forth CEC's expectations for creating a positive school climate and thus preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying.

Bullying behavior is strictly prohibited, and students who are determined to have engaged in such behavior are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion

from school. CEC commitment to addressing bullying behavior, however, involves a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a positive school climate in which bullying will not be tolerated by students or school staff.

## **I. Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation**

A. CEC expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional CEC of Education; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by CEC of Education.

B. CEC also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

C. In addition to prohibiting student acts which constitute bullying, CEC also prohibits discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying.

D. Students who engage in bullying behavior in violation of CEC Policy and the Safe School Climate Plan shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including expulsion, in accordance with CEC's policies on student discipline, suspension and expulsion, and consistent with state and federal law.

## **II. Definition of Bullying**

A. **"Bullying"** means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture directed at another student attending school in the same that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;
2. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for such student;
4. infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
5. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

## **III. Other Definitions**

- A. "Cyberbullying"** means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications;
- B. "Electronic communication"** means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system;
- C. "Hostile environment"** means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate;
- D. "Mobile electronic device"** means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted;
- E. "Outside of the school setting"** means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a local or regional CEC of Education;
- F. "Prevention and intervention strategy"** may include, but is not limited to, (1) implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying identified by the Department of Education, (2) school rules prohibiting bullying, harassment and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts, (3) adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur, (4) inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school, (5) individual interventions with the bully, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied child, parents and school employees, (6) school-wide training related to safe school climate, (7) student peer training, education and support, and (8) promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
- G. "School climate"** means the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults;
- H. "School employee"** means (1) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional CEC of Education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (2) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional CEC of Education;
- I. "School-Sponsored Activity"** shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by CEC of Education.

#### **IV. Leadership and Administrative Responsibilities**

### **A. Safe School Climate Coordinator**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the Superintendent shall appoint, from existing school staff, a Safe School Climate Coordinator ("Coordinator"). The Coordinator shall:

1. be responsible for implementing CEC's Safe School Climate Plan ("Plan");
2. collaborate with Safe School Climate Specialists, CEC, and the Superintendent to prevent, identify and respond to bullying in schools;
3. provide data and information, in collaboration with the Superintendent, to the Department of Education regarding bullying;
4. meet with Safe School Climate Specialists at least twice during the school year to discuss issues relating to bullying in the school and to make recommendations concerning amendments to CEC's Plan.

### **B. Safe School Climate Specialist**

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, the principal of each school (or principal's designee) shall serve as the Safe School Climate Specialist. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying and act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to reports of bullying in the school.

## **V. Development and Review of Safe School Climate Plan**

A. Each school year the Principal shall establish a committee or designate at least one existing committee ("Committee") in the school to be responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues relating to bullying in the school. Such committee shall include at least one parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, as appointed by the school principal.

B. The Committee shall: 1) receive copies of completed reports following bullying investigations; 2) identify and address patterns of bullying among students in the school; 3) review and amend school policies relating to bullying; 4) review and make recommendations to the Coordinator regarding the Safe School Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school; 5) educate students, school employees and parents/guardians on issues relating to bullying; 6) collaborate with the Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying; and 7) perform any other duties as determined by the Principal that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying.

C. Any parent/guardian serving as a member of the Committee shall not participate in any activities which may compromise the confidentiality of any student, including, but not limited to, receiving copies of investigation reports, or identifying or addressing patterns of bullying among students in the school.

D. CEC shall approve the Safe School Climate Plan developed pursuant to CEC policy and submit such plan to the Department of Education. Not later than thirty (30) calendar days after approval by CEC, CEC shall make such plan available on CEC's website and ensure that the Safe School Climate Plan is included in the school's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

## **VI. Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Complaints of Bullying**

A. Students and parents (or guardians of students) may file written reports of bullying. Written reports of bullying shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the alleged conduct, the number of incidents, the target of the suspected bullying, and the names of potential witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any building administrator and/or the Safe School Climate Specialist (i.e. building principal), and all reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for review and actions consistent with this Plan.

B. Students may make anonymous reports of bullying to any school employee. Students may also request anonymity when making a report, even if the student's identity is known to the school employee. In cases where a student requests anonymity, the Safe School Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall meet with the student (if the student's identity is known) to review the request for anonymity and discuss the impact that maintaining the anonymity of the complainant may have on the investigation and on any possible remedial action. All anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that does not disclose the source of the complaint, and is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of bullying. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.

C. School employees who witness acts of bullying or receive reports of bullying shall orally notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable, not later than one (1) school day after such school employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying. The school employee shall then file a written report not later than two (2) school days after making such oral report.

D. The Safe School Specialist shall be responsible for reviewing any anonymous reports of bullying and shall investigate or supervise the investigation of all reports of bullying and ensure that such investigation is completed promptly after receipt of any written reports. In order to allow the to adequately investigate complaints filed by a student or parent/guardian, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied should be asked to provide consent to permit the release of that student's name in connection with the investigation process, unless the student and/or parent has requested anonymity.

E. In investigating reports of bullying, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegations and the ages of the students involved. The Safe School Climate Specialist will interview witnesses, as necessary, reminding the alleged perpetrator and other parties that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

## **VII. Responding to Verified Acts of Bullying**

A. Following investigation, if acts of bullying are verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall notify the parents or guardians of the students against whom such acts were directed as well as the parents or guardians of the students who commit such acts of bullying of the finding not later than forty-eight hours after the investigation is completed. This notification shall include a description of the school's response to the acts of bullying. In providing such notification, however, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of other students, including the perpetrator of such bullying. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the

perpetrator, or personally identifiable information about a student other than the parent/guardian's own child, may not be disclosed except as provided by law.

B. In any instance in which bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also invite the parents or guardians of the student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardian of the student against whom such act was directed to a meeting to communicate the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student/victim and to prevent further acts of bullying. The invitation may be made simultaneous with the notification described above in Section VII. A., as it must include a description of the school's response to such acts, along with consequences, as appropriate. Normally, separate meetings shall be held with the respective parents; however, at the discretion of the Safe School Climate Specialist and with written consent of the parents/guardians involved, the meeting(s) may be held jointly.

C. If bullying is verified, the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall develop a student safety support plan for any student against whom an act of bullying was directed. Such a support plan will include safety measures to protect against further acts of bullying.

D. A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. The written intervention plan may include counseling, discipline and other appropriate remedial actions as determined by the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee, and may also incorporate a student safety support plan, as appropriate.

E. Notice to Law Enforcement

If the Principal of a school (or his/her designee) reasonably believes that any act of bullying constitutes a criminal offense, he/she shall notify appropriate law enforcement. Notice shall be consistent with CEC's obligations under state and federal law and CEC policy regarding the disclosure of personally identifiable student information. In making this determination, the Principal or his/her designee, may consult with the school resource office, if any, and other individuals the Principal or designee deems appropriate.

F. If a bullying complaint raises concern about discrimination or harassment on the basis of a legally protected classifications (such as race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability), the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall also coordinate any investigation with other appropriate personnel within the as appropriate (e.g. Title IX Coordinator, Section 504 Coordinator etc.)

### **VIII. Documentation and Maintenance of Log**

A. Each school shall maintain written complaints of bullying, along with supporting documentation received and/or created as a result of bullying investigations, consistent with CEC's obligations under state and federal law. Any educational record containing personally identifiable student information pertaining to an individual student shall be maintained in a confidential manner, and shall not be disclosed to third parties without prior written consent of a parent, guardian or eligible student, except as permitted under CEC policy and state and federal law.

B. The Principal shall maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying in the school and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. Consistent with obligations under state and federal law regarding student privacy, the log shall



not contain any personally identifiable student information, or any information that alone or in combination would allow a reasonable person in the school community to identify the students involved. Accordingly, the log should be limited to basic information such as the number of verified acts, name of school and/or grade level and relevant date. Given that any determination of bullying involves repeated acts, each investigation that results in a verified act of bullying for that school year shall be tallied as one verified act of bullying unless the specific actions that are the subject of each report involve separate and distinct acts of bullying. The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of bullying in each school and shall not set out the particulars of each verified act, including, but not limited to any personally identifiable student information, which is confidential information by law.

C. The Principal of shall report the number of verified acts of bullying in the school annually to the Department of Education in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education.

## **IX. Other Prevention and Intervention Strategies**

A. Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in the nature of the offense and the impact the behavior may have on the victim and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying", as defined above, will generally warrant traditional disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (e.g., detention, in-school suspension, suspension or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the building principal (or responsible program administrator or his/her designee). No disciplinary action may be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint. As discussed below, schools may also consider appropriate alternatives to traditional disciplinary sanctions, including age-appropriate consequences and other restorative or remedial interventions.

B. A specific written intervention plan shall be developed to address repeated incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetrated bullying incidents by the same individual. This plan may include safety provisions, as described above, for students against whom acts of bullying have been verified and may include other interventions such as counseling, discipline, and other appropriate remedial or restorative actions as determined by the responsible administrator.

C. The following sets forth possible interventions which may also be utilized to enforce CEC's prohibition against bullying:

### **i. Non-disciplinary Interventions**

When verified acts of bullying are identified early and/or when such verified acts of bullying do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of bullying, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered bullying. Students may also be subject to other forms of restorative discipline or remedial actions, appropriate to the age of the students and nature of the behavior.

If a complaint arises out of conflict between students or groups of students, peer or other forms of mediation may be considered. Special care, however, is warranted in referring such cases to peer mediation. A power imbalance may make the process intimidating for the victim and therefore inappropriate. In such



cases, the victim should be given additional support. Alternatively, peer mediation may be deemed inappropriate to address the concern.

## **ii. Disciplinary Interventions**

When acts of bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints, however, shall not be the basis for disciplinary action.

In-school suspension and suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation, in accordance with CEC's Student Discipline policy.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before CEC of Education, a committee of CEC or an impartial hearing officer designated by CEC of Education in accordance with CEC's Student Discipline policy. This consequence shall normally be reserved for serious incidents of bullying and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating bullying behavior.

## **iii. Interventions for Bullied Students**

The building principal (or other responsible program administrator) or his/her designee shall intervene in order to address incidents of bullying against a single individual. Intervention strategies for a bullied student may include the following:

- a. Counseling;
- b. Increased supervision and monitoring of student to observe and intervene in bullying situations;
- c. Encouragement of student to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization;
- d. Peer mediation or other forms of mediation, where appropriate;
- e. Student Safety Support plan; and
- f. Restitution and/or restorative interventions.

## **iv. General Prevention and Intervention Strategies**

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying and direct intervention when acts of bullying are verified, other actions may ameliorate potential problems with bullying in school or at school-sponsored activities. While no specific action is required, and school needs for specific prevention and intervention strategies may vary from time to time, the following list of potential prevention and intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators, teachers and other professional employees in each school. Such prevention and intervention strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- a. School rules prohibiting bullying, harassment and intimidation and establishing appropriate consequences for those who engage in such acts;
- b. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying is likely to occur;
- c. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying education and prevention curricula in kindergarten through high school, which may include instruction regarding

building safe and positive school communities including developing healthy relationships and preventing dating violence as deemed appropriate for older students;

- d. Individual interventions with the perpetrator, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied student, parents and school employees;
- e. School-wide training related to safe school climate, which training may include Title IX/sexual harassment training, Section 504/ADA training, cultural diversity/multicultural education or other training in federal and state civil rights legislation or other topics relevant to safe school climate;
- f. Student peer training, education and support;
- g. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
- h. Implementation of a positive behavioral interventions and supports process or another evidence-based model approach for safe school climate or for the prevention of bullying, including any such program identified by the Department of Education;
- i. Respectful responses to bullying concerns raised by students, parents or staff;
- j. Planned professional development programs addressing prevention and intervention strategies, which training may include school violence prevention, conflict resolution and prevention of bullying, with a focus in evidence based practices concerning same;
- k. Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
- l. Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping;
- m. Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of school employees and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies;
- n. Modeling by teachers of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;
- o. Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others; and
- p. Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

D. In addition to prevention and intervention strategies, administrators, teachers and other professional employees may find opportunities to educate students about bullying and help eliminate bullying behavior through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially-appropriate behavior. Administrators, teachers and other professional employees should intervene promptly whenever they observe mean-spirited student conduct, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of "bullying."

## **X. Improving School Climate**

Individual schools should use this section to outline affirmative steps to improve the quality of school climate as defined within a particular school and/or . These strategies should align with school improvement plans, school climate assessments, and be based on current data available on the quality of school climate within the school and/or including, but not limited to, the type, nature, frequency etc. of behavior that may constitute or lead to bullying, harassment or similar behavior. This section is intended to be broader in scope and should be targeted towards fostering positive school climate rather than exclusively preventing, investigating and otherwise responding to specific incidences of bullying.

## **XI. Annual Notice and Training**

- A. Students, and parents or guardians of students shall be notified annually of the process by which students may make reports of bullying.
- B. CEC shall provide for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying.
- C. At the beginning of each school year, each school shall provide all school employees with a written or electronic copy of the school 's safe school climate plan and require that all school employees annually complete training on the identification, prevention and response to bullying as required by law.

## **XII. School Climate Assessments**

On and after July 1, 2021, and biennially thereafter, CEC shall complete an assessment using the school climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the Department of Education. CEC shall collect the school climate assessments for each school in the and submit such assessments to the Department.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

### **Educational Records**

The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, sometimes called the "Buckley Amendment") applies to schools that receive federal education funds. FERPA requires schools to protect the privacy of student records, and gives parents and students rights including inspection and review of student records. The FERPA statute is found at 20 U.S.C. sec. 1232g. The FERPA regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99. The Connecticut Student Record Regulations are consistent with the FERPA statute and regulations. Staff is trained on the tenets of FERPA upon hire and refresher training during each school year.

The student records (charts) are maintained in the main office. The key is maintained by Chief Administrator and Floor Manager with copies to the Educational Administrator and Site Administrators. Connecticut Education Center will make the Connecticut student's record available to the School Department upon request.

All staff notes, reports, communication or documentation regarding the student are placed in the chart. All documents are legibly dated and signed by the person making the entry. Students' medical records are kept separately in the Nurse's Office in a locked file cabinet with office having a locking door.

Each student's chart is provided with a log of access that indicates the name, position and signature of the person releasing the information, the name, position and signature of the person who receives the information, the date of access, the parts of the record to which access was obtained and the purpose of such access.

Connecticut Education Center records will be provided to authorized persons as long as a valid release of information exists under pertinent regulations and FERPA guidelines.

## **EDUCATIONAL AND DISTRICT POLICIES**

### **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEP)**

#### **Revisions and changes**

Connecticut Education Center follows the guidelines for PPT meetings per Connecticut State Department Education (CSDE) mandates. Any IEP revision or change must be determined by the students PPT. These changes include placement, means or mode of service provision, addition or deletion of IEP goals, etc. Connecticut Education Center utilizes CT-SEDS in collaboration with LEAs to develop and maintain student IEPs.

### **SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELs) STUDENTS**

**Description of Program Modifications:** Students that have been identified through their LEAs as ELs will receive the following modifications of programming while attending the Connecticut Education Center .

- Sheltered Instruction - English language acquisition process for young children in which nearly all classroom instruction is in English, but with the curriculum and presentation designed for children who are learning the language. Books and instruction materials are in English and all reading, writing, and subject matter are taught in English. Although teachers use a minimal amount of the child's native language when necessary, all subject matter is taught in English, and students at Connecticut Education Center learn to read and write solely in English.
- Unless the student's IEP specifies otherwise, the student must receive:
  - Sheltered content instruction from a trained and qualified teacher; and
  - Additional instruction in English as a Second Language by a certified ESL teacher,
  - One to one tutoring in language of origin
  - Counseling in language of origin or one to one aide to assist with translation during counseling
- Case management to support student while in the referring community
  - EL students are fully immersed in all the structures and components of the Connecticut Education Center .

**Program Evaluation:** Due to the lack of or small number of EL students, the Connecticut Education Center evaluation of programming is based on the review of the individual progress via IEP Team and quarterly progress report.

**Student Performance Data:** EL student's performance is tracked via quarterly Progress Reports.

### **STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN IEP TEAM MEETINGS**

Beginning at 14 years old, Connecticut Education Center students are encouraged to attend all of their educational team meetings. Connecticut Education Center will provide every opportunity for the student's most active input.

Options for participation include:

- Attending entire PPT meetings
- Attending a portion of the PPT meetings
- Submitting input via a staff member (like clinician)
- Submitting input in written form

### **COLLABORATION WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

The Connecticut Education Center utilizes case contacts with LEAs to ensure effective collaboration on behalf of its students. Further, Connecticut Education Center utilizes its teacher and case management staff when a student transitions to a less restrictive in district setting or utilizing extracurricular activities. Connecticut Education Center's Director

oversees and coordinates efforts with the school district in matters of administration and compliance. Further, quarterly Progress Reports, Connecticut Education Center Report Cards, with the entire student file, are shared with LEA. Lastly, Connecticut Education Center takes all legal and ethical steps to assist the LEA in running an effective IEP meeting.

**PROGRESS REPORTS**

Connecticut Education Center staff listed by job description on each student’s IEP service delivery grid generates progress reports based on the student’s identified goals within their IEPs. From year to year, timelines for Progress Report mailing may shift, but the following is a useable guideline:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Term Dates</b>	<b>Progress Reports Due for Review</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	July 1 to 3 <sup>rd</sup> week of September	October 1
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of September to 2 <sup>nd</sup> week December	December 23
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> week of December to 3 <sup>rd</sup> week of March	April 1
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of March to 3 <sup>rd</sup> week of June	June 30

Report cards are mailed with quarterly progress notes to the parent/guardian and LEA. Progress reports include information that specifically addresses each identified goal and benchmarks and report detailed information regarding progress towards that goal. They are mailed to parents/guardians and school districts within one week after the “Reports Due” date. Quarterly progress reports and report cards are reviewed by the Educational Administrator before the information is mailed out to the LEAs and parent/guardian.

Case Managers ensure reception of Progress Reports by parents/guardians, LEAs and agencies via follow-up phone calls within a reasonable timeframe of mailing.

**CHANGE IN STUDENTS LEGAL STATUS**

Connecticut Education Center Case Managers maintain consistent contact with all parents/guardians and service providers of all students. The adult with legal authority to make decisions for students must sign appropriate documents as identified in intake procedures and disseminated throughout the year to allow communication to those besides the LEA.

Any person other than a parent or the student who has turned 18 must produce legal documentation from the court regarding their legal right to make decisions and sign for the student. This includes Guardians Ad Litem, Educational Advocates, and parents of children over the age of 18, divorced parents.

Upon the following circumstances, Case Managers seek to obtain legal status information and signing authority:

- Intake/admission to the school (see face sheet)
- During IEP meetings
- Divorce/separation of parents
- Change in address of a student
- DCF involvement or a Care and Protection (C&P) Order
- Any judicial or administrative proceeding concerning the student
- DYS commitment
- Student turning 18
- Student who has successfully filed for emancipation.

All legal status information, including court documentation, is recorded in the student's chart on the Face Sheet in the Admission Packet. Admission documents are updated at least annually by the Case Manager via a home visit, school meeting or mailing the forms out the student's legal guardian.

All staff are informed of the legal status of the student upon his/her admission to the school during a morning staffing meeting of the student's arrival, or any change in legal status during an afternoon team meeting or morning staffing staff meeting – whichever comes first once the information is learned. Case Managers share information verbally with each other regarding the legal status of all of the students. Therapists are specifically verbally informed of legal status and the administrative assistant is verbally informed of any changes which may require a change in answering or responding to phone or other inquiries.

### **LESS RESTRICTIVE PLACEMENT**

Connecticut Education Center ensures that there are flexible procedures and mechanisms that maximize opportunities for enrolled students to gain the capacity to return to a less restrictive educational program. These procedures occur include but are not limited to: regular administrative, clinical and educational monitoring of each student's program via observation, Behavioral Intervention Plans and IEP quarterly progress reports. Connecticut Education Center also maintains close case contact with parent/legal guardian to understand that any concerns or advocacy related to movement to a least restrictive environment. These mechanisms include but are not limited to: the capacity for part-time attendance at a LRE program, participating in the programmatically responsible school programs or a period of transition from one program option to a less restrictive program option.

### **STATE-WIDE ASSESSMENTS and Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment Participation**

Each student at the Connecticut Education Center is required to take the Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment within the state guidelines and timeframes. Each student receives significant accommodations that are determined by the IEP Team with strong input from the sending District, parent/guardian and service providers. Prior to testing, staff reviews the needed accommodations in the IEP. Staffing, routine and physical space are modified to ensure the implementation of all accommodations. To ensure student participation, staff utilizes the following interventions: preferred staff, chunking, and high incentive.

Angela Foley Powers, Educational Administrator, is the primary staff responsible for ensuring all Massachusetts and Connecticut students participate in Massachusetts and Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessments. The Connecticut Education Center Teachers are required, as test proctors, to attend and implement DESE and CSDE trainings on test implementation and administration. The Connecticut Education Center may change its program routines to accommodate student's needs during weeks of testing. Connecticut Education Center staff receive appropriate training via CSDE recommended trainings and materials on the DESE website. These changes are determined by the accommodations listed per the student's IEP. Further, the Connecticut Education Center also implements alternative assessments.

### **Connecticut Alternative Assessments**

Students with significant cognitive disabilities are identified for participation in the Alternate Assessment System when the Planning and Placement Team (PPT) determines the student meets eligibility criteria. Trained teachers administer the Alternate Assessments individually to eligible students.

### **Massachusetts Portfolio**

During the IEP Meeting, the team must determine the student's ability to demonstrate knowledge on a paper-and-pencil test given accommodations. If the student is unable to

demonstrate this knowledge, has a substantially modified curriculum and receives intensive, individualized instruction, then the team will determine that the student participates in an Alternate Assessment. If the team feels that the student is unable to demonstrate their knowledge in a specific subject area on a paper-and-pencil test then the Team can determine participation in an Alternate Assessment.

If the student has previously failed the standard Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) with accommodations and the nature of the student’s disabilities presents unique challenges, the team may submit a portfolio to satisfy the Competency Determination requirements.

**Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment Procedures**

The following procedures are conducted to ensure participation in state/district wide assessment;

- All staff are informed of the schedule change for students and the location testing will take place
- Staff are notified of the Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment testing schedule and location of testing to adjust schedules to accommodate Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment
- A list of students taking the standard Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment is distributed with a list of specific accommodations per IEP
- Students’ accommodations are discussed in detail and are assigned an individual proctor if needed.
- Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment proctors are given instruction regarding policies and procedures around testing and state requirements
- Staff sign off on Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment procedures stating they understand the rules and regulations around Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment testing
- Student incentive programs are implemented to increase student participation
- Notices to parents/guardians are sent home to inform them about testing and the importance of their student attendance and participation
- Students are reminded of Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment testing and the importance around their participation and effort

**RESPONSIBLE STAFF**

The Administrator, Educational Administrator, Case Manager, and student’s individual teacher ensure that the student participates in Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment and they are being assessed properly. The following individuals are included in the Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment process:

<b>STAFF</b>	<b>POSITION</b>
Angela Foley Powers	Chief Administrator
Melinda Duff	Educational Director