

**GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Middle  
School  
Handbook**

**2011—2012**



The Groton Board of Education meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month except for the months of December, July, and August, when only one meeting is held. Please check our web site at [www.groton.k12.ct.us](http://www.groton.k12.ct.us) for location of meeting.

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Carolyn Dickey, Business Manager  
Denise Doolittle, Director of Pupil Personnel Services  
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The Groton Board of Education reaffirms that all educational programs taught by the Groton Public School System are offered without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, creed, religion, age, handicaps, ancestry, physical or mental disability, or lack of proficiency in the English language.

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## Philosophy

The purpose of our schools is to develop each student to his/her fullest capacity and to create in him/her the desire to make the most of him/herself for his/her own good and the good of others. To this end our schools should provide opportunities for total development, for academic and vocation education, and for personal and social growth so that each student will come to understand him/herself in relation to his/her environment.

It is our belief that many organizations should assist in the education of our youth. The school should be an integral part of a program of development which includes the family as well as social and private organizations.

Although the basic function of the school is to encourage and provide for academic learning, it must assume responsibility in providing its youth with experiences that develop initiative, healthful growth, and moral values along with a better understanding of themselves and their obligations as citizens. We will foster respect for all groups of people and an awareness of the responsibilities and rights of the individual.

Within the Groton Public School System there should be individualized instruction and sufficient flexibility in program and methodology to achieve individualization for each student through a sequential program of learning. Staff, parents and students are encouraged to propose innovative programs consistent with recognized sound, educational practices.

**Dear Students and Parents:**

The Groton Public Schools is committed to excellence in its academic programs and services which it provides to its students. The school district recognizes that each child is unique. Meeting the many diverse needs presented by our students is a challenge which the Groton Public Schools accepts enthusiastically.

In partnership with parents, we will assure that all children will learn, and that they will grow up to be contributing citizens within our democratic society.

It is our hope and expectation that each of our students will experience a successful school year.

*Paul J. Kadri*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

## Middle School Mission

Groton Middle Schools Commit Themselves To:

1. Provide a gradual transition from the relatively self-contained elementary program to the departmentalized high school.
2. Create an atmosphere which fosters optimum student growth in the basic subject areas by allowing for flexible scheduling of class time.
3. Provide exploratory programs in other academic and skill areas which capitalize on the natural intellectual curiosity of this age group.
4. Develop the physical, social, and creative potential of the student.
5. Foster the development of responsibility through self-discipline and independent learning.
6. Enhance the student's self-concept and tolerance of others.
7. Provide special services to accommodate the unique needs of individual students.
8. Provide co-curricular activities to involve students in areas of their particular interests.
9. Encourage parents and community to become involved in the educational process.

## Course of Study

Language Arts, Science, Social Studies and Math are required core subject taught each day to students in grades 6, 7 and 8. Algebra is offered in grade 8 for recommended students.

Instruction in the core subjects will be provided in each middle school by Interdisciplinary Teaching Teams. This concept of team teaching not only provides for subject-centered teaching, but encourages teachers from separate disciplines to plan and teach interdisciplinary lessons that relate common topics to

each subject area. This most important aspect of team planning and teaching is the provision for focusing on student needs and learning styles. This approach is more student-oriented than subject-oriented. The benefits of teaming will be maximized providing time for team members to cooperatively plan the instructional experiences of their students.

Additional subject offerings are provided in areas such as:

Art	Technology Education
Music	Computer Literacy
Family and Consumer Science	Health



### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION/WORLD LANGUAGE**

Physical education and world language are offered on an every-other-day basis. In grade six, students explore French for one half of the year and Spanish for the other half. Students then select either French or Spanish to study in grade 7. The language is continued in grade 8, however, students may elect to take the language on an accelerated basis (i.e. level 1 high school equivalent) or as an exploratory course (i.e. Cultures and Conversations).

### **HOMEWORK**

Research evidence indicates a positive correlation between homework, student performance and achievement. Regular homework will be assigned to students. Homework assignments should:

- be related to classroom instruction;
- be age and developmentally appropriate;
- provide reinforcement and enrichment of classroom instruction which can be independently completed by the student;
- emphasize critical thinking, problem-solving and written expression;
- emphasize quality over quantity;
- be reviewed/assessed once submitted;
- contribute to the evaluation of the student's performance.

Homework should be relevant and instructionally sound and should not be used for disciplinary purposes. It should be noted that, on occasion, individual students may have to complete unfinished classroom work in addition to the regularly scheduled homework assignments.

The following homework procedures have been developed for grades 6-8 and reflect the time allocated for the completion of all assignments in total:

- Gr. 6 20 minutes of daily reading for pleasure, plus a minimum of 1 hour of other homework activities each day, Monday through Thursday.
- Gr. 7 20 minutes of daily reading for pleasure, plus a mini-

- mum of 1 to 1-1/2 hours of other homework activities each day, Monday through Thursday.
- Gr. 8 20 minutes of daily reading for pleasure, plus a minimum of 1-1/2 hours of other homework activities each day, Monday through Thursday.

It is expected that students will also work on extended/long-term assignments during weekends and other designated periods of time, including school breaks, during the school year.

#### **INTERNET USE**

Computers are provided in every classroom to equip our students with the anticipated technical skills to compete in tomorrow's world of information and technology. Prior to receiving authorization to use the Internet, students and their parents/guardians must sign a "Permission and Contract" document provided by the school district. Use of the Internet is a privilege, and all students must abide by the Groton Board of Education "Internet Use Policy and Procedures" to assure it is used appropriately and responsibly.

## **Marking System**

We use letter grades to indicate a pupil's progress and achievement. Our Marking system is as follows:

- A - Excellent
- B - Good
- C - Average
- D - Poor but passing
- F - Failure
- P - Passing

I - Incomplete, used mainly in cases where a student has been absent. A student receiving a grade of incomplete has a period of ten school days from the date of return to make up work.

Pluses and minuses will be used.

Anytime during a marking period, when the work of a pupil is falling below what might normally be expected, the teacher will take one or more of the following steps: (1) request a conference with the parents; (2) telephone the home; (3) send a note home; (4) send home unsatisfactory work for signature of parent or guardian.

#### **MAKE-UP WORK**

A student who has been absent or dismissed is expected to make up all school work. Students should initiate and make arrangements with their teachers to make up assignments missed on the day of their return to school.

When students are absent three or more days due to illness or extenuating cir-

cumstances, parents may make arrangements with the Guidance Office for assignments. Assignments will not be provided in advance to students who miss school for vacations.

## Promotion

To receive promotion to the next grade a student must not fail more than one subject. A student with two or more failures may be given a special promotion or may be retained in the same grade another year. The decision will be made after a review of such factors as age, attendance and social maturity.

### ACADEMIC STANDING

A good standing in school subjects is of great importance. Do not be satisfied with low marks. Prepare your assignments every day. Do not let them accumulate.

Use your agenda book for recording each day's assignments at the time they are assigned. Do not depend on memory or your classmates. This is the first and most important step in improving and establishing good study habits.

### TRANSFERS

If a student is to be transferred to another school, notification should be given to the Guidance Office immediately. Records will be forwarded to the new school upon receipt of an official written request and signed permission from parent or guardian.

### NEW RESIDENTS

Families who are moving into Groton with school-aged children are required to make an appointment with the School Registrar located at the Central Office. To transfer children to the Groton School District, the following information should be presented to the Central Office Registrar:

1. Birth Certificate
2. Address - proof of residence in Groton
3. Report Card or transfer sheet from previous school
4. Verification of immunizations
5. Physical

Upon receipt of the above information, arrangements will be made by the Groton School District to obtain additional needed student records from the last school attended. Visits to your children's school should be arranged by contacting the school.

### HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for High Honors, a student must have all A's or A's and one B in major subjects and no grade below a C in a special subject. To be eligible for honors, a student must have a B average in major subjects and no grade below a C in a special subject. A student with a grade below C in a major or special sub-

ject is not eligible for either Honor Roll. Major subjects for each grade are Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics and Level I World Language for eighth graders.

All other subjects in each grade are considered exploratory because they are not offered on a daily basis for the entire year.

#### **FAILURES**

Most failures in the middle school are due to irregular attendance or lack of effort. Pupils are urged to request special help when such assistance is needed.

#### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued three times a year. Conferences are held once a year.

The school encourages parent-teacher-pupil conferences throughout the year. Conferences can be arranged by contacting the guidance office.

#### **MARKING PERIODS**

PERIOD ENDS	REPORTS ISSUED
December 1	Reports Cards will be distributed within 10 school
March 8	days after the marking period ends. (This applies to all
June 11	3 dates.)

## **Parent/School Connection**

#### **PTO**

There is an active Parent Teacher Organization/PTO in each of the Groton schools. Additionally, the PTO's all participate in a town-wide PTO organization designed to facilitate communication and excellence.

#### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

A child's educational success is a partnership shared by school and family, including all those who play an important role in the child's well-being. Student achievement increases when families are active in the learning process. Educators recognize and acknowledge the family's role as the primary facilitator of their children's education.

Families are welcome in all Groton schools. Their support and assistance are actively sought in their child's social, emotional and academic development.

Parent involvement programs in our schools support and respect family responsibilities and diversity, as well as link parents to programs and resources within the community. All families will be provided opportunities for involvement.

Family and school communications are two-way, regular, meaningful, and respectful. Effective communication requires that both the family and the school initiate contact and provide vital information about a child's strengths, challenges and accomplishments.

### **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM**

Each of the schools in the Groton Public School District has an active School Improvement Team. Each SIT is comprised of parents, teachers, administrators and non-instructional staff.

## **Guidance Services**

The overall focus of the guidance program is to address the unique concerns of the middle school child. We address their needs through a Developmental Guidance Program. This is a comprehensive program of services that is designed to respond to the personal/social, career and educational needs of ALL pupils. These needs are met through classroom guidance activities and structured group experiences. Individual counseling continues to remain a vital part of our program.

Students and parents are encouraged to make contact with the counselors to discuss school progress, adjustment, career and academic goals.

## **Library Media Center**

The school library media center is a nucleus of school activity, where students and teachers gather to research, read, to work on assignments, to surf the internet, to spend time working on computers, to develop multi-media projects, and to produce video programs. The library media center is a hub of research activity and a multi-media production facility - a learning laboratory where students collaboratively discover new dimensions of learning, both through print and non-printing resources.



The library media specialist serves as a curriculum consultant, an information retrieval specialist, and a team teacher - someone who is available all day to serve the academic needs of staff and students. Orientation classes are held for all sixth graders so that students can become aware of the resources, services and facilities available in the library media center.

In addition to the routine use of the library media center during school day, students are encouraged to utilize the facilities after school on late bus days.

## **Things to Know**

### **ATTENDANCE**

The first rule for success in school is regular attendance. Many failures are caused by irregular attendance and the consequent loss of interest in school. Absences are permitted for illness, death or serious emergencies in the home, or religious observances. Students are required to present a written note from a parent or guardian confirming their absence.

Students must be present in school during the day in order to attend or participate in extra-curricular activities (i.e., dances, concerts and athletic events and practices).

Refer to the board of education policy on attendance on pages 15&16 in this handbook.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

8:05 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Half Day Schedule 8:05 a.m. to 12:32 p.m.

### **TARDINESS**

Because we feel that being on time is important, we try to help each student develop habits of punctuality. A student is late for homeroom at 8:05 a.m. If a student should ever be late, follow this procedure:

1. Go directly to the Main Office through main entrance.
2. Sign in the book (under tardy) filling in all the information. Bring a note from home explaining reason for tardiness.
3. Secure an admit slip and show it to the class teacher. Progressive discipline will be followed for students who are repeatedly tardy..

### **NO SCHOOL**

Selected radio and television stations will carry the announcement for no school or delayed openings. Normal delayed openings will be 1 1/2 hours unless otherwise notified. Notice of such closing is broadcast on local radio stations beginning at 6:00 a.m. through the School Messenger auto dialing system and on our web site [www.groton.k12.ct.us](http://www.groton.k12.ct.us). Please listen to the radio or television and check your messages. Please do not call the school, central office, police or radio stations. NOTE: It is important that your contact number be kept up-to-date with your child/children's school so that you receive all messages. Tune into any of the following for this information:

WADK 99.3 FM or WADK 1230 AM

WBMW 106.5 FM

WCTY 97.7 FM or WICH 1310 AM

WKNL 100.9 FM

WNLC 98.7 FM

GPS Channel 19

WFSB TV - 3

WTNH TV - 8

WVIT TV - 30

WQGN (Q105) 105 FM

School messenger: This is a "phone alert" system. The Superintendent can send messages home or to designated numbers to notify families of delays or cancellations.

### **SUPPLIES, TEXTBOOKS, MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT**

The school district will purchase such books, supplies, materials and equipment necessary to meet the needs of instruction in the schools. All books and equipment shall be loaned and materials and supplies furnished to all pupils free of charge.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are available and will be assigned at the beginning of the school year. Each locker must have a school issued lock. The fee for a school lock is \$5.00. This

will be returned to the student when the lock is returned. Lockers are to be kept closed and locked when not in use. Students should not divulge locker combinations. Personal locks are not permitted. All lockers are the property of the Groton Public Schools and are subject to inspection by the administration at any time.

### **PASSES**

Passes must be used during the school day whenever the student requests or is requested to leave homeroom or class. The pass system varies from school to school. Students will be instructed on the guidelines of the pass system used in their particular school.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

**Fire Drills and lockdown drills** are conducted during the school year. During a fire drill, students must pass quickly and silently in a single file to the nearest exit as directed by the teacher and remain with their class. Directions for this procedure will be found in each classroom near the exit door. After the fire drill, students will return to their classes at the direction of the teacher.

For a drill or in the event of an emergency, a code red lockdown may be initiated. When a “code red” is announced, students and school personnel shall go to the nearest classroom, remain outside or remain in another appropriate location until “code green” is announced. Directions for code red are posted near the exit door in all classrooms.

### **POTASSIUM IODIDE (KI) PILLS**

Potassium Iodide Pills are available for all students. In the event of an accident at any of the nearby nuclear reactors, it is possible that radioactive iodine could be released into the atmosphere. Radioactive iodine can be absorbed into the thyroid gland. Potassium iodide, also known by its chemical name “KI”, is an over-the-counter drug that protects the thyroid gland from radioactive iodine. Your child’s school has been stocked with enough KI pills for all staff and students. All parents/guardians are asked to fill out a potassium iodide (KI) student medication authorization form. This form must be filled out only once for the duration of the student’s enrollment in the school district. The form is available from the school nurse.

### **DRESS CODE**

School dress may be regulated and students are encouraged to dress in clothing appropriate to the school setting. Restrictions on freedom of expression may be applied whenever the mode of dress is unsafe, disruptive, or contrary to law.

Any school dress which impairs the safety or increases the risk to self or others, causes discomfort to others (e.g. uncleanliness, inappropriate language), causes distraction or disruption of the learning environment, advertises or advocates the use of alcohol or drugs, pornography, or inherently contains unreasonable potential to hurt or upset others is prohibited.

The following guidelines will be used in judging appropriateness of clothing worn in school

1. Students must wear foot apparel in school at all times which is appropri-

- ate and safe for school. Shoes with laces must be tied.
2. Clothing and accessories must be free of offensive signs, slogans, or language and not promote or refer to alcohol or illegal substances.
3. Items of apparel that can be disruptive may be banned for that reason. Examples include, but are not limited to: shirts or blouses that are transparent, strapless, midriff or tank tops, halter tops, muscle shirts, swimming apparel, spaghetti straps on shirts or dresses.
4. Underwear worn as outerwear and any clothing that exposes underwear are prohibited. No visible bra straps or boxer shorts.
5. Clothing must be appropriately sized. Pants must be worn at the waist.
6. No hats, bandannas, hoods, or any other head wear may be worn in the building.
7. For safety reasons, students with long hair may be asked to secure it while in special areas such as science laboratories, life sciences, physical education or around machinery.
8. Pajamas and lounge wear are prohibited.
9. Dresses, skirts, or shorts that are deemed by the administration to be too short are prohibited. Dresses, skirts, or shorts must not reach above the wearer's fingertips when the arms are held naturally at the sides.
10. Any gang related clothing, signs, insignia, etc. are forbidden.
11. Final decisions regarding inappropriate clothing rest with the administration.

If feasible, all inappropriate attire must be removed or the student will be sent home. Second and subsequent offenses will be dealt with disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.

#### **FOOD SERVICES**

The Groton Board of Education offers a program of food services as a participant in the National School Lunch Program. Prices once set are subject to change by the Groton Board of Education. Free and reduced price lunches and free milk are available to eligible children. At the beginning of each school year, an application form and explanatory letters are sent to all parents.

#### **VISITORS**

The Groton Public Schools encourage parents and citizens to become acquainted with schools, personnel and programs by visitation and observation and volunteer efforts.

All visitors shall report to the principal's office before visiting any person in the building. Upon arrival visitors are asked to sign in at the office and receive a visitor badge. As much as we would like to receive student visitors from other schools, we do not allow this practice. Please do not ask for special privileges.



### **DANCES**

In keeping with the middle school philosophy, dances may be held as part of the socialization process. Due to the developmental level of middle school students, these dances will generally be held immediately after school and are for students of their respective schools only. No guests will be allowed.

### **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

During school hours, students are not to receive calls. Only in cases of emergency will messages be delivered. Students will not be allowed to make phone calls except for emergency reasons.

Possession of cell phones by students is strongly discouraged. However, if a parent feels that a student must possess a cell phone in school, the following policy is in effect.

1. Any cell phone possessed by a student must be secured in the student's locker and turned off during the school day.
2. Neither the school nor the district is responsible for lost, damaged or stolen cell phones.

Students found to be in violation of this policy will have their cell phones confiscated and progressive discipline will be followed with further infractions.

### **CLASS RESPONSIBILITY**

Students are expected to be in class on time and prepared for their studies. In order to be considered prepared for a class, each student is expected to have with him: the agenda book, a note book, pencils, pen and all textbooks assigned for that class.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

In accordance with the middle school philosophy, extracurricular activities are offered and encouraged. Activities such as Student Council and various sports are available. Students must maintain passing grades in all subjects to be eligible to participate in these extracurricular activities.

### **BUSES**

Students coming by bus are assigned to regular buses at the beginning of the school year and are expected to take the same bus every day. If a student is to be transported by any other means, a note must be brought from home to the office.

The school provides buses for those remaining for after school activities, make-up work, additional help from teachers and detention.

A pupil who jeopardizes the safety of others while on the bus may have bus privileges suspended or may face other disciplinary measures. Pupils may also be removed from the bus by the principal for unacceptable language or behavior.

### **BUSES — CODE OF CONDUCT**

Bus transportation to school is a privilege available to all students. However, this privilege can be suspended. The bus is an extension of the school and it is expected that proper behavior will prevail. The driver is in FULL charge on the

bus, and his/her instructions are to be obeyed. For your own comfort and safety you must abide by the following:

- Be on time. Buses must meet a schedule.
- Respect personal property while waiting at a stop.
- As the bus approaches, form a single line. Do not move toward the bus until it stops.
- Enter the bus in an orderly manner and take a seat.
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Quiet conversation is encouraged. Do not distract the driver by loud talk or shouting.
- Appropriate language must be used at all times.
- Do not offend pedestrians or passengers in other vehicles by shouting out of windows or making obscene gestures.
- Nothing is to be thrown or tossed within the bus or out of the bus.
- The carrying of weapons, or any object that may be used as a weapon, on the bus is prohibited by State Law.
- Do not bring cigarettes, matches or lighters to school. Smoking is not allowed.
- Get on and off at a regular stop. Do not request special consideration.
- Pupils who deface the bus will be held liable for its repair. Should you note any damage, report it immediately to the driver.
- Any student who loses the privilege of riding the bus due to misconduct, is still required to attend school.
- Student and parents are invited to discuss any bus problem with the assistant principal.

#### **LATE BUSES**

Late buses are available to students who stay after school for extra-curricular activities. Late buses leave at 3:50 p.m.

If a bus is late in the morning, the office will not count a student tardy. Students should:

1. Enter main entrance and go directly to Main Office for a late pass.
2. Pick up books and go directly to classes (if classes have started) or home-room.
3. Give pass to teacher as you enter.

#### **DISMISSALS**

If it should be necessary for a student to be dismissed before the close of the school day, this procedure is to be followed:

1. Bring a note to the Main Office before 7:55 a.m.
2. All notes must contain:
  - a. The date
  - b. Time of dismissal
  - c. Reason for dismissal
  - d. Signature of parent or guardian
  - e. Telephone number where parent may be reached
  - f. Students will be given a dismissal pass

3. If the request is approved, the student's name will be placed on the dismissal list.
4. When the time comes for the student to leave:
  - a. Proceed to locker for belongings
  - b. Report to the Main Office. Sign out in the dismissal book
  - c. Students will show the teacher the dismissal pass

#### **DISMISSALS FOR ILLNESS OR INJURY**

A student who becomes ill during the day will be dismissed by the principal, assistant principal or the school nurse after the parent or guardian is notified and has arranged for the student's transportation. It is imperative that the school have on file the telephone number of a relative or friend so that a responsible person can be reached at all times in case of sudden illness or injury.

#### **LOST AND FOUND**

Articles found anywhere in the building or on the grounds should be taken to the office. These articles may be claimed there by the person who has lost them. Students should refrain from bringing valuables to school. Unclaimed lost and found articles will be given to local charities.

If money or valuables are found during the day, they should be brought to the office.

## **Board of Education Policies**

The complete text of all Board of Education policies is available for review in each school and in the Central Administrative Office. Selected policies are summarized in this handbook for student and parent information.

#### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The Board of Education holds the certified personnel responsible for the proper conduct and control of students while legally under the supervision and jurisdiction of the school.

#### **Principal**

The principal may implement necessary procedures and rules and regulations not inconsistent with applicable provisions of law to render effective the policies of the Board of Education relating to standards of student behavior. The principal may involve representatives of all areas of school personnel, students, parents and citizens of the community.

#### **Teachers**

Teachers shall be responsible for the instruction of students in rules and regulations of proper conduct, as well as be responsible for proper and adequate control of students. The responsibility and authority of any teacher extends to all students of the school district under the assigned supervision of the teacher and to other students so situated with respect to the teacher as to be subject to the teacher's control.

**Parents**

Parents shall be expected to cooperate with school authorities regarding the behavior of their children. Parents shall be held responsible for the willful and chronic misbehavior of their children.

**Students**

Students shall be properly instructed in rules and regulations of acceptable conduct; they shall then be responsible for understanding and complying with the standards of behavior described therein. Any student who fails to comply with these rules and regulations concerning student behavior is liable for suspension, in-school suspension, or expulsion.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Each school within the district shall provide time each school day for students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Such recitation is voluntary. If, because of some personal philosophy or belief, a student has made the personal decision not to recite the Pledge, such student may choose to remain seated and silent. Students may wish to use this time to reflect on their philosophy, belief, or remember loved ones. In any event, all students must be courteous and respectful of the beliefs of others.

**ATTENDANCE**

The Groton Board of Education recognizes that regular attendance in school is fundamental to a child's achievement. Instructional experiences that occur in school are meaningful and essential components of the learning process. Time lost from class is irretrievable. It shall be the policy of the Groton Public Schools to encourage regular, daily attendance by all students.

It is the responsibility of parents or guardians of all children five (5) years of age and over and under eighteen (18) to cause their children to attend school regularly. School personnel shall act cooperatively with parents or guardians to support and assist them in this effort. The schools will make all reasonable efforts to keep parents and students informed as to attendance problems and will make all reasonable efforts to help students improve their attendance when such improvement is warranted. Only when all local resources are exhausted is referral to legal authorities recommended.

This policy shall not apply to any child receiving equivalent instruction (either in private school or otherwise) in accordance with Connecticut General Statute Sec. 10-184.

**Absence from School**

The Board of Education believes a student should not be absent from school without the parent's knowledge or consent. Therefore, verification of each absence shall be in writing by parent or guardian.

An absence shall be considered excused when it is the result of

- illness or injury
- death in the family
- religious obligation
- court appearance/jury duty

- school sponsored activity
- suspension from school
- college visitation
- participation in an educational program organized and/or sponsored by a recognized institution of learning.
- any situation deemed legitimate by the building principal or designee.

All other absences, including absences on scheduled school days for family vacations, shall be deemed unexcused. School personnel shall notify parents of all unexcused absences.

### **Tardiness and Class Cutting**

All students are expected to arrive at school on time and to attend all classes in which they are registered. Elementary students who arrive in class after the announced starting time of the school day shall be determined to be tardy. Middle school and high school students who arrive after the announced starting time shall be determined to be tardy. Students who absent themselves from class without the prior approval of an appropriate school official shall be determined to have “cut” the class. Tardiness and “cutting” of classes shall subject the student to disciplinary action.

### **Truancy**

Any student five (5) years of age and over and under eighteen (18), who has accumulated four (4) unexcused absences in any one calendar month, or ten (10) unexcused absences in any school year shall be determined to be a truant. Any student five (5) years of age and over and under eighteen (18), who has accumulated twenty (20) unexcused absences in a school year shall be determined to be an habitual truant.

At the elementary level, student attendance shall be monitored on both a daily and a session (a.m.,p.m.) basis. At the secondary level (middle and high school), student attendance shall be monitored on both a daily and period basis.

Each building principal shall develop procedures to monitor student attendance which, as a minimum, shall include the following:

- a. Annually at the beginning of the school year and upon enrollment of a student during the school year, notifying parents or guardians of each child enrolled in school of their obligations under the attendance policy, and of their obligations to cause their children to attend school pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Sec. 10-184. Specifically, parents or guardians shall (1) notify the school by telephone on the date of a child’s absence, and (2) write an excuse note to be delivered to the school upon the child’s return to school.
- b. Holding a meeting with the parents or guardians of truants to review and evaluate the reasons for the child being truant. This meeting shall be held not later than ten (10) school days after the child’s fourth (4th) unexcused absence in a month or tenth (10th) unexcused absence in a school year.
- c. The coordination of services with referrals of children to community agencies providing child and family services.
- d. Obtaining from each parent or other persons having control of an enrolled child, a telephone number or other means of contacting such parent or other person during the school day.

- e. Making a reasonable effort to notify, by telephone, the parent(s) or other such persons whenever a child fails to report to school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been received by school personnel that the child's parent or other person is aware of the student's absence.

If the parent or other person having control of a child who is truant fails to attend the meeting described at section b. above (after a fourth unexcused absence in a month, or tenth unexcused absence in a school year), or if such parent or other person otherwise fails to cooperate with the school in attempting to solve the truancy problem, the superintendent of schools shall file a written complaint with the superior court for each such truant pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 46b-149 alleging that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his/her family is a family with service needs.

**Attendance Parameters For Excused or Combination of Excused and Unexcused Absences  
Elementary/Middle School:**

The Principal will send a notification letter to the parents/guardians of any student who has 10 absences, stipulating the student's number of absences. These absences may be categorized as excused or may be a combination of excused and unexcused absences. (Note: If the student has accumulated a specific number of unexcused absences within a designated time frame, the Board of Education's Attendance Policy on truancy outlines certain procedures which must be followed.) The Principal will also enclose a copy of the Board of Education's Attendance Policy with the notification letter and will request that the parents/guardians review the policy with their child.

The Principal will request a conference with parents/guardians after their child has acquired 20 excused or a combination of excused and unexcused absences. The purpose of this conference is to discuss health issues and to develop a plan of action.

Students who are absent from school for 30 days or more without an approved plan of action, for any reason (excused and/or unexcused) shall be retained.

The Superintendent of Schools shall:

- a. Assure that this policy is implemented equitably in each of the schools of the district through a standard set of procedures. These procedures shall provide appropriate incentives to encourage regular attendance. They may require disciplinary actions, including exclusion from extra-curricular and athletic activities, to stimulate regular attendance. No student shall be automatically dropped from a class or from enrollment at school due to excessive absence.
- b. File a monthly report on student enrollment attendance with the Board of Education.
- c. Provide an annual report to the State Department of Education on a school by school basis listing the number of children enrolled who are habitual truants.

**CHILD ABUSE - PREVENTION AND REPORTING**

School personnel are in a unique position to observe signs of abuse, maltreat-

ment or neglect of students by their parents, guardians or by school employees. Any person (employee, volunteer, contracted service provider, etc.) having reasonable cause to suspect that abuse, maltreatment or neglect of a Groton student has been caused or may be caused by the parent, guardian or person responsible for such child's health, welfare or care or by a person given access to such child by such responsible person including any school employee, shall immediately report this suspicion orally to the Commissioner of Children and Families or a law enforcement agency within 24 hours, and as otherwise required by the Connecticut General Statutes and this policy.

**Definitions:**

"Child abuse" is defined as a situation in which any child under the age of eighteen (18) years has had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him/her other than by accidental means, or has injuries which are at variance with the history given of them, or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

"Child neglect" is defined as a situation in which any child under eighteen (18) years has been abandoned, or is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotional or morally, or is being permitted to live under conditions or circumstances injurious to the child's well being, or has been abused.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment. The Board of Education prohibits any form of sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee, individual under contract, volunteer or student subject to the control of the Board to harass an employee; individual under contract, volunteer or student through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined by this policy.

If individuals or parents suspect that they or any students may be victims of sexual harassment, they should contact the District Title IX Compliance Officer Denise Doolittle at 572-2150 immediately.

This policy, in its entirety, can be obtained from the Building Principal.

**BULLYING**

Bullying, hazing, menacing and/or abuse of students or school personnel will not be tolerated. Bullying is any overt act (including electronically transmitted acts - i.e. internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (pda), or wireless hand held device) by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate the other student, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. Such behavior is considered harassment or bullying whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle. Any student or group of students who engage in bullying behavior shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

Bullying may take many forms, such as, but not limited to:

1. Physical violence or attacks;

2. Verbal taunts and name-calling;
3. Discriminatory slurs, including, but not limited to, insulting, disparaging or derogatory comments regarding a person's race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national or ethnic background, or disability;
4. Threats and intimidation;
5. Extortion or stealing of money or other property;
6. Exclusion from the peer group.

A comprehensive program to address bullying at all school levels is essential to reduce incidents of bullying. Therefore, bullying prevention and intervention programs shall be implemented at all Groton Public Schools. These programs will strive to develop a school environment:

- which firmly limits bullying behavior;
- where non-hostile, non-physical negative consequences are consistently applied in cases of bullying behavior;
- where adults act as authorities and positive role models; and
- where students and parents are included in efforts to improve the school climate.

**Prevention and intervention strategies may include, but not be limited to the following:**

- Implementing an evidenced-based model for positive behavioral interventions;
- A school climate survey;
- A bullying prevention committee;
- Clear display and reinforcement of school rules;
- Adult Supervision;
- School-wide training related to a safe school environment;
- Provision for the inclusion of language in student codes of conduct concerning bullying and annual notification of the process for reporting bullying.

**The following standards shall be observed in dealing with observed bullying behavior:**

1. Students are encouraged to report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators, on an anonymous basis, if necessary or appropriate.
2. Parents or guardians of students may file written reports of suspected bullying with the school principal.
3. Teachers and other school staff members who witness acts of bullying or receive student or parent reports of bullying are required to notify the school principal/designee immediately and in writing. This immediate communication must be accompanied by an acknowledgement that the principal/designee has received the information.
4. Principals or other designated school administrators shall investigate all written reports and review all anonymous reports of bullying, and report their findings to the Superintendent of Schools. Each such report shall include an intervention strategy where appropriate. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. An anonymous report may lead to a more thorough investigation.
5. The parents or guardians of students who commit any verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of any victims of bullying shall be notified of the bullying behavior, including a description of the response of school staff to such acts and any consequences that may result from the commission of further acts of bullying. Both sets of parents/guardians will

receive in writing an invitation to attend separate meetings to discuss intervention efforts. Documentation of invitations shall be maintained.

6. Appropriate corrective action shall be taken by school administrators to insure that bullying behavior does not continue and to prevent retaliation against any person who reports, or is the victim of such bullying, including disciplinary and/or counseling action where appropriate.
7. Each of the Groton Public Schools shall maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying and shall make such list available for public inspection.
8. Reasonable training will be made to all staff holding an educational certificate where there is not an evidence-based model approach.
9. If anyone feels appropriate action has not been taken, a written complaint can be filed to the Title IX Coordinator.

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS**

### **Sports Physicals**

It is the Policy of the Board of Education to require physicals for participation in sports. Physicals for participation in sports for athletes shall be required within thirteen months prior to the date the student is to participate in interscholastic sports. Documentation of this physical must be placed in the student's health record.

The Board of Education recommends that all physicals be performed by the student's own physician. If, for some reason, this is not feasible, sports physicals will continue to be provided by the school physician. Annual written parental permission will be required before physicals can be performed by the school physician.

### **Mandated Physicals**

It is the Policy of the Board of Education to require periodic health assessments prior to Kindergarten, Sixth and Tenth grades, unless objected to in writing on religious grounds by the parents or guardian of the student (or by the student if age 18 or over). No record of such medical examination shall be open to public inspection.

## **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION**

All employees in the school system shall have an obligation to monitor the behavior of students and to report student misbehavior in accordance with the terms of the Groton Board of Education policy on Suspension/Expulsion. The Board's complete policy is included in a separate booklet.

Definitions of significant words and phrases in the policy and the sections of the policy are included here. Refer to the policy to fully understand the Suspension/Expulsion topic.

**Note to students:** If for any reason you are in possession of anything that you have a question about, discuss this with any adult in the school.

### **Definitions**

- A. "Exclusion" is any denial of public school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.
- B. "Removal" is the exclusion from a classroom for all or part of a single class period, provided the exclusion does not extend beyond ninety (90) minutes.
- C. "In-School Suspension" is the exclusion from regular classroom activity for no

more than five (5) consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school, provided the exclusion does not extend beyond the end of the school year in which the in-school suspension was imposed.

- D. "Suspension" is the exclusion from school privileges, or from transportation services only, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, provided the exclusion does not extend beyond the end of the school year in which the suspension was imposed.
- E. "Expulsion" is the exclusion from school privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, and is deemed to include, but not be limited to, exclusion from the school to which the student was assigned at the time the disciplinary action was taken, provided the exclusion does not extend beyond a period of one calendar year.
- F. "Emergency" is a situation under which the continued presence of the student in school poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that a hearing may be delayed until a time as soon after the exclusion of the student as possible.
- G. "Firearm" is any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any firearm muffler or firearm silencer, or any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas such as a bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine or any similar device, and excluding an antique firearm, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, as amended.
- H. "Deadly weapon" is any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles, as defined in C.G.S. § 53a-3(6).
- I. "Dangerous instrument" is any instrument, article, substance or device which is capable of causing death or serious physical injury, or which poses a serious threat to school personnel, students or property, including by way of example, but not limited to any knife with a metal blade or a razor, utility knife, box cutter, or any instrument, article or substance which, under the circumstances in which it is used or attempted or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury to persons or property.
- J. For purposes of determining the availability of an alternative educational opportunity, or a statutorily mandated expulsion, a "Dangerous instrument" means any instrument, article or substance which, under the circumstances in which it is used or attempted or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury, including a vehicle, as defined in C.G.S. § 53a-3(7).
- K. "Martial arts weapon" is a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or chinese star, as defined in C.G.S. § 53a-3(21).
- L. The term "seriously disruptive of the educational process" means a marked interruption or severe impediment of the day to day operation of the school. In making such a determination the administration may consider, but shall not be limited to: whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school; whether other students from the school were involved, or whether

there was any gang involvement; whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon, as defined in C.G.S. §29-38, and whether any injuries occurred; and whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol or drugs. This definition of “seriously disruptive of the educational process” shall apply to all portions of this Policy.

M. Bullying is defined as repeated and systematic harassment and attacks on others, perpetrated by individuals or groups. Bullying takes many forms and can include many different behaviors, as:

1. physical violence and attacks,
2. verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethnically-based verbal abuse and gender-based put-downs,
3. threats and intimidation, extortion or stealing of money and possessions.

**SUSPENSION/EXPULSION POLICY OUTLINE**

Section I	Definitions [provided above]
Section II	Removal of students from class
Section III	In-school suspension of students; Reassignment
Section IV	Suspension of students
Section V	Expulsion of students <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Procedure</li> <li>B. Alternative education opportunity</li> <li>C. Special education</li> <li>D. Student records, transfers and withdrawals</li> <li>E. Readmission</li> </ol>
Section VI	Standards governing suspension and expulsion <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Statutorily required expulsion proceedings</li> <li>B. Administratively required expulsion proceedings</li> <li>C. Discretionary proceedings for suspension and/or expulsion</li> </ol>
Section VII	Notice of disciplinary policies and action
Section VIII	Statutory modification

Policy Revised: December 13, 2004

**OFF-SCHOOL MISCONDUCT**

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct, even if such misconduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time.

Such discipline may result whether: 1) the incident was initiated in the school or on the school grounds, or 2) even if the incident occurred or was initiated off-school grounds and non-school time; if after the occurrence there was a reasonable likelihood that return of the student would contribute to a disruptive effect on the school education or its process by threatening;

1. The school’s orderly operations;
2. The safety of the school property; or
3. The safety and welfare of the persons who work or study there.

Examples of the type of such off-school misconduct that may result in such

discipline include, but are not limited, to:

1. Use, possession, sale or distribution of dangerous weapons;
2. Use, possession, sale or distribution of illegal drugs; or
3. Violent conduct, where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood of threatening the health, safety or welfare of school property, individuals thereon, and/or the educational process.

For example, if it is determined that a student's use, possession, or sale of drugs in the community has a reasonable likelihood of endangering the safety of students or employees because of the possibility of such sales in the school; or if violent conduct in the community presents a reasonable likelihood of repeating itself in the school environment; or if any similar type of misconduct in the community has a reasonable likelihood of being continued or repeated in school or of bringing retaliation or revenge into the school for such off-school misconduct, the Board may impose discipline up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

#### **DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS**

The Board of Education, concerned for the safety and welfare of all students and school personnel in school and at school sponsored activities, prohibits carrying of a dangerous instrument on, or introducing a dangerous instrument onto, school grounds or at school sponsored events or on any school vehicle.

Possession and/or use of any such dangerous instrument by a student shall result in an expulsion hearing, as required under Board of Education Policy 5115.

#### **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

The Board of Education, having carefully weighed and balanced the rights of privacy of students and staff against the district's duty to maintain order and discipline, finds that it is appropriate to provide for the use of video camera surveillance in its transportation vehicles and on school grounds. Video surveillance shall only be used to promote the order, safety and security of students, staff and property.

#### **ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND TOBACCO**

It is the policy of the schools to take appropriate action in the handling of incidents in the schools involving the possession, sale, and/or use of behavior affecting substances. These substances shall include but not be limited to alcohol and controlled substances as defined by the Penal Code of the State of Connecticut and inhalable substances (including gases, solvents, butane propane, adhesives).

In the event that the student is under the influence of a drug or alcohol, or engaged in the illegal activity of possessing or selling drugs and/or alcohol, he/she will be suspended/expelled from school in accordance with the suspension/expulsion policy.

Personal privacy rights of students shall be protected as provided by law.

School properties may be inspected by school authorities in the interest of maintenance, health and safety. Inspections for the location of drugs, narcotics, liquor, weapons, poisons and missing properties are matters relating to health

and safety and may be regarded as reasonable purposes for inspection by school personnel.

The Board is also concerned that other substances, not listed as “controlled substances”, such as contained in common household items and inhalants, if purposely used inappropriately, can also have a stimulant, depressant or hallucinogenic affect on students. Inappropriate use, possession, sale or distribution of these non-controlled substances will result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and/or expulsion. Further, grade level appropriate education pertaining to proper use of these materials and the danger of abuse shall be presented.

Smoking and/or possession of tobacco products by students are prohibited in school grounds, at school activities and on school buses at all time.

#### **PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE**

The Board of Education prohibits all school personnel from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. This shall not prohibit (nor require) a recommendation by the school’s medical staff, including school nurses and/or the District’s medical advisor, for evaluation by an appropriate medical practitioner. Further, upon the consent of the student’s parents or guardian, school personnel may consult with the medical practitioner regarding such use.

The refusal of a parent or other person having custody of a child to administer or consent to the administration of any psychotropic drug to the child shall not, in and of itself, constitute grounds for referral to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) unless such refusal causes such child to be neglected or abused, as defined in C.G.S. §46b-120.

#### **SURVEY OF STUDENTS (Student Privacy)**

In this policy, “surveys, analysis, or evaluations” refer to methods of gathering data for research purposes.

No student shall be required as part of any program to submit to any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- A. Political affiliations or beliefs of the students or the student’s parents;
  - B. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family;
  - C. Sex behavior or attitudes;
  - D. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  - E. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  - F. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
  - G. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student’s parents;
  - H. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program without the prior written consent of the student’s parent/guardian.)
- For the purpose of this policy, “instructional material” does not include academic tests or assessments.

All instructional materials, regardless of format, including teachers' manuals, films, tapes or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation shall be available upon request for inspection by the student's parent/guardian, or of the student, if he/she is 18 years of age or older. Academic tests and assessments are not included.

A parent may inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to a student.

The Superintendent/designee will be responsible for implementing any procedures necessary to protect the privacy of the participating students and to provide parents with access to surveys within a reasonable time before administration or distribution.

The schools will notify parents of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable time of any substantive change in policy. Insofar as practicable\*, schools will also directly notify parents annually at the beginning of the school year when surveys, analysis, or evaluations are scheduled or anticipated. Parents shall have the opportunity to exclude their children from participating in such surveys, analysis, or evaluations.

*\*"Insofar as practicable" acknowledges that there may be circumstances in which a research request is made or is approved only after the school year has begun. When this occurs, the school unit should notify parents for enough in advance for them to access surveys and related instructional materials and to exclude their children from participating, if desired.*

#### **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

Children who meet the Federal definition of "homeless" will be provided a free and appropriate public education in the same manner as all other students of the District and will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. No homeless student will be denied enrollment based on lack of proof of residency or lack of documentation of required immunization. No Board policy, administrative guideline, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment, attendance, or school success of homeless children.

Homeless students will be provided services comparable to other students in the District in compliance with federal and state law.

The Superintendent will appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children who will perform the duties as assigned by the Superintendent. Additionally, the Liaison will coordinate and collaborate with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth as well as with community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths.

#### **MIGRANT STUDENTS**

The Superintendent will develop and implement a program to address the needs of migrant children in the District. Migrant students are students who move with itinerant workers (parent(s)/guardian(s) who travel from one area to another in search of work.

This program will include a means to:

1. Identify migrant students and assess their educational and related health and social needs.
2. Provide a full range of services to migrant students including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes.
3. Provide migrant children with the opportunity to meet the same statewide assessment standards that all children are expected to meet.
4. Provide advocacy and outreach programs to migrant children and their families and professional development for district staff.
5. Provide parents/guardians an opportunity for meaningful participation in the program.

#### **Migrant Education Program for Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Involvement**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation, and evaluation of the migrant program.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of migrant students will receive instruction regarding their role in improving the academic achievement of their children.

For purposes of this policy, the term "migrant" student shall mean a student who is, or whose parent or legal guardian is, a migratory agricultural worker, including a migratory dairy worker and migratory fisher worker, and who, within the preceding thirty six (36) months, has changed school districts to obtain, or for his/her parents to obtain, agricultural, fishing or dairy work.

## **Health**

#### **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT**

The school district complies with Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AHERA). Specifically accredited/certified persons will be utilized as required to inspect all school buildings for asbestos-containing material. Appropriate action will be taken to control the release of asbestos fibers upon completion of inspections. Corrective steps and long-range maintenance in a management plan shall be made available to all concerned persons and filed with the Department of Public Health.

Employees, parents and the public shall be notified of this plan. Records shall be maintained of the location of all known asbestos and records shall be maintained of all abatements. Further information concerning the school district's procedures for asbestos control, removal and disposal can be found in the school district offices.

#### **PESTICIDE/HERBICIDE APPLICATION PLAN**

The use of pesticides/herbicides in the Groton schools is regulated. Pesticides/herbicides are used only when there is no alternative and then only after regular school hours and when there are no planned activities except when there is an immediate health threat and then only non restricted pesticides/herbicides are used. Children are not allowed into the area of use until it is safe to do so per the directions for use on the pesticide/herbicide label.

Parents/guardians and staff may register with the school principal to be notified before the date of application of the active pesticide/herbicide ingredients and the location of the application. Records of pesticide/herbicide use for the past 5 years are available for review at each school.

No pesticides have been used in recent years. Use of herbicides has been limited to athletic fields at Fitch High School.

The pesticide/herbicide management plan is available by contacting C. Wesley Greenleaf, Director of Building and Grounds (572-2190).

#### **GREEN LEARNING PROGRAM**

Environmentally preferable cleaning products that minimize the potential harmful impact on the environment and human health are chosen for use in the Groton Schools. Products are chosen that meet or exceed standards approved by the Federal Department of Administrative Services in consultation with the Commissioner of Environmental Protection. Such products include but are not limited to general purpose cleaners, bathroom cleaners, carpet cleaners, glass cleaners, floor finishes, floor strippers, hand cleaners, and soaps. Employees, students, parents and others entering Groton Public School facilities are prohibited from bringing any cleaning products into the schools.

## **School Discipline Issues**

#### **DETENTIONS**

Improper conduct may result in a detention. The following are procedures to be carried through in the case of any detention.

1. A detention will be issued to the student and the parent notified. In certain instances, parents may be notified of the detention by phone. This will take place if the detention is to be served on the same day as the offense.

2. All students are to report promptly by 2:45 p.m. to the assigned detention and remain until dismissal.

If a student does not comply fully with the above directions, is absent from detention without an acceptable excuse or is removed from detention for misbehavior, the student will receive either additional detentions or possible suspension.

#### **FIGHTING/PLAY FIGHTING**

Fighting, play fighting and aggressive behavior are strictly forbidden. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

#### **LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Students may not leave school grounds during the school day. (The school day includes after-school activities.) Students arriving on buses cannot leave school grounds after getting off their bus.

#### **SELLING**

Students are not allowed to sell candy, gum, etc. in school unless special permission is granted by the administration.

### **SNOWBALLS**

During inclement weather, when snow is on the ground, there is to be no snowball throwing. Disciplinary action will be taken if such occurs.

### **TOYS/ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Materials such as yo-yo's, water pistols, radios, headphones, tape recorders, cell phones, etc. which could interfere with the educational process are not to be brought to school. Electronic sound reproduction devices of any type are strictly forbidden.

## **School Health Program Services**

VNA of Southeastern CT provides the school nursing service for the Groton Schools. A professional registered nurse is responsible for carrying out the many activities of the school health program. The professional registered nurse is assisted by school health aides in specific areas. The goal of the school health program is to assist each child to attain and maintain his/her optimum state of health so that he/she may benefit to the maximum degree from his/her educational experiences. The means of accomplishing this goal are to reduce the obstacles to learning caused by poor health and to contribute to education in healthful living.

### **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION**

This Groton Board of Education in accordance with the Connecticut General Statute (Section 10-204A) requires that the required immunizations be documented by submission of a record at the time of registration. Immunization record or proof of immunity must be confirmed in writing by a physician. Parents or guardians may check the specifics of the required immunizations by contacting their child's pediatrician, the school nurse or the school nurse supervisor at 860-444-1111. The required immunizations are as follows:

1. **DTP/DTaP/TD**
2. **POLIO**
3. **HEMOPHILUS INFLUENZA TYPE B (HIB)**
4. **HEPATITIS B (HBV)**
5. **MEASLES, RUBELLA and MUMPS (MMR)**
6. **VARICELLA**

Medical exemptions must be accompanied by a physician's note and a religious exemption must be accompanied by a written statement from the parent/guardian.

Students who do not have proof of immunization will not be registered in school, or if registered, will be suspended from school until such time as proof of immunization is presented to the school nurse.

Proof must be by immunization record, health record, or from a doctor's office.

Any deviations from these immunizations should be discussed with the nurse

or call the School Nurse Supervisor at 444-1111.

Each record will be reviewed by school personnel and questions answered as to compliance with State Statute. This information will be transferred to a permanent health record and should be kept current by notifying the nurse when a child receives updating of immunizations.

#### **HEALTH SERVICES OFFERED**

The school nurse is available for counseling in these situations:

1. **Illnesses** - Counsels students, contacts parents as necessary.
2. **First Aid** - Administers first aid and emergency care as needed.
3. **Immunization Clinics** - Information regarding clinics can be obtained from the school nurse.
4. **Physical Examinations** - prior to 6 and 10, and sports activities at the Middle and High Schools.
5. **Scoliosis Screening** - For students in Grades 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.
6. **Vision Tests** - For specific grade levels and for anyone who is referred.
7. **Hearing Tests** - For specific grade levels and for anyone who is referred.
8. **Teacher Nurse Conferences.**
9. **Health Education** - Does health education sessions on varying subjects in the classroom as a resource person.
10. **Health Counseling Services** - To students, parents, and faculty in relation to health problems.
11. **Home Visits** - Made on behalf of students for varying reasons.
12. **Multi-Disciplinary Team Member** - Works with all professional school personnel to find the appropriate education program for individual students.

You are encouraged to contact your school nurse with any questions or problems which you may encounter regarding the health of your child.

#### **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS**

Each pupil enrolled in the public schools is required to have a health examination at periodic intervals. It is required that the first examination be done within the year preceding the child's entrance to school. A health assessment form shall be given to you on the registration day. Physical assessments are also required prior to Grade 6 and Grade 10. These must be completed prior to that school year or the student will be excluded from school the beginning of the next year. Please refer to the Board policy on Physical Examinations on pages 19-20 of this handbook.

Mandated components of the physical examination are as follows:

1. Hemocrit or hemoglobin test, height, weight and blood pressure;
2. Gross dental exam, vision, hearing, scoliosis screening and chronic disease assessment;
3. Immunizations as listed above.

Conferences will be held with the parents or guardian and the school nurse on the day of registration.

**TB Testing (PPD):** TB Skin test to be done at the discretion of the physician.

## GENERAL SCHOOL HEALTH INFORMATION

**Health Records:** An individual cumulative health record is maintained for each child. The information recorded shall consist of a health history filled out by the parent of guardian at the time of registration. Results of ongoing screening test are also incorporated into the record as they are performed at school. It is *imperative* that the parent/guardian notify the school nurse if a child has received an updating on immunization or has received a physical examination from the family physician. This cooperative effort is extremely beneficial in ensuring effective health care and prevents duplication of effort.

Health problems may restrict some students from participation in some school activities, such as physical education. In these circumstances, a note from a family physician describing the condition and advising the type and length of restriction is required. Permanent excuses must be renewed at the opening of each school year.

**Communicable Disease:** If a child is absent due to a diagnosed communicable disease such as chicken pox, please notify the school. When your child has recovered, he/she may be readmitted by the school nurse. In certain cases, such as infectious hepatitis, it may be necessary to have a readmission slip from a physician.

**Emergencies:** Health care provided in schools is restricted to first aid in accidents and illness. Emergency cards, providing written authorization for further care, as well as names of physicians and other persons to be called in an emergency, should be one file for each child. It is of prime importance that the school be provided with an emergency telephone number in case of a medical emergency or routine illness which requires exclusion. The parent/guardian shall provide the school with an alternate telephone number of a relative, or neighbor, who has agreed to respond when the parent or guardian cannot be reached. This person should live within a reasonable distance from the school and be willing to accept the responsibility of providing transportation so that the child can be picked up at the school. This person will be responsible for your child's care and decisions made in your absence. The school will immediately summon an ambulance in cases of serious emergency.

**Medications in the schools:** Students are not allowed to have any type of medications in the school according to public Act No. 723. A physician's written order and parent's or guardian's authorization is required for a nurse, or, in her absence, the principal or designee to administer medications. A form is available at each school to be filled out by the prescribing physician and signed by the parent or guardian. This form is returned to the school and kept with the child's health record.

Self-administration of medication will be allowed provided certain criteria are met. In the case of inhalant medications, self administration may be approved with a prescription from a physician and written parental consent on file.

The medication should be given to the school nurse by the parent or guardian. The medication can then be administered, as prescribed by the school nurse, or in her absence, the principal or designee. These forms must be reviewed at specified intervals.

No more than a 45 day supply of medication can be kept at the school at one

time. Parents should pick up any unused medications at the end of the school year or they will be destroyed.

**Exclusion:** A child can be excluded from school for various illnesses or injuries. The school nurse recommends exclusion to the principal or designee according to the policies set by the school medical advisors and the State Department of Health. Students are also excluded if there is evidence of pediculosis or scabies.

### **HEALTH ROOM**

The Health Room is located near the office. Any student who becomes ill or injured during the day should report to the health room.

For students excused for illness, means of transportation must be arranged by the parent of guardian. Parents are requested to file with the school the name, address and telephone number of a person to be contacted if parents cannot be reached in case of emergency.

## **Athletic Policy**

The coaching staff has discussed its sport program as it relates to the entire school curriculum. It has come up with various thoughts and ideals that it feels should provide the guidelines for the program. The various thoughts and ideals listed below provide the guidelines for the program.

It is felt that students going out for an interscholastic sport should realize:

1. The interscholastic program is a special activity, not a required program.
2. Selection to this is a privilege.
3. They should expect special rules and regulations to be part of each program.

**Unexcused Absences** — from practice the day before a game — a student cannot participate in the activity but may be required to accompany the team at the coach's discretion.

**Unexcused Absences or Tardiness** - Standards to be set by individual coaches, but will reflect the attitude that such occurrences are not acceptable and could lead to dismissal from the club.

**Excused Absences or Tardiness** - Mechanics for such will be established by the individual coaches but will reflect the attitude that it is the student's responsibility to communicate with the coach.

4. They are representatives of the school and their conduct should reflect positive ideals during the school day as well as at athletic events.
5. Being in a special program, their conduct will be more obvious to teachers, administrators, parents and peers.
6. School policies and responsibilities have priority over athletics.
7. Education is the school's primary role, therefore, scholastic performance must be at an acceptable level to be a part of the athletic program.
8. The coaches have responsibility to uphold acceptable values, to set rules and regulations for their sport, and to handle violations in a consistent and fair manner.

Consistency is important in setting down rules and regulations for the athletic programs, however, there may be differences in the structure of a sport that will not allow total compliance. The following are areas that all teams shall abide by and these will be clarified to all participants of the program.

1. **Scholastic Eligibility** - Students must maintain passing grades in all subjects to participate in interscholastic sports. This standard will also apply to the cheerleading squad.
2. **Physical Exams** - All participants must have physicals yearly before practice begins.
3. **Parental Permission Slips** - Will be distributed to participants. Parents or guardians must sign for student to continue in the program.
4. **Conduct** - Participants will at all times reflect acceptable behavior and positive ideals and conform to Middle School policies. Those not conforming to such standards will face dismissal from the team.
5. **Absence** - Any student absent from school will not be allowed to participate, travel or join the team that day.
6. **Tardy** - A tardy student must be in school before 10:00 a.m. — exception to be approved if parent or guardian communicates with the administration.
7. **Medical Excuse** - Medical excuse from PE classes — no participation in interscholastic sports.
8. **Detention** - A school or classroom detention on the day of an activity — the student cannot play, suit up, or travel on a bus. Detentions will not be rescheduled to accommodate games or practices.
9. **Care of Uniforms/Equipment and Facilities** - Students will be responsible for all lost uniforms/equipment and damaged facilities.

## Special Education Services

### SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTION

The Planning and Placement Teams (PPT) in each of our schools ensure that students meet the eligibility requirements of the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and state regulations. It is also through the PPT process that the district ensures that all students with disabilities aged 3 through 21 who require special education and related services, who have not graduated with a regular high school diploma, receive a free and appropriate public education. The district develops a written plan for each student requiring special education and related services. This plan is called an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IEP is developed, implemented, maintained, reviewed, revised and evaluated for all students served by our district.

The district ensures that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are nondisabled. However, the district provides a continuum of programming options for students to the extent necessary in order to implement the IEP. Each student requiring special education and related services is educated in the school that he or she would attend if he or she did not require special education and related services, unless the IEP requires another placement.

## Related Services

The following services are available in each school:

**Psychological services** are provided by certified school psychologists who provide a range of services including support for all students and consultation and collaboration with educators, professionals and parents. School psychologists work collaboratively with teachers and administrators to help create safe and supportive school environments, empower teachers to understand and respond to students' social and emotional needs, develop and monitor academic and behavioral interventions to enable students to attain educational goals and personal-social well-being, and coordinate community services, outside providers and agency involvement to prevent problems, enhance independence and promote optimal learning.

**School psychologists** conduct individual assessments to provide information that is helpful in determining a student's eligibility for special education and related services and in the development of individual academic and behavioral programs which maximize the student's achievement and educational success.

**Speech and language services** are provided by certified speech and language pathologists to students who exhibit speech-language impairments that adversely affect educational performance in accordance with the IEP. Speech and language pathologists participate in the development and monitoring of alternative procedures and programs in general education which may be explored and implemented, where appropriate, before a child is referred to special education. When concerns about a child's communication development continue despite the implementation of alternative interventions, speech and language pathologists conduct individual assessments to provide information that is helpful in determining a child's eligibility for speech and language services as special education or a related service.

**Physical and occupational therapy** are provided in accordance with the student's IEP.

**Special education transportation** is provided as a related service in accordance with the student's IEP.

## Additional Services

### **Homebound Instruction:**

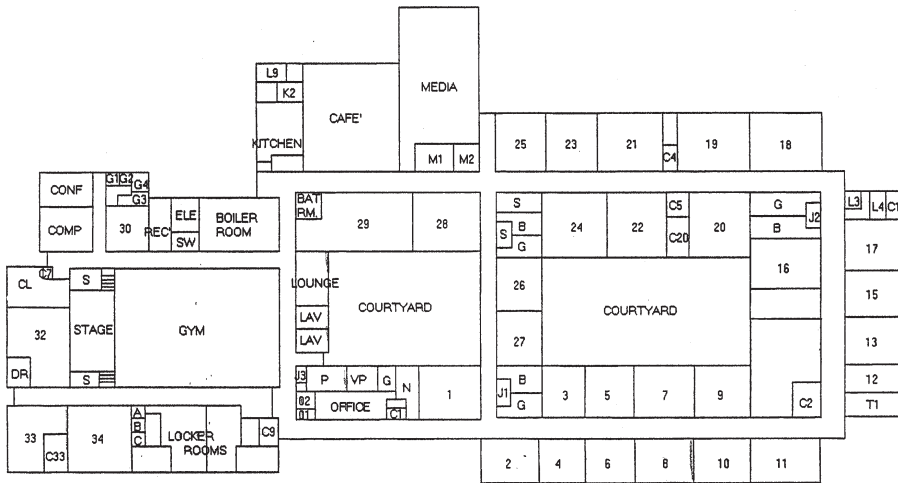
Homebound instruction is provided for students who receive special education and related services when recommended by the PPT in accordance with the

student's IEP. Homebound instruction is also provided for any student for whom a physician has certified, in writing, that the student's medical condition will cause an absence of at least three weeks' duration. Instruction typically begins no later than two weeks from the first day of absence.

**Alternative Procedures and Programs Prior to Referral to Special Education:**

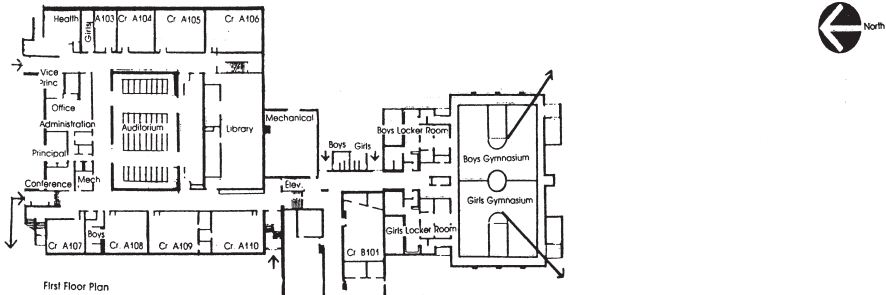
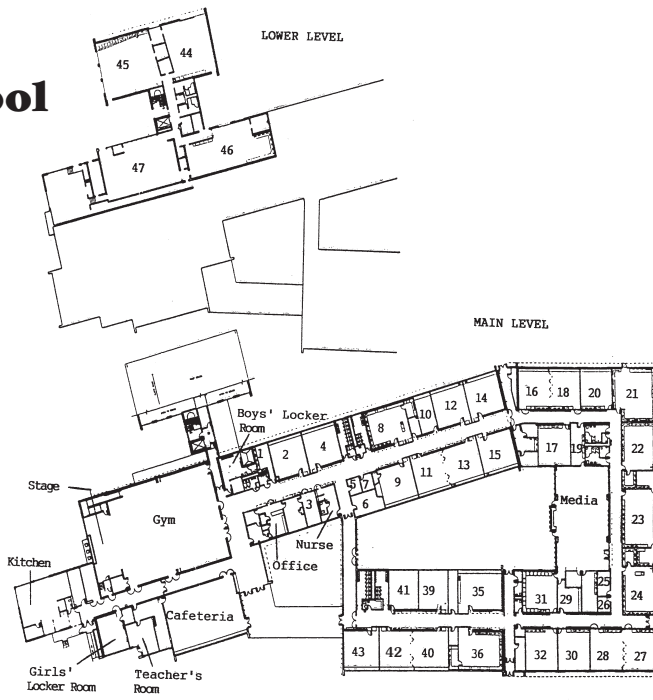
Before school personnel refer a student to a Planning and Placement Team (PPT), alternative strategies and programs in general education are explored and, where appropriate, implemented. Each middle school in our district has a Student Assistance Team which works collaboratively with teachers and parents to develop and monitor the effectiveness of alternative strategies and supplemental interventions to assist the student within the general education program. For students who do not demonstrate a response to the targeted interventions over a specified time period, a referral to the Planning and Placement Team is made for additional testing to determine eligibility for special education services under IDEA.

# Cutler Middle School

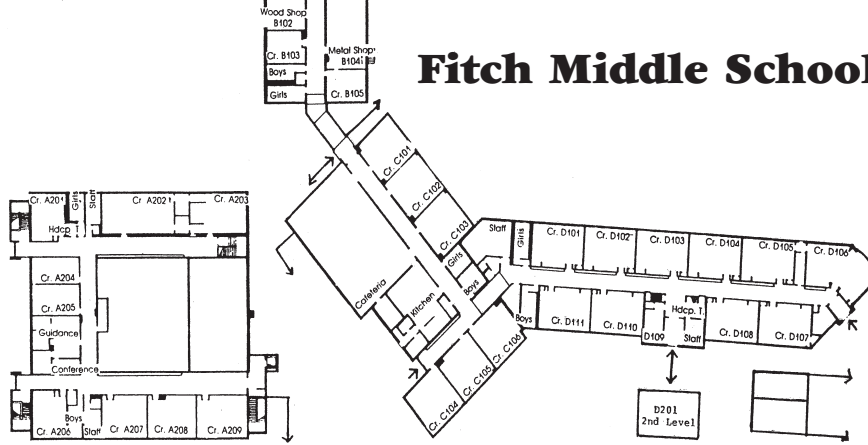


# Groton Public Schools Groton, Connecticut

# West Side Middle School



# Fitch Middle School



## **Groton Public Schools**

### **Code of Conduct**

#### **Respect**

- Respect the learning process.
- Treat others as you would have them treat you.
- Understand, respect and celebrate diversity.
- Respect personal and school property.

#### **Responsibility**

- Learn from mistakes.
- Be on time.
- Be prepared.
- Do your best every day.
- Dress appropriately.

#### **Commitment**

- Be a committed learner.
- Participate in class every day.
- Be a productive citizen of the school community.
- Celebrate success.

www.groton.k12.ct.us

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**AUGUST**  
1 days, 1 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
18	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

**SEPTEMBER**  
21 days, 22 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
LD	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

**OCTOBER**  
19 days, 41 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
CD	19	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

**NOVEMBER**  
18 days, 59 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	TG	25
29	30			

**DECEMBER**  
17 days, 76 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

**JANUARY**  
20 days, 96 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
MLK	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

**FEBRUARY**  
19 days, 115 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
PD	21	22	23	24
27	28	29		

**MARCH**  
22 days, 137 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

**APRIL**  
15 days, 152 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	GF
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

**MAY**  
22 days, 174 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
MD	29	30	31	

**JUNE**  
7 days, 181 accrued

M	T	W	TH	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12**	13**	14**	G**
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

**MARKING PERIODS  
Grades 8-9**

Period Ends	Reports Issued
Dec. 1	Reports Issued Within 10 school days after marking period ends
Mar. 8	
June 11	

July 2-5 .....July 4th Holiday Recess	Feb. 10 .....PD President's Day (Lincoln and Washington) Recess
Aug. 25, 26 .....Freshman Orientation, 8:00-11 a.m., at Fitch High School	Mar. 5-30 .....CMT/CAPT Test Dates
Aug. 31 .....* First Day of School for Students	Mar. 28-30 .....Early Dismissal for Elementary School Conference Days, K-5 Only
Sept. 5 .....LD Labor Day	Apr. 6-13.....Spring Recess/Good Friday
Sept. 29 .....Rosh Hashanah (Informational Only)	April 24.....Early Dismissal (CEU)
Oct. 8 .....Yom Kippur (Informational Only)	May 25 .....Early Dismissal (CEU)
Oct. 11 .....CD Columbus Day	May 28 .....MD Memorial Day
Oct. 26, 27, 28 .....Elementary/Middle School Conference Days, K-8	June 11 .....LAST DAY OF SCHOOL
Nov. 8 .....[ ] Professional Development Day for Teachers - no school for students	June 15 .....[G] GRADUATION, early dismissal
Nov. 11 .....VD Veterans' Day	June 12, 13, 14, 15.** Storm make-up days, if necessary.
Nov. 23 .....Early dismissal due to Holiday Recess	
Nov. 24, 25 .....TG Thanksgiving Holiday Recess	
Dec. 23.....Early dismissal due to Holiday Recess	
Dec. 24, Jan 2.....Holiday Recess	
Jan. 16 .....MLK Martin Luther King Birthday Observed	

Early Dismissal Session

MIDDLE SCHOOL HOURS 8:05 a.m to 2:45 p.m.

