

Area Cooperative Educational Services

Parent – Student Handbook

2017-2018



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Preface

Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) 2017-18 Parent-Student Handbook

This handbook was developed to provide parents and students with a summary of important ACES policies and procedures. This handbook is not intended to be all-inclusive and does not contain all of ACES policies. The ACES policy manual is available online at <http://www.aces.org/about/publications-policies/policy-manual> and at each school. All ACES policies are in compliance with the United State Constitution, Connecticut, federal and local policies. Please contact your school principal or the superintendent's office should you have any questions or would like additional information.

Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability in providing education services. ACES has been designated to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. Carol Bunk has been designated to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) does not discriminate on the basis of disability by denying access to the benefits of district services, programs, or activities. To request information about the applicability of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), interested parties should contact Carol Bunk.

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ACES Mission Statement

The mission of ACES, a leader and innovator in education, is to empower our students, member districts, and other clients to meet educational and life challenges in the changing global environment by providing collaborative, customized, cost effective solutions to meet identified needs of our educational community.

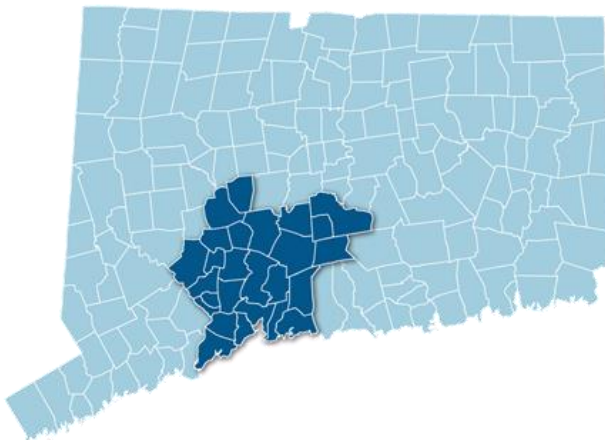
ACES Organizational Beliefs

We believe that...

- ✓ each individual has inherent worth
- ✓ all individuals can learn
- ✓ high expectations and effort are essential for higher achievement
- ✓ quality education provides the foundation for the success of the individual and the community
- ✓ diversity strengthens an organization
- ✓ individuals are accountable for their actions
- ✓ everyone has a responsibility to each other and to contribute to the common good
- ✓ honesty and respect are essential for building trusting relationships
- ✓ a positive attitude enhances performance
- ✓ collaboration enhances productivity and generates creativity
- ✓ families are essential partners in education
- ✓ the willingness to change is necessary for individuals to grow and organizations to thrive

ACES Districts

Ansonia	North Haven
Bethany	Orange
Branford	Oxford
Cheshire	Regional District #5
Derby	Regional District #13
East Haven	Regional District #16
Hamden	Seymour
Meriden	Wallingford
Middletown	Waterbury
Milford	West Haven
Naugatuck	Wolcott
New Haven	Woodbridge
North Branford	



Central Administration

Peter C. Young Administration Building
 350 State Street
 North Haven, CT 06473-3108
 203.498.6800 / www.aces.org

<p>Thomas M. Danehy, Ed.D. Executive Director 203.498.6816</p>	<p>Timothy Howes Assistant Executive Director Finance & Operations 203.498.6838</p>	<p>William Rice Assistant Executive Director Schools and Curriculum 203.498.6868</p>
<p>Carol Bunk Director, Human Resources 203.498.6823</p>	<p>Rachel Sexton Chief, ACES Institute 203.407.4437</p>	<p>Evelyn Rossetti-Ryan, Ed.D. Chief, Marketing & Outreach 203.498.6881</p>
<p>Timothy Gunn Director Facilities & Construction 203.498.6839</p>	<p>Chidi Onukwugha Director ACES ACCESS 60 United Drive North Haven, CT 06473 203.234.1344</p>	<p>James Hoko, Ph.D., BCBA-D Director Behavior Services and Autism Programs 26 Old Post Road Northford, CT 06472 203.484.9501</p>
<p>Laura Evangelist Director Extension Therapy Services 205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 203.407.4470</p>	<p>Leslie Abbatiello Director Professional Development and School Improvement 205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 203.407.4402</p>	<p>Vanessa Taragowski Director Pupil Services 204 State Street North Haven, CT 06473 203.498.6849</p>
<p>Wanda Wagner, D.M. Director Technology Services 204 State Street North Haven, CT 06473 203.287.6804</p>	<p>Dawn Carranzo Director Transportation Services 60 United Drive North Haven, CT 06473 203.234.2406</p>	

Schools

<p>Center for Autism Spectrum and Developmental Disorders Leslie Peters, Principal 26 Old Post Road Northford, CT 06472 203.484.9501</p>	<p>Educational Center for the Arts Jason Hiruo, Principal 55 Audubon Street New Haven, CT 06510 203.777.5451</p>
<p>Mill Road School Cynthia Ratchelous, Principal Vacant, Assistant Principal 295 Mill Road North Haven, CT 06473 203.234.0303</p>	<p>Thomas Edison Middle School Karen Habegger, Principal Megan Conatser, Assistant Principal 1355 North Broad Street Meriden, CT 06450 203.639.8403</p>
<p>Village School Virginia Tagliatela, Principal Jennifer Santarcangelo, Assistant Principal 31 Temple Street North Haven, CT 06473 203.234.7611</p>	<p>Whitney High School East / West Lisa Mucciacciaro, Principal Patricia Hart, Assistant Principal 261 Skiff Street / 205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 203.281.3577</p>
<p>Whitney High School North Mark Dougherty, Principal 205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 203.407.4500</p>	<p>Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School Todd Solli, Principal Vicki Rose, Assistant Principal 670 Wintergreen Avenue Hamden, CT 06514 203.281.9668</p>
<p>ASPIRE Bryan Markiewicz, Principal 560 Ella Grasso Boulevard New Haven, CT 06519 475.220.6750</p>	

Academic Information

School Day, Grades K-12

The ACES school year provides at least 180 days of school for all grades and provides a minimum of 900 hours of actual school work for full-day programs and 450 hours for half-day programs.

Assessments and Grading

Through instructional performance objectives, ACES maintains student standards which promote educational achievement and excellence. Issuance of regular student grades promotes continuous student evaluation and informs students, parents, and counselors of student progress and encourages improvement in student performance, if improvement is needed. ACES will make all test results available as soon possible after receiving the results from the State Department of Education.

Homework

The purpose of homework is to help students become self-directed, independent learners and is related to the educational progress of the student. It serves to help all students reach their instructional goals. Specific homework assignments may strengthen basic skills; extend classroom learning; stimulate and further interests; reinforce independent study skills; develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction; stimulate worthwhile use of leisure time; and acquaint parents with the student's work in school. Homework will not be used to initiate new learning.

Promotion and Retention

The decision to promote or retain a student to the next grade level is based on successful completion of the curriculum and curriculum-based assessments and attendance. A student shall not be promoted based upon age or any other social reason not related to academic performance. ACES may require students whose academic performance jeopardizes their promotion or graduation to attend after-school, summer school or other programs the sending district offers designed to help them. ACES administration shall determine remedial assistance for a student who is not promoted and work closely with families to support the student well before retention becomes an option.

Confidentiality and Maintenance of Student Records

The local education agency (LEA) representing the home district or sending district for any student enrolled in an ACES program maintains ownership of and holds ultimate responsibility for the official record of such student. Records are to be considered on loan to ACES during the student's period of enrollment. As long as the student remains in an ACES program, ACES will maintain records and provide for the filing, protection, confidentiality review and, when appropriate, destruction of such records. Once a student exits from an ACES program, all records for that student, including educational reports generated by ACES, will be returned to the LEA. ACES will maintain a record of the student's name, program, date of entrance and date of withdrawal from ACES. This information will be sent to and maintained by the Executive Director or designee for fifty (50) years according to law and maintained within the Central Office of ACES.

Acceptable Use Policy

It is the policy of Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) that network technology services are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner in accordance with the mission and policies of ACES. Users of network technology services must acknowledge their understanding of the general policy and guidelines as a condition of using the network. Use of network technology services is a privilege, not a right. Failure to adhere to the policy and administrative procedures may result in suspension or revocation of network access. Willful or

intentional misuse could lead to disciplinary action, including suspension or termination, or criminal penalties under applicable state and federal law.

Access to the Internet is provided by ACES for the purpose of benefiting the school community, the educational and business responsibilities of ACES, and enriching the educational experience for all students. In order to better facilitate the safe use of the Internet by students at ACES, technological measures will be taken to attempt to restrict access by minors to materials that may be harmful to minors and incompatible with the educational mission of ACES, as well as to promote the internal security of the network. ACES takes appropriate measures to educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber bullying awareness and response.

All student users must read and sign the Acceptable Use Agreement prior to being permitted to access the Internet through the network provided by ACES. All staff are expected to be familiar and comply with the ACES Acceptable Use Policy.

Asbestos Management Plan

ACES has plans on file showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to ensure a safe school environment. All buildings will be periodically inspected and cared for under ACES Asbestos Management Plan. A management plan including the inspection report is available in each school's Central Office for review and inspection during normal office hours. Questions can be directed to ACES Director of Facilities and Construction at (203) 498-6839.

Attendance Policy / Early Dismissal

Connecticut State Law requires parents/guardians to ensure their children attend school regularly during the hours and terms the school is in session. Learning experiences that occur in the classroom are considered to be meaningful and essential components of the learning process. Time lost from class tends to be irretrievable in terms of opportunity for instructional interaction.

ACES requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child. A student should not be absent from school without the parent's or guardian's knowledge and consent. Verification of absence should be written by parent or guardian.

An absence shall be considered "excused" when a child does not attend school due to illness, injury, death in the immediate family, religious obligation, an emergency, or other exceptional circumstances. Written excuse for such absences should be submitted to school officials by the child's parent or guardian. All other absences with or without written explanation shall be considered unexcused.

Request for Early Dismissal

Request for release of a student during the school day must be handled by the administration to ensure maximum provisions for the safety and welfare of the student. Parents/guardians or designee requesting dismissal before the normal end of the school day for students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12 must make a written request. The designated adult of students in grades Pre-K-8 must come into the school office to pick the student up and sign the student out. Early dismissal should be requested only in emergency or unusual situations.

Behavior Management

ACES is committed to providing appropriate individualized educational services for students who exhibit a variety of special needs within the school, home, job site and community. The provision of such services often requires the use of behavior management procedures. Behavior management procedures employ a highly structured, data-based, approach for teaching new behavior as well as the reduction of non-desired behaviors. Strategies used for the employment of behavior management techniques are guided by ethical/procedural safeguards which recognize the rights of the student, parent/guardian and community. Behavior management procedures are based on the principles of applied behavior analysis, including the least restrictive/intrusive practice, most effective practice, and positive reinforcement.

Use of Physical/Mechanical Restraint or Seclusion

Any student in an ACES program exhibiting behaviors that result in immediate, or imminent, danger to the person, or to others, shall be subject to restraint and or seclusion in accordance with the rules set down in Public Act 15-141.

The use of any form of restraint, other than those techniques taught through participation in the ACES Systematic Safety Intervention Strategy Training (ASSIST) or Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), is prohibited. In all situations, even those that become physically violent, it is the intent of ACES to provide the best possible care, welfare, safety and security for students, staff and property. Whenever possible, attempts will be made to prevent or defuse potentially assaultive or dangerous behavior through the use of early intervention strategies. ASSIST and CPI consist of "non-harmful restraint techniques to safely control an individual until he/she can regain control of his/her own behavior." Safe, approved physical restraint can be used to prevent immediate or imminent injury to the student, others or ACES property, after all other verbal and nonverbal strategies have been attempted.

Bullying Policy

ACES believes that all students have the right to a secure and safe environment and to be free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore, it shall be the policy of ACES that bullying of a student is prohibited. Bullying is defined as any overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity, or on a school bus, which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year. Bullying which occurs outside of the school setting may be addressed by school officials if it has a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school. Bullying of a student by another student is prohibited. Such behavior is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed to another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such students;
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or 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. (The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.)

Other definitions include but are not limited to:

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, photoelectronic 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. "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, 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.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical violence and attacks
2. Verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs including ethically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs
3. Threats and intimidation
4. Extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
5. Exclusion from peer groups within the school
6. The misuse of electronic communications for the purpose of bullying, harassing, or sexually harassing other students within school or out of school ("cyberbullying")
7. Targeting of a student based on the student's actual or perceived "differentiating" characteristics such as race; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; socioeconomic or academic status; physical appearance; or mental physical, developmental, or sensory disability.

Students who engage in any act of bullying, 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 ACES, or

through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by ACES, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

1. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victims,
2. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school, are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspensions, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement official.

Each ACES school has a school climate plan that addresses bullying. These comprehensive plans

1. Permit anonymous reports of bullying by students to teachers and administrators and written reports of suspected bullying by parents or guardians; Requires teachers and other school staff to notify school administrators in writing of bullying acts they witness and students' reports they receive;
2. Require school administrators to investigate parents' written reports and review students' anonymous reports, except that no disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report;
3. Require each school to maintain a publicly available a list of the number of verified bullying acts that occurred there, and within available appropriations, report such number to the Department of Education annually and in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of Education;
4. Requires each school to have prevention and intervention strategy, as defined by statute, for school staff to deal with bullying, including language about bullying in student codes of conduct and in all student handbooks;
5. Require each school to notify parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying and invite them to attend at least one meeting. The notice shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian if requested. The notice must describe the school's response and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying;
6. Require the development of case-by-case interventions for addressing reported incidents of bullying against a single individual or recurrently perpetuated bullying incidents by the same individual that may include both counseling and discipline;
7. Require students to be notified annually of the process by which they may make reports of bullying;
8. Require the identification of appropriate school personnel, which may include, but shall not be limited to, pupil services personnel, responsible for taking a bullying report and investigating the complaint;
9. Are included in the ACES staff development program for certified staff;
10. Require each school to notify parents or guardians of students who commit verified acts of bullying and the parents or guardians of students against whom such acts were directed no later than forty-eight hours after the completion of the investigation;
11. Require each school to invite the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying and the parents or guardians of the student against whom such acts was directed to a meeting to communicate to such parents or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the student against whom such act was directed and to prevent further acts of bullying;
12. Prohibit discrimination and retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying;
13. Require the principal of a school, or the principal's designee to notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such principal, or the principal's designee, believes that any acts of bullying constitute criminal conduct.

ACES expects prompt and reasonable investigation of alleged acts of bullying. The principal of each school or his/her designee is responsible for handling all complaints of alleged bullying. This

policy shall not be interpreted to prohibit a reasonable and civil exchange of opinions, or debate that is protected by state or federal law.

Annual Bullying Notice

Bullying behavior by any student in the ACES schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means any overt acts by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at school-sponsored activity, or on a school bus, which acts committed more than once against any student during the school year

Students may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to teachers and school administrators. In addition, parents may also file written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

Informal/Verbal complaints of Bullying by Students

Students may make complaints of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbally reporting to a teacher, administrator, or other professional employee such as a guidance counselor, school psychologist, nurse, social worker or school therapist. Student complaints of bullying should specify the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including the time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A teacher, or other professional employee, or administrator who receives a student complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the information provided by the student. The written report by the teacher, other professional employee and/or administrator shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal (or other responsible program administrator) for review and action.

Formal/Written Complaints of Bullying

Students and/or their parents or guardians may also file formal written complaints of conduct that they consider to be bullying. Such written reports should specify the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any teacher or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal for review and action.

Anonymous Complaints of Bullying

Students who make complaints of bullying to a teacher and/or administrator may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the teacher(s) or administrator(s) who receives the complaint. Should anonymity be requested, the principal or his/her designee shall meet with the student to review the request for anonymity and the impact that maintaining anonymity of the complaint may have on the investigation of the complaint and/or possible remedial action. At such meeting, the student shall be given the choice as to whether to maintain the anonymity of the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) 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 report.

Bus Safety & Policies

The primary responsibility of the ACES Transportation Department is to transport students in a safe and efficient manner. The paramount emphasis is always on safety. State of Connecticut Statutes, ACES Governing Board policies and administrative guidelines reflect that commitment. The ACES driver has been instructed to report any student who interferes with the safe operation of the vehicle. This report should be made to the principal in writing. The complaint will be addressed by administration.

Relative to ACES magnet schools, partnership districts often (in some cases exclusively) transport their district students to the magnet schools. The bus drivers who drive for the partner towns must also report in writing any student who interferes with the safe operation of the bus to the principal.

A student with special needs who attends an ACES program for students with special needs must abide by the same rules as applied to all students attending ACES schools. A behavioral plan will be developed to address such behavior concerns on the bus. Parents will be notified of infractions, which may result in a warning of indefinite suspension from the bus, dependent on the severity and frequency of occurrence.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

The misuse of cell phones, pagers, laser pointers or other electronic devices is not permitted during school hours or on school transportation.

Discipline Policies

Actions Leading to Suspension or Expulsion

Students may be suspended or expelled for conduct that endangers persons or property, or whose conduct, on or off school grounds, is seriously disruptive of the educational process or violates a publicized policy of the ACES Governing Board. Conduct that may lead to suspension or a recommendation for expulsion includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- ✓ Fighting, physical assault or attempted physical assault;
- ✓ Making threatening statements to or about any student or staff member;
- ✓ Continued and/or willful disobedience of the school and/or district rules;
- ✓ Defiance of the authority of a teacher, administrator or any other persons having authority over the student;
- ✓ Taking or attempting to take property or other possessions from another person by means of force, threat, fear, theft, or intimidation;
- ✓ Smoking in or on school property;
- ✓ Gambling in or on school property;
- ✓ Leaving a school building or school grounds without authorization;
- ✓ School or class truancy;
- ✓ Incitement of the truancy of other students;
- ✓ Possessing or using any type of firearm, firearm facsimile, explosive, weapon, deadly weapon, or knife, or any other dangerous instrument, which means any instrument, article, or substance that, under the circumstances, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury;
- ✓ Unauthorized possession, offering for sale, use or distribution in the school or on school grounds, or at any school sponsored activity or in school provided transportation of drugs, narcotics, controlled substances, or alcoholic beverages;

- ✓ Unauthorized occupancy of any school, building or other property owned or controlled by ACES or failure to leave such school, building or property when directed to do so;
- ✓ Inciting and/or participating in a student walkout;
- ✓ The use of abusive, obscene and/or profane language or gestures or social or ethnic epithets;
- ✓ Turning in a false alarm or bomb threat;
- ✓ Conduct of any pupil while awaiting or receiving transportation to and from school which endangers persons or property or an ACES policy;
- ✓ Possessing or using a remotely activated paging device or cell phone;
- ✓ Possessing and/or using a laser pointer;
- ✓ Violation of any local, state or federal law.

Actions Leading to a Mandatory Expulsion

The following conduct shall result in a recommendation for expulsion:

- ✓ Possession of a deadly weapon or firearm;
- ✓ Bringing a "weapon" to school;
- ✓ Sale and distribution of a controlled substance.

Out of School Misconduct

Students are subject to discipline, up to and including suspension and expulsion for misconduct, which is seriously disruptive of the educational process and is a violation of a publicized ACES policy, even if such misconduct occurs off-school property and during non-school time. In compliance with judicial decisions, the ACES considers conduct which is "severely disruptive of the educational process" to mean conduct that "markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operations of a school" in addition to such conduct also being in violation of publicized school policy. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, phoning in a bomb threat, or making a threat off school grounds, to kill or hurt a teacher or student. Such discipline may result whether the incident was initiated in the school or on school grounds, 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, markedly interrupting or severely impeding the day-to-day operation of a school.

Dress Code

ACES requires students to dress in clothing appropriate to the school situation and which is conducive to teaching and learning. Restrictions on freedom of student dress may be applied whenever the mode of dress in question:

- ✓ Is unsafe for the student or those around the student;
- ✓ Is disruptive to school operations and the education process in general; and
- ✓ Is contrary to law.

No restrictions on freedom of dress and adornment will be imposed which:

- ✓ Reflect discrimination as to civil rights;
- ✓ Enforce particular religious tenets; and
- ✓ Do not fall within the direct or implied powers of ACES and the Governing Board.

Drug- and Alcohol- Free Schools

ACES aims to maintain a drug- and alcohol-free school district, and requires schools to take positive action through education, counseling, parental involvement, and medical and police referral in handling incidents in the schools involving possession, sale, and/or use of behavior affecting substances. These substances shall include but not be limited to alcohol and controlled substances as defined in the Penal Code of the State of Connecticut.

Personal privacy rights of students shall be protected as provided by law. School properties may be inspected by school authorities to maintain health and safety. Searches to locate drugs, narcotics, liquor, weapons, poisons, and missing properties are matters relating to health and safety and may be regarded as reasonable grounds for searches by school personnel. Use, possession, sale or distribution of drugs, drug paraphernalia and/or alcoholic beverages is prohibited at any time in school vehicles, on school premises or at any school-sponsored activity. If a student is under the influence of a drug or alcohol, or engaged in the illegal activity of possessing or selling drugs and/or alcohol, his/her parent(s) will be contacted, he/she will be suspended from school, referred to the appropriate treatment agency, and possibly considered for expulsion. In cases of the illegal activity of possessing or selling drugs or alcohol, students will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Possession by the Principal as Agent

The principal in each school, as authorized agent of ACES is personally responsible for holding contraband materials, including controlled drugs, and for delivering them to the proper public authorities. A receipt should be furnished to the owner (or previous possessor), if known and one should be demanded from the police officer who takes possession of the contraband materials.

Power to Inspect, Search and Question

The students should be informed, through notice in the student handbook where such exists, and through suitable announcement at the beginning of each school year, and as deemed necessary during the year, that desks and lockers remain the property of ACES, and may be inspected by delegated agents of the administration if the administration has reason to suspect that materials injurious to the best interests of the school are kept on school property.

ACES is responsible for the welfare of each student under its control. Interviewing of students by law enforcement officials will be done only in the presence of the principal or his/her designee. Every effort should be made to include the parent or guardian of a student in any interview which carries an implication of possible guilt or the furnishing of information leading to an indictment. The student's right to request and be represented by an attorney must not be abridged. The principal or his/her designee will maintain an informal record of the interview, showing the time, place, persons present and a summary of the discussion and findings.

Responsibilities of Teachers and other Personnel

Communication by a student to a teacher, of the student's involvement in use of controlled drugs, may be kept confidential by the teacher, as long as the student is not under the influence of a drug or drugs. The teacher should endeavor to lead the student to seek treatment from an appropriate person or agency. Pupil Personnel staff, nurses or the principal may be consulted for assistance with this and provide information regarding available referral sources. The teacher working with the student should inform the principal that such a situation exists, but need not identify the student.

If a teacher suspects that a student is under the influence of drugs, she/he will notify the school nurse, or in his/her absence, the principal. If in the judgment of the nurse or principal the student is under the influence of drugs, the customary procedures for illness or accident will be followed.

If a teacher or any other staff member suspects that a student has in his/her possession a controlled drug, she/he will so inform the principal. If the principal concurs in this judgment, she/he will immediately notify the parent or guardian and the police of his/her suspicions.

If a student is found by a teacher or any other staff member to have in his/her possession a substance suspected of being a controlled drug, the teacher or staff member will so inform the

principal. If the principal concurs in this judgment, she/he will confiscate the substance, immediately call the police, and notify the parent or guardian of the student of his/her actions.

Emergency Closings / Late Openings

In the event school is closed because of bad weather or another emergency, announcements will be made on WTNH, WVIT, WFSB, and WTIC. Emergency closings will also be posted on the ACES website, <http://www.aces.org>. ACES will also notify families by phone and email via School Messenger.

Fire Drills / Crisis Response Drills

In each school operated by ACES, there shall be a fire drill held at least once per month in which all students, teachers, and other employees shall be required to leave the school building. (Every third month, a Crisis Response Drill will replace the fire drill.)

Health & Safety

Health Assessments

In order to provide the best educational experience, school personnel must understand your child's health needs. ACES recommends that students have a Well Child Visit by their Primary Care Provider (PCP). If you need help obtaining health insurance or identifying a PCP for your child, please contact the school nurse or social worker for assistance. ACES is committed to promoting effective and timely access to healthcare for all children and adolescents.

State law requires complete primary immunizations and a health assessment by a legally qualified practitioner of medicine, an advanced practice registered nurse, or a physician assistant prior to school entrance (including Kindergarten) in Connecticut (C.G.S. Secs. 10-204a and 10-206). An immunization update and additional health assessments are required for entry into 7th grade and 10th grade. Students can be withheld from starting these grades if the proper health assessment and immunization record is not provided to the school nurse before the start of the school year. Any student participating in an intramural or interscholastic sports program must have a health assessment, completed annually, within one year prior to the first try-outs or training session for the sport or sports.

Vision, Audiometric and Postural Screenings

ACES will provide vision, hearing, and postural screening in accordance with P.A. 15-215, for any student who has not had those screenings done by their primary care provider within the previous year. Notices will be sent home prior to the scheduled screenings and parents/guardians will have the opportunity to request that their child not have the designated screening in school. Parents/guardians will also be given notification if the results of a screening indicate the need for a more complete evaluation by a healthcare provider, or if the school staff are unable to complete the screening.

Medication

Parents/guardians are requested to give medications (antibiotics, over the counter medications, etc.) at home and on a schedule other than during school hours if possible. If it is necessary that a medication be given during school hours, the following procedures must be followed:

- ✓ All prescription and over the counter medication administered at school requires a *medication authorization* form signed by a health provider and the parent/guardian.

- ✓ Medications must be in the *original* container picked up at the pharmacy each time the medication is refilled. The appropriate pharmacy or medication label must be intact. The school nurse will send home a notice and/or call a few days prior to needing a refill.
- ✓ All medications are to be kept in the nurse's office, unless there is an approved medication authorization that allows the student to self-carry and self-administer his/her own medication.
- ✓ When a parent/guardian and health care provider authorize a student to self-carry and self-administer a medication, they are responsible for confirming that the student understands the condition which the medication is used, and can safely store, correctly administer, and know when and how to use the medication, and when to ask for help.
- ✓ If a student does have the proper authorization to self-carry and self-administer a medication, the student needs to review the plan for taking that medication with the school nurse at the beginning of each school year or at the onset of that medication authorization.
- ✓ No student is allowed to share any type of medication with anyone else during school hours and events.
- ✓ All prescription controlled substance medications (i.e. for ADHD) must be delivered to the nurse *by an adult*. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that all other means of delivering medication to the school nurse is safe and appropriate.
- ✓ Medications authorizations for the following chronic health conditions require emergency or action plans for the use of those medications:
 - Asthma – Asthma Action Plan
 - Epilepsy – Seizure Action Plan
 - Food or any potential anaphylactic allergies – Emergency Allergy Plan
 - Diabetes – Diabetes Medication and Management Plan

Required Immunizations

ACES requires each student to provide documentation that he/she is immunized according to CT Department of Public Health immunization requirements for enrolled students in CT schools. To download a copy of this form, go to <http://www.aces.org/about/publications-policies/aces-forms>. *Students may be withheld from starting the designated school year if documentation of these immunizations is not provided to the school nurse before the start of that school year.*

- ✓ A medical exemption for an immunization requires a qualified healthcare provider to complete the appropriate Department of Public Health form stating that there is a medical contraindication for that vaccine based on the student's health condition.
- ✓ A religious exemption for an immunization requires the completion of the Department of Public Health form according to P.A 15-174. ACES does not permit the school nurse to sign as a witness acknowledging the validity of a student's religious exemption for any required immunizations.

ACES Life-Threatening Allergy Prevention and Management Plan

ACES follows a food allergy prevention and management plan that promotes each school to be considered "Nut Safe." In order to provide the safest environment for students with known or unknown food allergies, we recommend the following:

- ✓ Minimize the amount of peanut and nut foods brought into school.
- ✓ Remind students to not share any foods with other students anytime, or eat on the bus.
- ✓ Students who eat peanut or nuts should wash their hands afterwards to prevent accidental exposure to other students.
- ✓ Do not send food into school with the intention that it be shared with classmates for any type of celebration. ACES promotes the use of creative, non-food options to celebrate birthdays and special occasions.
- ✓ Teasing or bullying students with food allergies is strictly prohibited.

ACES Life-Threatening Allergy Prevention and Management Plan is available at <http://www.aces.org/about/publications-policies/aces-forms/health-forms>.

Illnesses and Injuries

ACES is committed to helping students be healthy, present in class, and ready to learn. The following are important guidelines to follow if the student has an illness or injury:

- ✓ Please do not send your student to school if he/she is vomiting, has diarrhea and/or has a temperature of 100°F or higher. They may return to school if they no longer have these symptoms for 24 hours.
- ✓ Proper hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of germs. Children should wash hands before eating and after playing outdoors, using the bathroom, coughing, sneezing, blowing their noses, or touching someone else with a cold or cough.
- ✓ If you and your PCP determine that your child needs over the counter pain reliever (Tylenol or Ibuprofen) or seasonal allergy medication, please plan to give it prior to sending them to school. Many students complain of headache, stomachache, sore throat, and stuffy nose. These symptoms are often due to the common cold or seasonal allergies. Please encourage your student to drink extra fluids (water) and get at least 8-10 hours of sleep every night, and discuss ongoing concerns with your healthcare provider. Unless the student has an elevated temperature, we do not typically request that they go home early.
- ✓ If you send the student to school when they are not feeling well, please have a plan to pick them up if needed. It's helpful to tell them why and when they should see the nurse. For example, "Go to the nurse after lunch if you don't feel any better and I will pick you up if you have a fever". You can always call the nurse to discuss these plans if you know there might be a health issue during school.
- ✓ ACES encourages the annual influenza ("flu") vaccine for all students, unless they have a medical contraindication. Please discuss this with your PCP.
- ✓ Please communicate with the school nurse by written note, phone call, or email about any health concern or request for treatment. School nurses are also available to assist parents/guardians with coordinating or obtaining health care with community providers.
- ✓ If the student is unable to participate in physical education class due to an injury, or requires the use of crutches or a wheelchair that has not been previously approved, a health care provider's note indicating the type of injury, duration of restriction, and any other specific instructions is required.

Student Medical Care at School

ACES school personnel are responsible for the immediate care necessary for a student whose illness or injury occurs on the school premises during school hours or in school-sponsored and supervised activities.

ACES schools require that parents/guardians provide updated medical emergency and contact information for each student. If a student's illness or injury requires immediate care, the approved Medical Emergency Procedure will be implemented. The parent/guardian or identified emergency contact person will be called by telephone by the nurse, the building principal, or other personnel designated by the principal, and advised of the student's condition.

When immediate medical care is indicated, and when parents / guardians or the identified emergency contact person cannot be reached, the approved Medical Emergency Procedure will be implemented. The nurse, principal or other personnel designated by the principal will continue phoning the parent/guardian or identified emergency contact person until notification has been accomplished.

Suspected Abuse/Neglect/At Risk Reporting

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 (ACES Employees). Mandated reporters (ACES Employees) are required to report or cause a report to be made when, in the ordinary course of their employment or profession, they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child under the age of 18 has been abused, neglected or is placed in imminent risk of serious harm. (Connecticut General Statutes §17a-101)

Youth Suicide Prevention and Youth Suicide Attempts

ACES is aware that suicide and other self-destructive behaviors have become critical problems for children and youth, families, school personnel and the community. ACES is also aware that students experiencing stress or depression are less available for learning. Students engaging in self-destructive behaviors are jeopardizing their health and well-being as well as their academic achievement.

ACES recognizes its responsibility to develop policy and procedures for dealing with youth suicide prevention and youth suicide attempts. In response to this concern it shall be the policy of ACES to establish programs and procedures regarding youth suicide prevention and intervention for teachers, administrators, staff and students. All school personnel will be required to act in accordance with ACES policy and procedures and timelines whenever there is any suspicion that a student may be at risk for suicide. Policy and procedure will be evaluated on an annual basis to ensure that they are current with best practice and address the needs of students, staff, families and the community in dealing with the issue of youth suicide prevention.

Nondiscrimination in the Instructional Program

ACES pledges to avoid discriminatory actions and seeks to foster good human and educational relations which will help to attain:

- ✓ Equal rights and opportunities for students and staff members in the school community.
- ✓ Equal opportunity for all students to participate in the total school program of the schools.

- ✓ Continual study and development of curricula toward improving human relations and understanding and appreciating cultural differences.
- ✓ Training opportunities for improving staff ability and responsiveness to educational and social needs.
- ✓ Opportunities in educational programs which are broadly available to all students.
- ✓ An appropriate learning environment for students which includes (1) adequate instructional books, supplies, materials, equipment, staffing, facilities and technology, (2) equitable allocation of resources among district schools and (3) a safe school setting. Each student, at the time s/he becomes eligible for participation, will be advised of his/her right to an equal opportunity to participate in school programs without discrimination of any kind.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, no otherwise qualified individual with handicaps shall, solely by reason of such handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program of the ACES Governing Board. All district schools, regardless of whether they receive Federal Title I funds, provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies are provided in a manner to ensure equivalency among district schools.

The right of a student to participate fully in classroom instruction and extracurricular activities shall not be abridged or impaired because of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, pregnancy, parenthood, marriage, or for any reason not related to his/her individual capabilities. ACES staff will meet with parents / guardians after a child has been assessed for possible placement in special education and before a PPT meets to discuss the PPT process and parental/ guardian concerns about the student.

Homeless Students

ACES shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children within the district, encourage their enrollment and eliminate existing barriers to their education, which may exist in district policies or practices, in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws. Homeless students, as defined by federal and state statutes, will have all programs, services and transportation that other students enjoy. To the extent feasible, a homeless child will be kept in the school of origin, unless it is against the wishes of the parent/guardian. ACES Director of Pupil Services is the local liaison for homeless children.

Limited English Proficient Students

Parents of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the LEP program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion. Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services which may include, but are not limited to, English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, homework assistance and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

Migrant Students

The district has a program to address the needs of migrant students. A full range of services will be provided to migrant students, including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted

education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes. Parents/guardians of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the migrant program.

Parent Involvement

ACES recognizes that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school, family and sending school district during the entire period the child spends in school. To support the goal of ACES to educate all students effectively, the school, the parents and the sending districts must work as knowledgeable partners. Parents share the school's commitment to the educational success of their children, however diverse the parents and their children are in culture, language and need. ACES in collaboration with parents and our districts shall establish programs and practices that enhance parent involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their families.

Title I Parental Involvement

Parents of a child in a Title 1 funded program will receive a copy of the district's parental involvement policy, including provisions of an annual meeting and involvement of parents in the planning, review and implementation of Title 1 programs.

Participation in the National School Breakfast, Lunch and Milk Programs

ACES Participates in the National School Program, School Lunch Program and School Milk Program. The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. In some schools, ACES is fortunate to be able to participate in The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). CEP is a provision from the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 that allows schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students. Program applications and additional information are available at each of the ACES schools. Parents/Guardians should contact the school principal or designated school staff for additional information or assistance.

Pest Management Plan

ACES has implemented an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan to comply with the recommendations from the Connecticut Environmental Protection Agency. Only certified pesticide applicators are used in school for any non-emergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Pesticide applications are limited to non-school hours and when activities are not taking place. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years.

Pledge of Allegiance Policy

Students will be offered the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance at least once during each school day. Participation in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance will be voluntary. Students may refuse to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any reason including, religious, political, philosophical, or personal reasons. If a student chooses not to participate, he/she may stand or sit in silence.

Relations with Non-Custodial Parents

The custodial parent has the responsibility to keep the school office informed as to the address of residence, in a manner determined by the school, and how he/she may be contacted at all times. Any legal documents which restricts the rights of the non-custodial parent must be

provided by the custodial parent. Unless otherwise indicated by a verified note from the parent or by a legal document provided by a parent, only the custodial parent has the right to remove the student from school property. If school personnel anticipate possible student abduction, law enforcement personnel are to be notified immediately, and the student will remain on school property pending the arrival of law enforcement officials. Non-custodial parents and parents with shared custody not normally receiving materials from the school may annually request this service. Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, the non-custodial parent upon written request, may view the student's educational, medical or similar records maintained in student's cumulative record, receive school progress reports, visit the child briefly at school and have an opportunity to confer with the student's teacher(s).

Safe Schools

ACES is committed to the prevention of violence against people or property in the schools or at school activities, whether by students, staff or others. While ACES is committed to the protection of each person's constitutional rights, including due process rights, ACES does not condone lawlessness. Any individual committing violent acts in or on school property will be disciplined according to applicable ACES policy and regulations.

Sexual Harassment / Intimidation

ACES prohibits sexual harassment or intimidation of its employees or students whether by supervisory or non-supervisory personnel, by individuals under contract, or volunteers subject to the control of the board, or by students. Sexual harassment/intimidation in the workplace by employees will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Students engaged in sexual harassment/intimidation will also be subject to disciplinary action.

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

Student / Client Smoking

Students, in accordance with state law, are prohibited from smoking in school buildings or on school buses. ACES recognizes that smoking represents a health and safety hazard which can have serious consequences for the smoker and non-smoker. Because of the Board's grave concern for the safety of the system—both people and property and in order to protect the students/clients from an environment that may be harmful to them and because of possible harm to personal well-being, the Board hereby prohibits smoking by all students/clients in all buildings and vehicles owned or leased by ACES. For the purposes of this policy "smoking" will mean all uses of smoking materials and tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, pipes, chewing tobacco, and snuff. There shall be no smoking or other use of tobacco products on school property during regular school hours or during the course of any trip or school activity sponsored by or under the supervision of the ACES Governing Board or its authorized agents.

Forms

To access forms, visit www.aces.org/about/publications-policies/forms or request copies from your school.

Policies

For more information on ACES policies, visit www.aces.org/about/publications-policies or speak with your building principal.