

2025 • 2026

Student Handbook



COMMON GROUND
HIGH • SCHOOL

Draft For Final Board Approval September 2025

Faculty and Staff Common Ground High School

Monique Frasier	School Director
Dr. Shanequa Sturgis-Nash	Assistant School Director
Iris Jimenez	School Office Operations Manager
Jamila Abou Khadra	Science
Arianna Alamo	Art
Rosana Anoh	French & Financial Literacy
Kathleen Bergman	Math
Sarah Bowles	Theater
Michell Brito	Long-Term Substitute
Jonathan Carney	Physical Education & Health
Paul Clare	Science
Beth Czar	Administrative Assistant
Jared Dennehy	Social Studies
Sarah Field	Science
Candi Fulcher	Director of Student Engagement & Equity
Juan Carlos Galarza	Social Worker
Denis Granado	Math
Evan Green	Music
Rachel Haymann	Social Worker
Christina Magnuson	Health
Antoine Merritt	Food Service Assistant
Nuria Miller	Spanish
Marisa Misbach	English
Melvin Morales	Mathematics & Computer Science
Gamaliel Moses	Student Affairs Manager
Dana Perry	School Nurse
Renee Poirier	English
Rachel Sharnick	Social Studies
Miriam Sheffield	Student Affairs Manager
Jeremy Stone	Lead Teacher - Curriculum & Instruction
Joel Tolman	Director of Community Impact & Engagement
Ericka Toney	Support Educator
Samantha Townsend Lucero	English
Jessica Weimann	English
Fathiya Williams	Chef

**Staff Common Ground High School,
Urban Farm, and Environmental Education Center**

Genevive Walker	Executive Director
Amanda Byam	Manager of Communications & Board Liaison
David Girard	Children's Program Manager
Deborah Greig	Farm Director
Rebecca Holcombe	Director of Community Programs
Diane Litwin	Farm Manager
Tash Neal	Grant Writer & Prospect Research Specialist
Ana Rosa	Assistant Director, Human Resources & Operations
Robyn Stewart	Schoolyards Program Manager
Trevor Williams	Site and Facilities Manager

Common Ground High School Handbook

Table of Contents

I.	About Common Ground HS	7
	Mission	7
	What We Value	7
	POWER: Every Student Leads	8
	Public Charter Schools	8
	Location	9
	Transportation	9
II.	Family Involvement	9
III.	Academic Program and Schedule	10
	Portrait of a Graduate: Helping Students Find Their Path	11
	Graduation Requirements	12
	Grading	13
	Portfolio of Learning & Leadership	15
	Daily Schedule	16
	Alternate Schedules	16
	After School Programs, Academic Enrichment & Support	17
	Academic Laboratories	17
	Academic Enrichment	17
	Saturday Academy	17
	Homework Center	17
	Academic Integrity	17
	Guidance	18
	Guidance Curriculum	18
	College & Career	19
	Common Ground Early College Program	19
IV.	School Organization and Leadership	21
	Guidance Teachers	21
V.	Attendance	21
	Absences	21
	Excused	22
	Unexcused	22
	Tardies-Morning	23
	Tardies-During day	22
	Early Dismissal	23
	Emergency Closings – SMS System	24
	Credit	24

Table of Contents (continued)

VI.	School Codes of Conduct	25
	Common Ground Student Bill of Rights	25
	Universal Respect Agreements	25
	Restorative Justice	26
	Traditional Discipline Practices	26
	Cell Phone & Electronic Device Policy	28
	Food and Drink	29
	Parent/Guardian Sign-Ins & Trespassing	29
	Conduct outside of school building	29
	Conduct On – or –Off Campus	30
	Dress Code	30
	Acceptable Internet Use	31
	Acceptable Use	31
	Privilege	31
	Monitoring	32
	No Warranties	32
	Responsibilities and Prohibitions	32
	Vandalism, Harassment, and Cyber-bullying	33
	Security	34
	Consequences	34
	Guidelines for Student Use	35
	Computers: Web Sites/Pages	35
	Use of Computer Equipment and Related Systems, Software, and Networks by Students and Staff	35
	Bullying, Hazing, Harassment and Teen Dating Violence	36
	Bullying	36
	Hazing	38
	Harassment	38
	Disability Harassment	38
	National Origin Harassment	38
	Racial Harassment	39
	Religious Harassment	39
	Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation Harassment	39
	Sexual Harassment	39
	Reporting/Grievance Procedure for Bullying, Hazing, Harassment, Teen Dating Violence, ADA, Section 504, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and other Civil Rights or Discrimination Issues	40
VII.	Common Ground Student Identification Cards and	
	One-to-one Chromebook Policy	42
	Student Identification Cards	42
	Student One-to-One Chromebook Program	42
	Insurance	42
	Training	42
	Return	43
	Personalization	43

Table of Contents (continued)

VII.	Common Ground Student Identification Cards and One-to-one Chromebook Policy (continued)	
	Care and Use	43
	General Precautions	43
	Carrying the Chromebook	43
	Screen Care	44
	File Management	44
	Software	44
	Additional Software	44
	Virus Protection	44
	Inspection	45
	Data Protection	45
	Chromebook Identification	45
	Storage	45
	Chromebooks Left In Unsecured Areas	45
	Repairing or Replacing Your Chromebook	45
	Return/Check-In of Leased Chromebook	46
	One-To-One Computer Device Program Pledge	46
	Staff Emails	47
	Appendix A – Safe School Climate Plan	48
	Appendix B – Sexual Harassment Policy & Regulation	59
	Appendix C – Student Parking Registration/Privileges	66
	Appendix D – Nondiscrimination Policy	70
	Affirmative Action Policy Statement	75
	Academic School Calendar for 2022-2023	76

Contact Information

Common Ground High School
358 Springside Avenue
New Haven, CT 06515
(203) 389-4333
www.commongroundct.org
cghs@commongroundct.org

I. About Common Ground HS

Mission

Common Ground High School will graduate students with the knowledge, skills, and understanding to live healthy, powerful, and productive lives. We do so through authentic learning that develops academic excellence, ecological literacy, strong character, and commitment to community.

Common Ground High School takes the urban environment as its organizing focus, using three sites as laboratories for learning: the urban farm that is the school's campus, the natural environment of the adjacent West Rock Ridge State Park, and the urban setting of New Haven, Connecticut. Close study of these places develops understanding of local and global issues. Through this study and core academic work, students experience a rigorous high school curriculum that prepares them for competitive colleges, meaningful careers, purposeful lives, and powerful leadership.

Common Ground High School is part of something bigger: a center for learning and leadership, inviting people across ages and identities to connect to their urban environment, build community, grow into their full potential, and contribute to a just and sustainable world. We work toward this mission through active, authentic learning rooted in justice and our environment: a farm, in a forest, in a city. Three connected efforts are at the core of Common Ground's work:

- The nation's longest-running environmental charter high school, creating the next generation of successful college students and powerful environmental leaders.
- An urban farm, modeling practices of sustainable agriculture and contributing to a healthy food system for New Haven residents.
- An environmental education center, connecting people of all ages with the natural world while helping them develop habits of sustainable living through summer camps, after-school programs, community festivals and workshops, and more.

What We Value

As a community organization and public school, Common Ground strives to live by these core values:

Our Place & People. We are rooted in our place—a farm, in a forest, in the City of New Haven. The people and ecology of our place are the foundation of all we do. Our work starts here, and ripples outward.

Learning & Growth. Learning and leadership take many different forms—and everyone can be a powerful learner and leader in their own, authentic way. We are dedicated to providing many different opportunities for people to learn, grow, and take action to improve the world, including through direct, authentic exploration and discovery of nature, our food sources, and the local community.

Commitment & Joy. Commitment, passion, and creativity inspire everything we do. We endeavor to balance our hard work with joyful adventure.

Diverse, Connected Community. Diversity is essential to healthy, resilient ecological and human communities. Just as we are committed to conserving and supporting biological diversity, we are committed to cultivating a diverse human community that thrives within an environment of trust, equity, dignity, and interconnectedness.

Sustainable Change. Future generations have a right to share equitably in our human, environmental, and economic resources. We recognize that change is inevitable, and embrace change that is sustainable—positive, measurable, just, and lasting.

POWER: Every Student Leads

Common Ground celebrates academic achievement and student leadership through our school-wide commitment to POWER. Powerful students demonstrate **Pride** in themselves and their school, **Ownership** of their actions, **Wonder** and intellectual curiosity, serious **Effort** in all classes, and **Respect** for themselves, peers and adults throughout the school community.

Common Ground recognizes students whose actions best exemplify each aspect of POWERful leadership, with awards at bimonthly POWER assemblies.

Common Ground also recognizes students demonstrating exemplary commitment to Environmental Leadership and Health & Wellness.



Public Charter Schools

Common Ground High School is a public charter school. We are separate from New Haven Public Schools and led by the board of directors of the New Haven Ecology Project, a not-for-profit organization. We operate with public funds provided by the State Board of Education. We also rely on private donations and the support, cooperation, and encouragement of agencies and institutions who value our mission in the greater New Haven area. All Board meetings are open to the public; visit <http://commongroundct.org/common-ground-board-of-directors/> for meeting dates and minutes.

Location

Common Ground High School is located at 358 Springside Avenue in the West Rock neighborhood of New Haven on 20 acres of city park land, surrounded by one of Connecticut's largest state parks. We are just ½ mile northwest of Southern Connecticut State University, on the Connecticut Transit 243 bus line (visit www.cttransit.com for schedules).

Transportation

- **Bus:** Students who live in New Haven are given bus passes to use CT Transit in the city of New Haven. Each bus pass may only be used to and from school, including for after-school programs, and for school-related educational activities, such as early college classes. A student may exchange their used bus card for a new one after appropriate use. Misuse of bus passes or inappropriate behavior on the bus or at bus stops will lead minimally to suspension of bus privileges and could lead to serious disciplinary consequences, including suspension.
- **Bicycles, skateboards, in-line skates, scooters, e-bikes, RipSticks, or any other device with wheels** are allowed on the Common Ground High School campus by student community members within the following guidelines:
 - Students are not allowed to ride devices down the hill
 - All students riding any device on the campus must wear a helmet. The campus includes the top of the hill, parking lot, and bus stop.
 - All devices must be stored outside the building; bicycles are to be parked at the provided racks during the entire school day.
 - Students who do not abide by the “device with wheels” guidelines will lose the privilege of bringing those devices to school.
- **Automobile:** Students may drive cars & motorized scooters to school after receiving permission from the office, which requires documentation from parents and the DMV and completing an agreement to follow all school automotive rules. (Please refer to Appendix B)

II. Family Involvement

According to numerous research studies, children whose parents and guardians are involved in school have better attendance and do better academically from preschool through high school.

Research also shows that a home environment that encourages learning is even more important than a parent's income or educational level. By actively participating in their child's education at home and in school, parents send a critical message to their child: school is important.

Common Ground High School strongly encourages all parents and guardians to be involved in the school any way they can: attending family events, meeting with teachers, helping with class projects, sharing family history or career advice, offering after-school activities, guest teaching in classes, providing administrative help, supporting events, chaperoning field trips or dances, joining a site work day, or participating on the Family Leadership Team. Common Ground High School offers several family workshops throughout the school year; please make time to attend several of them. We will notify you of parent programming through email, telephone calls, text messages, and our weekly student/family newsletter.

Parents and guardians should also advise the school of any specific health concerns for a student, including allergies and medications. This is an environmental high school and requires outdoor study and work as part of the educational program. Students will be allowed to sit out of outdoor activities only with a note from a doctor.

Parents are encouraged to make their student's guidance teacher (Guide) their primary contact for questions and concerns about the student.

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a student's legal guardian may have access to any part of a student's school records. The actual guardian is the only person who has a right to these records.

III. Academic Program & Schedule

Common Ground is a small high school with a school-wide environmental justice focus – committed to helping every student graduate ready for college success, meaningful careers, powerful environmental leadership, and healthy, happy, sustainable lives. Students travel four-year pathways that help them reach these goals and follow their own passions:

- Every 9th grader experiences Core 9 – integrating biology, social studies, health, English, and other courses to explore who they are, our school community, and our unique 20-acre campus. Alongside the core curriculum, 9th graders take more traditional courses – including Algebra 1 or a higher level math, PE, Spanish, French, art, music, and academic support classes.
- All 10th graders take on Core 10 – learning science, social studies, English, and the arts as they explore stories, justice, climate change, power, and health in the City of New Haven. Sophomores also take a level-appropriate math course, chemistry, world language, electives, and academic support labs.
- Juniors and seniors have more choice and voice in their schedule. All 11th graders take Statistics and either Junior Seminar or AP Language and Composition, and all 12th graders are enrolled in Senior Environmental Justice Capstone – helping them to prepare for the SAT, write college essays, reflect on their growth as leaders, conduct research, and take on projects that contribute to a more just and sustainable community. In addition to these core classes, juniors and seniors take a mix of more traditional classes – from physics, to pre-calculus, to Advanced Placement Language & Composition – alongside college courses, credit-bearing internships, and electives ranging from multimedia art to computer science. Sophomores (starting second semester), Juniors and seniors also take courses at local colleges, and join in credit-bearing internships.

Across all these classes and learning experiences, we believe that every student deserves:

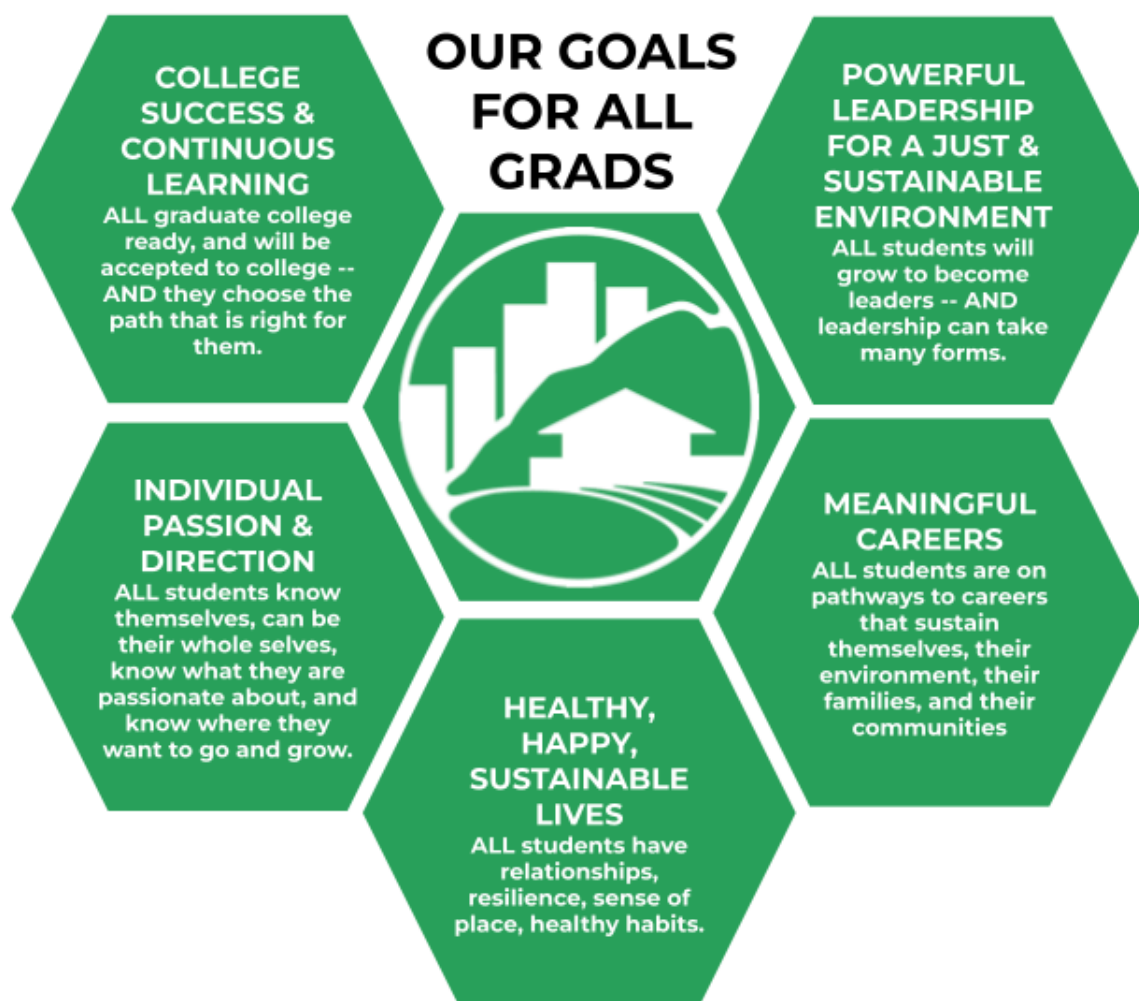
- **Rigor** - ALL students are held to high standards, struggle with essential questions, do the cognitive work to solve complex problems, and engage in critical inquiry and reflection.
- **Responsive Relationships** - Knowing each other well, individualizing learning and supporting each other, incorporating students lived experiences and cultures, in a safe and just school community,
- **Relevance - Rooted in the Environment & Community** - Putting the environment & social justice at the heart of authentic, interdisciplinary learning that's rooted in our place and engages community.
- **Routines & Roadmaps** - Learning follows a logical sequence, and connects to essential questions – students know what's expected of them, and get regular, actionable, timely feedback.

- **Real Roles and Rights** - Creating student-centered learning that builds real choice and voice, and engaging families and community as co-creators and full partners – helping all people grow into leaders and agents of change.

Because Common Ground is a small school – with just 225 students – every student is known well. Our highly qualified teachers challenge students individually and link them to the learning experiences they need. We are committed to educating the whole child, and attending to the students’ social-emotional and ethical development.

Portrait of a Graduate: Helping Students Blaze Their Path

Common Ground High School’s responsibility and goal is to help every student travel pathways to:



Over four years of high school, Common Ground helps students develop the skills and capacities that put them on pathways to success, including:

- **POWER:** Pride, Ownership, Wonder, Effort & Respect
- **Academic Skills & Understanding:** Reading, Writing/Communicating, Problem-Solving, and Inquiry.

Graduation Requirements

Common Ground students must meet the following Connecticut state requirements for graduation:

Complete a minimum of 26 credits, including not fewer than:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 credits in the Humanities, including Civics and the Arts 9 credits in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 credit in Physical Education and Wellness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 credit in Health and Safety 1 credit in World Languages 1 credit Mastery-based Diploma Assessment (Senior Environmental Justice Capstone) <p>Starting with the Class of 2027, students will also be required to earn 0.5 credits in Financial Literacy</p>	

The school year is divided into two semesters, and each semester students receive a new schedule with up to seven courses. Students earning full credit receive 8.50 credits a year, and can also earn credit for participation in Early College, Green Jobs Corps, community service, and out-of-school programs.

All Common Ground students must take the following courses as part of their overall academic program. Need-based exceptions can be made as part of the student's academic planning process.

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Core 9 English Core 9 Social Studies Core 9 Biology Core 9 Health Algebra 1	Core 10 English Core 10 Social Studies Core 10 Art Core 10 Environ Science Chemistry Geometry	Junior Seminar (or AP Language & Composition) U.S. History Statistics Algebra 2	Senior Environmental Justice Capstone
Any Grade: Minimum 1 year of a World Language, ½ year of Civics			

To advance to the next grade, students must minimally earn the following credits:

Sophomore 7 credits

Junior 14 credits

Senior 21 credits

Senior Environmental Justice Capstone Requirement

Students must complete the following elements of the Senior Environmental Justice Capstone course.

- Senior Project: a comprehensive project that applies the knowledge and skills acquired throughout their education.
- Senior Research Paper: a detailed paper that demonstrates the ability to conduct in-depth research and analyze environmental justice topics.
- Portfolio of Learning and Leadership: showcasing mastery of 21st Century Learning Expectations including evidence of learning and leadership skills.
- Senior Defense: a formal presentation where students defend their Senior Project and research findings, demonstrating their comprehensive understanding and articulation of key concepts.

Community Service Requirement

Students must complete a minimum of **15 hours of Community Service each year** in order to earn credit in Guidance. Students plan for community service during Guidance meetings.

Common Ground's definition of community service includes:

- service with a *non-profit organization or a public school* including the New Haven Ecology Project, the non-profit home of Common Ground High School, Urban Farm & Environmental Education Center
- acts of student activism, voice, leadership, change-making and agency that contribute to a just and sustainable world – e.g., Student Government, Students for Educational Justice, New Haven Climate Movement, participating in community campaigns on social justice issues, etc.

Common Ground's definition of service does **NOT** include:

- unpaid work for a *for-profit* business, including a family business
- helping family members/helping out in your own home
- activities that are primarily about personal learning and growth, rather than helping others/creating change beyond yourself (career or college exploration, recreational and enrichment after-school programs, academic supports, etc.)

Students are responsible for taking advantage of service opportunities to complete the 15 hours.

Students who complete community service hours during the summer months of July and August should submit those hours during the **first two (2) weeks of September**.

Students are expected to complete at least 7.5 hours by **the end of first semester** and the remaining 7.5 hours by **the end of the second semester**.

Students must submit their service hours through an [online form](#), and attach proof of service signed by the person who supervised this service. Students can access an online record of the service they have logged at any time via that form, and can pick up paper community service forms in the main office to use as proof of service for this online form.

Note: New Haven Promise and other organizations have different definitions of community service than Common Ground. For instance, New Haven Promise **ONLY** counts service for a **community non-profit** in the **City of New Haven** toward its 40 hour service requirement. Service that only benefits Common Ground High School (e.g., cleaning up a classroom), not our community nonprofit, also does not count for New Haven Promise.

Grading

Students will be given a letter grade and narrative evaluation at the end of the semester in every class. Midterm progress reports are issued halfway through each semester. Grades are determined by student attainment of the academic skills and concepts targeted in each class as demonstrated through assessments for learning, including course summative exams, unit tests, performance tasks, projects and presentations. Completion of daily classwork and homework and good attendance support students' acquisition of academic standards.

Students who do satisfactory work in each area for every class will receive:

- 0.50 credit per semester for each single period class
- 0.75 credits per semester for AP classes with labs
- 1.00 credit for a successfully completed college class of 3 credit hours or more

Credits toward graduation may also be earned through a variety of other learning experiences including, but not limited to, After School programs (75 hours/0.5 credits), Community Service (50 hours/0.5 credits), Internships, Green Job Corps placements and other paid work experiences (150 hours/0.5 credits), Guidance (0.5 credits/year), and other out of school learning and leadership experiences. Students will be required to demonstrate learning and leadership by adding reflections and artifacts to their portfolios in order to earn credit for these opportunities.

Grading and GPA is based upon the following scale:

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade Equivalent	Standard and College Prep GPA Value	AP & Early College GPA Value
A+	97+	4.33	5.33
A	93-96	4.0	5.0
A-	90-92	3.67	4.67
B+	87-89	3.33	4.33
B	83-86	3.0	4.0
B-	80-82	2.67	3.67
C+	77-79	2.33	3.33
C	73-76	2.0	3.0
C-	70-72	1.67	2.67
D+	67-69	1.33	2.33
D	63-66	1.0	2.0
D-	60-62	0.67	1.67
F	<60	0.0	0.0

GPA is weighted and calculated from the beginning of 9th grade through the most recently completed term, and is based upon grades from all Common Ground, AP and Early College college classes listed on the transcript. Other pass/fail courses that appear on students' transcripts – including credit for work experience, summer programs, advisory classes, and/or some internships – are not included in the GPA calculation.

Class rankings for determination of Valedictorian and Salutatorian are determined based on weighted GPA. Class rankings will not be reported as part of the college application process, but identification of class rank, including both Valedictorian and Salutatorian, may occur for purposes of college scholarships. Determination of Valedictorian and Salutatorian for public attribution will be made by the School Director, or a designee, and will occur after all grades have been posted at the conclusion of students' senior year.

Students are rewarded for academic achievement in multiple ways.

- High Honors = All A's in a semester.
- Honors = All A's and B's in a semester.
- GPA Societies
 - Bronze = Cumulative GPA 3-3.39
 - Silver = Cumulative GPA 3.40-3.69
 - Gold = Cumulative GPA 3.70+
- POWER Up Awards = for Outstanding Improvement in GPA
- Seal of Biliteracy = Students may earn a Seal of Biliteracy upon graduation by demonstrating fluency in a second language.

The Portfolio of Learning and Leadership

All Common Ground students must create a Portfolio of Learning and Leadership containing reflections and artifacts that demonstrate mastery of P.O.W.E.R. leadership standards and their growth over four years of high school. Each year, students will update their portfolio with Core course work, 2 Community Service Reflections, as well as College and Career exploration materials, showcasing their growth as both students and leaders in our community. Seniors are required to choose 5 of their most powerful reflections to include in the culminating Portfolio Defense - demonstrating mastery of each P.O.W.E.R. leadership standard either through academic work or through participation in Guidance or extracurricular activities. Students' portfolios must also reflect on their pathways toward career and college, leadership and life – sharing who they are, and what's next for them after high school.

Seniors are also required to complete a **Senior Portfolio Defense** where they will defend two of these five reflections, present their Senior Project, demonstrate their growth over time, and describe their post-high school plan before a panel of staff members prior to graduation.



Daily Schedule:

	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
8:00 - 9:07	1	6	3	7	4
9:11 - 10:18	2	7	4	8	5
10:22 - 11:29	3	8	5	1	6
11:33 - 12:06	Lunch & Guidance	Lunch & Guidance	11:33-12:40 6	Lunch & Guidance	Lunch & Guidance
12:10 - 12:43	Lunch & Guidance	Lunch & Guidance		Lunch & Guidance	Lunch & Guidance
12:47 - 1:54	4	1	12:40 Grab & Go Lunch 1:10 Staff Meeting	2	7
1:58 - 3:05	5	2		3	8

Alternate Schedules:

<p>Early Dismissal, Assembly and Delay Schedules will maintain the Period Rotation for the day of the week.</p> <p><i>For example:</i> an Assembly Schedule on a Thursday will run Periods 7, 8, 1, Assembly, Lunch/Guidance, Period 2, and 3</p> <p><i>Wednesday Delays</i> will have a special schedule distributed on the day.</p>	Assembly:	Early Dismissal:		
			1 Hour Delay:	
	8:00 - 8:56 Period #	8:00 - 8:36 Period #	9:00 - 9:56 Period #	2 Hour Delay:
	9:00 - 9:56 Period #	8:40 - 9:16 Period #	10:00 - 10:56 Period #	10:00 - 10:45 Period #
	10:00 - 10:56 Period #	9:20 - 9:56 Period #	11:00 - 11:56 Period #	10:49 - 11:34 Period #
	11:00 - 11:56 Assembly	10:00 - 10:36 Period #	12:00 - 12:30 Lunch/Guidance	11:36 - 12:06 Lunch/Guidance
	12:00 - 12:30 Lunch/Guidance	10:40 - 11:16 Period #	12:35 - 1:05 Guidance/Lunch	12:08 - 12:38 Guidance/Lunch
	12:35 - 1:05 Guidance/Lunch	11:18 - 11:48 Lunch/Guidance	1:09 - 2:05 Period #	12:42 - 1:27 Period #
	1:09 - 2:05 Period #	11:50 - 12:10 Guidance/Lunch	2:09 - 3:05 Period #	1:31 - 2:16 Period #
	2:09 - 3:05 Period #			2:20 - 3:05 Period #

After School Programs, Academic Enrichment, and Support

Common Ground offers a wide variety of academic enrichment and support services for students after school from 3:15-5:15pm Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday, Wednesdays 1-3pm (limited programs), on Saturdays.

Common Ground offers many after school programs for enrolled students through its **After School Learning Center**, funded with support from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. This program offers a safe space for students to participate in enrichment programs, academic supports, college/career exploration opportunities, aca, and other recreational and cultural opportunities.

Students must select and sign up for programs they wish to attend in advance. Any student not signed up for after school programs will be asked to leave campus promptly at dismissal. After school program information will be provided during September for the fall and early February for the Spring.

All school rules apply after school. Students participating in after-school programs must follow all school policies.

Students are expected to depart school grounds promptly at the end of after-school programs.

Students can earn elective credit for participation in after-school programming (75 hours of program participation = ½ credit).

Academic Laboratories/Homework Center:

Academic Labs provides students with targeted support in Math and Literacy to remediate or accelerate learning, and with a quiet space to complete homework. After school academic labs are staffed by staff and tutors who provide assistance to students who voluntarily seek assistance. Parents/guardians can request student attendance in labs by signing academic contracts. Students can be referred to the homework center by teachers or parents.

Academic Enrichment:

Academic enrichment programs are intended to enrich student learning and vary throughout the year. Offerings include college and career exploration, arts and self-expression, student leadership and service, physical activity/wellness programs, and other topics.

Saturday Academy:

The teachers and Support Educators who staff Saturday Academy from 9-11am provide additional academic support to students whose academic status is jeopardized due to work incompleteness, attendance issues, or other reasons. Attendance is mandated by contract for some students. Parents can also request that their children attend.

Academic Integrity

In preparing for the future, which includes higher education, a profession, or service to an increasingly global community, students must practice being responsible citizens. This means that they will be required to follow a code of ethics; these are the standards of behavior one will be expected to maintain both on the job and—more and more frequently—in one's personal life. At Common Ground High

School, students will practice the type of honesty and integrity they must demonstrate later in their professional lives.

This makes the issue of academic honesty the core of any student project. To that end, students will receive instruction to produce work that is not plagiarized; after this instruction, they will be required to credit each source they use in the production of their projects or be charged with academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty occurs when a student misrepresents his or her connection to the ideas or materials of a project. Academic dishonesty includes the presentation of the words or ideas from another source as one's own words, without proper acknowledgement. It also includes any "heavy-handed" assistance in the creation of work submitted for academic evaluation. It also includes the use of Artificial Intelligence to generate assignments without teacher permission and student acknowledgement. When the balance of student work is overshadowed by unrecognized contributions from other sources, it will be regarded as intentional: the evasion, substitution, or misrepresentation by the student as to whom the credit belongs. Any form of academic misconduct or dishonesty may result in a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action.

Guidance

All Common Ground students participate in a four-year Guidance program. Upon entering as 9th graders, each student joins a small Guidance group led by a teacher or staff member who serves as their Guide and advocate. Activities and opportunities in Guidance are organized around four themes: community building and social-emotional learning, career and college exploration, leadership and agency, and supporting students in academic success. Guidance groups are organized at Common Ground:

- By Grade – with students at the same grade level in the same group.
- By Common Interest – for example, art, music, writing, or outdoors.

In both types of guidance groups, as much as possible, students stay with the same guidance group throughout their time at Common Ground.

Students can earn **0.5 credits each year** for participation in Guidance, completing Guidance activities and tasks, and completing 15 community service hours planned and tracked through Guidance.

Guidance Communication

Students' Guides are their primary person at Common Ground – the advocate, advisor, first point of contact. Family members are strongly encouraged to communicate regularly with their student's Guide, and to use their guide – along with the main office – as their first point of contact with the school.

College and Career

At Common Ground, we believe that students must begin preparing for college and success after high school the moment they walk through the door as 9th graders. Our Student Pathways Team and Guides work deliberately with each student to ensure they have a solid post-high school plan following graduation. All students work through a four-year college planning and career development curriculum in their guidance classes. In addition to the guidance work, we provide students at all grade levels with significant college and career exploration opportunities each year. These exposures are available on a continuous basis in the classroom, on campus with college admission officers, and off campus through

school trips and “takeover” days. We believe that the more information students can access regarding the college-going and admissions process, the better equipped they are to plan for their post-high school endeavors.

CGHS provides comprehensive college going support for students and families alike. Financial aid and scholarship workshops, one-on-one college sessions, guidance classes, and in-home sessions are all services CGHS college office offers to families to ensure the lines of communication are clear when it is time for students to graduate and move into the next chapter of education.

Families are expected to engage in the process by helping students research post-high school options. Families are also encouraged to attend financial aid workshops whenever they are available regardless of their student’s grade level. It is important for families to map out a clear plan for paying for college as early as possible.

Common Ground Early College Program

CGHS students have the opportunity to take courses for free at Southern Connecticut State University (students may take up to 10 courses over their high school career, with a maximum of two courses fall and spring and 1 course each summer), Gateway Community College (limited to 10 students per semester and must have a 3.0 GPA), Yale University (requires a 3.5 GPA), and Albertus Magnus University. We encourage all of our students to avail themselves of this opportunity. Our Early College policy explains the process for how students may take fullest advantage of this opportunity, as well as how they might lose the opportunity.

Why might a student want to take a college class?

- Fulfills a requirement that might not be able to be fulfilled through CG’s course selection (i.e.; Upper level math or world language course)
- Allows the student to pursue an area of interest in a course not offered at CG (i.e., Education, Psychology, Photography)
- Gives them a chance to experience the life of a college student
- Provides additional academic challenge
- Gives students college credit that may be transferred to a college once they leave Common Ground (transfer policies vary by college).

What makes a student eligible for Early College?

- Being a senior, junior or 2nd semester sophomore (In special cases, 1st semester sophomores or 9. graders may be recommended)
- Earning a 3.0 GPA, OR receiving special permission based on
 - Reaching college readiness benchmark on PSAT, SAT, and/or MAP RIT score,
 - Successful completion of previous Early College courses,
 - Earning As and Bs in the current term, and/or
 - Recommendation by either classroom or Guidance teacher – must be in writing

Student responsibilities:

- Attend any college or CG information sessions or contact Early College Manager if they cannot attend
- Complete all online applications and forms for college enrollment on time
- Inform Early College Manager of the class(es), including days and times, for which they have registered

- Students and/or their families will be responsible for any non-tuition fees related to a college course (ie, book, lab or material fees). Common Ground may be able to provide financial assistance in some cases. Students requiring such assistance should speak with the Early College Manager.
- Transportation to & from college classes in most time effective manner (students may use CG provided bus cards)
- Attend all college classes and complete all assigned work.
- Be aware of CGHS graduation requirements and ensure that college classes do not prevent the student from completing CGHS graduation requirements
- Communicate with CGHS teachers whose classes they will miss, leave early or enter late (students are highly encouraged to enroll only in classes that do not interfere with Common Ground classes).
- Sign in and out of the main office of CGHS when leaving and arriving for/from college class.
- By means of a copy of a college transcript, a pdf of their grade, a screenshot of their end of semester grade, students must report their grade in the college class within two weeks of the end of the semester in which they are taking courses. Failure to do so will result in the college course not being added to their Common Ground High School transcript.
- Make a determination when you receive your college class grade as to whether you want that grade reported on your transcript. Once it is reported on the CG transcript, it cannot be removed.
 - **Note:** If the college course fulfills a CG graduation requirement, it must be reported on the transcript.

Reasons a student may lose the privilege of taking a college course:

- If a student earns a D or F in a CG course that ends in the semester prior to the college course, they may be prevented from taking a college course in the following semester.
- Students who miss signing in or out on time in the Main Office three times will be removed from the college class (student will receive a warning after two misses), and may lose credit as they may not be eligible to be enrolled in a high school class once removed from the college class.
- Each college has its own rules regarding students losing the privilege of taking a college course. Students need to make themselves aware of these rules.

Procedure:

- In advance of the opening of applications (generally late July for fall applications, November for Spring courses, April for Summer courses), Early College Manager sends email to all eligible students and their families, reminding them of policy regarding Early College, and inviting them to express interest in taking a college course.
 - At the same time, Early College Manager will send an announcement to all teaching staff inviting them to recommend students who might not otherwise be eligible for taking a college course.
 - Early College Manager will include info about the Early College opportunity, policy and procedure in email newsletters, daily announcements, etc. .
- Early College Manager will provide information and support about how to access the different college course catalogs and schedules so that students can identify possible courses to take. Students must identify potential courses, and the colleges where they are offered, and communicate this information to the Early College Manager. They may receive assistance from their Guidance teacher in this process. Students must receive permission from the Early College Manager or School Director to take a course during the Common Ground school day.
- Students will need to complete applications and registration for the college in which they wish to register – different colleges have different requirements. Early College Manager will assist with these requirements.

IV. School Organization and Leadership

Under the leadership of our School Director, teachers and other staff step up to lead teams responsible for supporting student learning and success. Members of the school leadership team include:

- School Director, Monique Frasier, is responsible for leading and managing all affairs of the school and community programs.
- Assistant Director, Dr. Shanequa Sturgis-Nash, is directly responsible for school climate matters and student support, and assists the Director with parent activities, school programs and events.
- Candi Fulcher, Director of Student Engagement and Equity
- Miriam Sheffield and Gammy Moses, Culture Team
- Joel Tolman, Community Engagement Director
- Jeremy Stone, Lead Teacher Curriculum & Instruction
- Samantha Townsend Lucero, ELA Lead/Coach
- Melvin Morales, Math Lead/Coach
- Jonathan Carney, Technical Subject Lead/Coach
- Sarah Field, Science Lead/Coach
- Marisa Misbach, Core 10 Lead
- Rachel Haymann, Social Work Lead

Full-time faculty also act as guidance teachers, helping students succeed, and serving as their advocates. A parent who has a question about their student’s education should first consult their guidance teacher.

Guidance Teachers

9th Grade Granado Abou Khadra & Morales Magnuson & Carney Anoh	10th Grade Bergman Weimann Miller	Multi-Grade Houses Art - Alamo Music - Green Outdoors - Field Writing - Misbach
11th Grade Clare Poirier Sharnick	12th Grade Dennehy Townsend	

V. Attendance

Common Ground’s goal is for 95% of its students to be in school on time 95% of the time.

Absences

Connecticut state law defines Excused and Unexcused Absences as follows:

Excused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered **excused** if written documentation of the reason for the absence has been submitted within **ten** school days of the student's return to school or in accordance with Section 10-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes and meets the following criteria:

1. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation.
2. For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:
 - a. Student illness (Note: all student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of absence)
 - b. Student's observance of a religious holiday
 - c. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family, up to two days will be excused. Additional days for travel will be unexcused
 - d. Mandated court appearances (additional documentation required)
 - e. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation is required for this reason)
 - f. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance

Unexcused Absences

A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless they meet one of the following criteria:

1. The absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including documentation requirements); or
2. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence.

In order for an absence to be excused, parents/guardians should notify the school office (203-389-4333) any time a child is absent **and send a note to the school the following day** regarding required appointments, illness, etc. **Appropriate documentation must accompany each absence.** A written note/email should be sent to Iris Jimenez at ijimenez@commongroundct.org and Beth Czar at beth.czar@commongroundct.org. Failure to notify the school regarding an absence renders that absence UNEXCUSED.

Common Ground High School will take the following steps to communicate attendance information to parents and government agencies the school is required to report to:

1. Calls will be made daily to parents and guardians by office staff for all unexcused absences. After two unexcused absences, the parent will be required to come in to develop an attendance plan.
2. Home visits will be made to all parents who fail to keep required appointments.
3. Failure to keep scheduled appointments may result in referrals to the Department of Children and Families.

According to Connecticut General Statutes section 10-198a, a "truant" is a student who has four unexcused absences in a month or 10 unexcused absences in a school year.

NOTE: School administrators make final decisions about excusing absences. Required appointments should be scheduled outside school hours so that students do not miss classes.

Known medical problems should be noted on the Medical Information form, which is kept on record at the school.

Tardies—Morning (Anytime on/after 8am)

Parents/guardians should notify the school office (203) 389-0823 Ext.1200, any time a child will be tardy.

1. Tardy from 8:00-8:20

- a. Student must report to the main office and tardy will be logged.
- b. Student will be sent directly to class.
- c. If there is a pattern of unexcused tardies, the student's parent or guardian will be contacted and we will schedule a meeting to discuss a plan of action. Depending on circumstances, a conference call may take the place of an actual meeting.
- d. Home visits will be made to all parents who fail to keep required appointments.

2. Tardy after 8:20 am and before 9:00 am

- a. Student must report to the main office and tardy will be logged.
- b. Parent will be notified that the student is tardy.
- c. If there is a pattern of unexcused tardies, the student's parent or guardian will be contacted and we will schedule a meeting to discuss a plan of action. Depending on circumstances, a conference call may take the place of an actual meeting.
- d. Home visits will be made to all parents who fail to keep required appointments.
- e. Failure to keep two or more scheduled appointments will result in referral to the Dept of Children and Family Services.

3. Unexcused tardy after 9:00 A.M.

- a. Student must report to the main office and tardy will be logged.
- b. Student must then report to the Student Support Office.
- c. Student must email teacher for work missed. The email must also be sent to the administrator, student's parent/guardian, teacher, and advisor.
- d. Student's parent or guardian will be contacted, and we will schedule a meeting to discuss plan of action. Depending on circumstances, a conference call may take the place of an actual meeting.
- e. Home visits will be made to all parents who fail to keep required appointments.
Administration reserves the right to send students back home if tardies are frequent and parent or guardian fails to keep appointments.
- f. Failure to keep two or more scheduled appointments will result in referral to Dept of Children and Family Services.

If a student incurs a tardy due to a doctor's appointment, a medical note should be obtained and dropped off at the school's main office to excuse the tardy and to keep on the student's records.

Tardies—During day

Students are expected to be in their seats ready to work before the bell rings at the beginning of each period. Students **who arrive late to class** (which includes guidance) **may be assigned detention by the culture team, depending on the circumstances and regularity of the behavior.**

Early Dismissal

Any time it is necessary for a student to be dismissed from school before the regular dismissal time, the parent will be notified. If a parent/guardian requests an early dismissal, s/he must notify the school. If the parent/guardian wants someone else to pick up his/her child, it must be a responsible adult designated by the parent or guardian. Office staff must receive parental approval before permitting any

student to leave school early, and students must sign out in the office. Early dismissal passes will be issued to students who give advanced notification of the early dismissal to the office. These passes should be shared with teachers. Students who leave school without securing parental approval and signing out are considered to be skipping school.

Students cannot sign themselves out even if they are 18 years of age or older. Parental permission is required at all times.

Emergency Closings–SMS system

On occasion, school may have to be opened late, dismissed early, or canceled for bad weather or other circumstances. In the event of such an emergency, Common Ground notifies the media of delays and closings, which are announced on local TV stations, school's web page and facebook pages. School closings will also be communicated to the parent/guardian through text message, voicemail and email using the school's internal messaging system.

Please notify the school if home, work or cell phone numbers change so that parents or guardians can be reached in case of emergency.

CREDIT LOSS

Students who have accrued more than 10 absences in a class in a semester risk losing course credit. Students who accrue more than 20 absences (excused and unexcused) in one year risk losing credit. Any student who misses more than 10 days in a semester will not be able to earn credit unless they enter into a contract to demonstrate course mastery, complete missing work, and participate in after-school and Saturday academic support. Contracts are subject to school director approval.

Students will be allowed to make up class time for **excused absences** during after school hours and/or Saturday Academy. Students must make up time for **excused absences** incurred before the end of the unit and/or before mid-term exams. Excused absences incurred after mid-terms must be made up by the end of the semester.

Students should work with their teachers to make-up work due to attendance issues. *Please be advised: due dates for missed assignments, projects, papers etc, are at the teacher's discretion.*

VI. School Codes of Conduct

Quality education can only occur in a safe and orderly environment. In order to create and maintain a safe and healthy learning environment, Common Ground students and staff have co-created two very important documents: the Student Bill of Rights and our Universal Respect Agreement.

Common Ground Student Bill of Rights

All students have the right to:

- Learn without being disturbed by unreasonable behavior.
- Feel safe verbally, physically, emotionally at school.
- Ask questions! But always use a respectful tone and demeanor.
- Resolve differences with fellow students and with teachers in an appropriate and respectful way.
- Know the restorative process, Know their rights as students.
- Expect our community to protect these rights.
- Have a voice in policies.
- Have a voice on committees (Student Council, Board)

Universal Respect Agreement

Student to student:

- Students have the right to resolve differences with fellow students in an appropriate and respectful way.
- Students have the right to address other students about disruptions
- Students have the right to expect others to keep the classroom and campus clean, so they can learn in a neat environment
- Students have a right to feel safe verbally, physically, and emotionally at school
- Students expect all students to protect these rights

Student to teacher:

- Students have the right to resolve differences with teachers in an appropriate and respectful way.
- Students have the right to ask questions, keeping in mind a respectful manner and a respectful tone
- Students expect all teachers to protect these rights

Student to administration:

- Students have the right to know the restorative process, know their rights as students.
- Students have a right to have a voice in policies
- Students have a right to having voice on committees (Student Council, Board of Directors)
- Students have a right to know how they are being evaluated in and outside of the classroom
- Students expect all administration staff to protect these rights

Student to environment:

- The classroom should be a learning environment; therefore, students have the right to learn without disruption by other students.
- Students have the right to learn in a clean environment
- Students expect our community to protect these rights

To uphold our Student Bill of Rights and Universal Respect Agreement, a Student Code of Conduct has been developed. In the event that a student violates a school rule, appropriate consequences will be implemented, which may include referral to a school counselor or social worker to reflect upon the decision-making that led to the infraction. The goal is not to be punitive, but to instill in our students the understanding that school is important to their future and the future of their peers and disruption or behavior that impedes that growth cannot be tolerated.

At Common Ground, we do our best to uphold our Student Bill of Rights and Universal Respect Agreements through a combination of Restorative Practices and more traditional discipline practices.

Restorative Justice

Common Ground High School strives to practice a restorative approach to discipline. Discipline situations requiring problem-solving are viewed as learning opportunities for all individuals involved and the community. This approach requires parents, teachers, and students to work together to teach students to take responsibility for the impact of their behavior and to help students to understand how their behavior affects others.

Restorative Justice is a more sustainable, equitable, and respectful alternative to dealing with misbehavior, from minor infractions to violence. It is also used as a proactive strategy to create a culture of connectivity and care where all members of the school community can thrive.

Restorative Justice brings together all parties involved in any incident in a safe and respectful space, promoting communication, accountability, and a stronger sense of community. This process includes some form of restorative action by the person who willfully disregards our, Universal Respect Agreements, and School Policies. Therefore, parents, teachers, and students will be encouraged to work together to create a community that teaches everyone to take responsibility for their behavior.

The goal is to build a stronger, more accepting, understanding, empathetic Common Ground family. Although our community cannot promise a resolution in every situation, our community will do its best in the true spirit of Common Ground to uphold the Restorative Justice process while being transparent.

Common Ground is fully committed to educating our community members about the restorative justice system on a regular basis using relevant and responsible content.

Traditional Discipline Practices

Common Ground High School recognizes that some behaviors require more traditional discipline responses. We are in the process of reviewing our disciplinary policies to incorporate more discipline strategies that bridge traditional zero tolerance practices with our strong commitment to incorporating restorative practices. Our Culture Team works with all staff to build a climate that::

1. Fosters learning through positive relationships and interactions with peers
2. Helps educators recognize the importance of keeping the social and emotional health of their students a deliberate and central focus of learning
3. Ramps up efforts to strengthen safe and supportive schools, address conflict, improve school climate, and build a positive school culture
4. Recognizes the impact of trauma and loss on our youth and the need to use restorative strategies that includes consequences and accountability for those who have caused harm and restorative justice to repair the harm for those who have suffered from destructive actions.

We welcome parents, community partners, and students to discuss, review and strategize around restorative practices and will update the handbook as changes occur.

Common Ground reserves the right to issue consequences until the new disciplinary policy is developed and approved. Consequences may include removal from class, detention, parent-meeting, suspension or expulsion based on the severity of the behavior.

Suspension/Expulsion

A student is subject to suspension and/or Expulsion for conduct that violates a publicized policy of the Board and is seriously disruptive of the educational process. Such conduct shall include but is not limited to conduct leading to a violation of any federal or state law if that conduct is determined to pose a danger to the student himself/herself, other students, employees or school property.

The following violations of student conduct **on school property, en-route to or from school, on school-provided transportation, or at any school sponsored activity** may, depending on circumstances, lead to suspension and/or expulsion and could result in a police referral:

- Conduct causing threat of danger to the physical well-being of themselves or others.
- Willful striking, assaulting or causing bodily harm to another person
- Theft
- Arson
- Open defiance or verbal abuse issued towards any member of the school staff
- Blackmailing, threatening, harassing or otherwise intimidating others.
- The possession, transmission or discharge of any fireworks, explosives or other dangerous object or facsimile thereof
- The possession, use, or sale of unauthorized drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages.

Possession of drugs or weapons can result in mandatory police referral and recommendation for expulsion.

In any situation where violations which may result in suspension or recommendations for expulsion are alleged to have occurred, the administration will hear the student's explanation and investigate the matter fully before determining if a violation has occurred. If a violation has occurred, the principal or designee will determine the level of response to that violation.

Suspension

A student may be assigned a suspension if the student's conduct endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive to the educational process, and/or violates the Universal Respect Agreements or school discipline policies. The suspension may be served in or out of school, depending on the severity of the offense.

Administration will observe the following procedures when recommending an out of school suspension

- Unless an emergency or extenuating circumstances exist requiring a student's immediate removal, no student will be suspended without allowing adequate time to inform the student of the infraction for which suspension is being recommended and providing opportunity for the student to respond.

- Administration will make reasonable attempts to notify parents and/or guardian(s) of the student within twenty-four hours (24) about the suspension and the causes leading to the suspension.
- Additionally, administration will forward a letter to parents or guardian(s) to the last known address reported to the school. The letter will be provided within one day of the suspension action and will offer the parents and/or guardians an opportunity to conference.
- Upon return to school, administration will conference with parents and/or guardians to review and discuss the conditions under which the student may return to school.

Expulsion

Expulsion is an exclusion from school privileges for more than ten consecutive school days but not extending beyond one hundred and eighty consecutive days. The period of an expulsion may extend into the school year following the year in which the expulsion was imposed.

The Bottom Line

The success of any set of school rules depends on making the members of the school community aware of the rules and then enforcing those rules in a consistent and fair manner, one which recognizes the individuality of the member as well as his or her obligation to the community. **It is not the intent of the school to identify every possible behavior infraction and its penalty.** It is hoped that all parties will commit themselves to a smooth operation of Common Ground High School and will exercise good judgment. **The Bottom Line is Respect—students who respect themselves show respect to other students, teachers and the school as a whole. The School Codes of Conduct can and will be subject to review and may change at the discretion of the administration.**

Cell Phone & Headphone Policy

The cell phone plan is intended to decrease student's off task behavior caused by cell phone usage and to increase their general well-being. Every stakeholder has a responsibility to ensure we maximize student learning time without exceptions.

What is Expected from Students

During school hours and academic time spent after school students will be expected to adhere to the outlined plan below.

In Classrooms:

- All students must keep cell phones and headphones away during class.
- If a student uses a device, they will be asked to place it in the silver box located in each classroom.
- The device will be returned to the student at the end of the class.

Enforcement:

- Violations will be documented in Kickboard, as they may result in detention.

Refusal to Comply:

- If a student refuses to place their phone in the Silver Box, they will be sent to the Culture office.

- The phone will be confiscated until the end of the day, the family will be contacted, and detention will be assigned.

Lunch Period:

- Students may use their phones during designated lunch periods, as long as it does not disrupt the learning environment or interpersonal interactions.

Expectations from Parents

- Review the cell phone plan with your children
- Please do not encourage students to call you throughout the day, if contact needs to be made, please use the listed phone number
- If students are given detention after school in response to noncompliance please allow time in their schedules for those detentions
- In seriously reluctant cases of student compliance please be amenable to keeping the phones at home

Repeated offenses will require a parent conference to determine a behavioral plan for electronics.

Food and Drink

Students are allowed to eat lunch in the cafeteria and designated outdoor spaces. Students are not allowed to bring food into or eat in classrooms except with explicit permission from staff. Teachers establish classroom rules about students' beverages in class. Students may not order food to be delivered to the school. Chilled water is available in the cafeteria for students who bring a reusable water bottle.

**FOOD IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED IN THE MULTIPURPOSE ROOM
AND THE SCIENCE CLASSROOMS DUE TO SAFETY CONCERNS.**

Parent/Guardian Visits & Sign-Ins

Parents and guardians are always welcome to visit the school. Please sign in at the office. Parents/guardians who wish to speak to faculty members, the administrative staff or the school director may call to make an appointment or ask for a return call.

Trespassing

All visitors to Common Ground High School must sign into the main office. Any person on the Common Ground High School property who is not conducting such official business with the school may be asked to leave.

Conduct outside of the school building

All school rules apply to students on school grounds, on the bus to and from school, on school field trips, and at off-site sponsored events. The school grounds extend from behind the school to the Job Corps property.

Conduct on- or off- campus

Students may also face serious repercussions for illegal activity. Recommendation for expulsion is mandatory whenever a student is found to have engaged in the sale or distribution of drugs or when the student is in possession of certain weapons, whether that conduct occurred on school property, at a school sponsored activity, or off of school property.

***Common Ground High School and New Haven Ecology Project are not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items. Students bringing valuables to school do so at their own risk and bear the responsibility for the loss, theft, or damage of said item.**

COMMON GROUND HIGH SCHOOL IS A SMOKE FREE FACILITY. SMOKING AND VAPING ARE NOT PERMITTED ANYWHERE IN THE BUILDING OR SCHOOL.

Students who show signs of being under the influence at school will be wanded (subject to administrator discretion) and referred for evaluation by the nurse.

Dress Code

The CGHS dress code meets an appropriate standard for both school and the workplace.

Pants:	Jeans, dress, khaki, capris, and cargo style pants of any color are acceptable. Pants must be worn at the waist. Rips in pants must be below mid-thigh level. Sheer leggings/tights may be worn along with shorts, skorts, dresses, skirts, and long shirts that hang at the mid-thigh level.
Shorts, Skorts, & skirts:	Any style or color of short, skort, or skirts are acceptable as long as the item hangs at the mid-thigh level. All items must be worn at the waist.
Dresses:	Any style or color of dress is acceptable as long as the item hangs at or past the mid-thigh level.
Shirts, Blouses, & tops:	Collared shirts, blouses, knit tops, t-shirts are acceptable. Shirts can be sleeveless as long as they have straps. No strapless shirts/blouses allowed. No exposed back.
Head Coverings:	No ski masks or head gear that covers students' faces are allowed in school. Medical and N95 masks are allowed. If these items are worn in the hallway or brought into classrooms, they will be confiscated and may require parent retrieval.
Footwear:	Footwear must be worn at all times. Shoes, sandals, boots, flip-flops, and sneakers of any style are permitted. Slippers are not permitted.
Sunglasses:	Sunglasses may not be worn in the building without a doctor's approval.

The administration and faculty will enforce the dress code policies at CGHS. We ask parents to reinforce this policy. Students not adhering to the dress code will be asked to wear clothing supplied by the school for the school day unless a parent/guardian brings a change of clothes. Students who wear clothing that is inappropriate (too revealing, sheer, or featuring inappropriate messages*) will be required to change.

Considering that styles continuously change, Common Ground faculty and staff make the final decision regarding what is appropriate to wear at school.

BECAUSE A NUMBER OF CGHS CLASSES INCLUDE OUTDOOR STUDY, STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING CLOTHES THAT THEY CAN WEAR TO WORK OUTSIDE. STUDENTS SHOULD BRING AN OLD SHIRT, PANTS AND FOOTWEAR SO THAT THEIR REGULAR CLOTHES WILL NOT GET DAMAGED.

***Inappropriate messages include references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, gangs, offensive language and/or hate speech that demeans people of a protected race, religion, culture, gender identity, or sexual orientation.**

Acceptable Internet Use

Students and staff must understand and practice proper and ethical use of the Internet. All students and staff must attend at least one session regarding procedures, ethics and security involving using Internet. This training is required before receiving an account name and password in order to use the system.

1. Acceptable Use

- a. The purpose of the Internet is to facilitate communications in support of research and education by providing access to unique resources and an opportunity for collaborative work. To remain eligible as a user, the use of your account must be in support of and consistent with the education objectives of Common Ground High School. Access to the Internet is made possible through an appropriate provider to be designated by Common Ground High School at its sole discretion. Common Ground High School and all users of the Internet must comply with existing rules and Acceptable Use Policies, which are incorporated into this document and are available from Common Ground.
- b. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighting material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.
- c. Use for commercial activities is generally not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

2. Privilege

The use of the Common Ground High School Network is a privilege, not a right.

Inappropriate use, including any violation of these conditions and rules, may result in cancellation of the privilege. Common Ground High School, under this agreement, delegates authority to the administrator or his/her designee to determine appropriate use and may deny, revoke, suspend or close any user account at any time based upon its determination of inappropriate use by account holder or user.

3. Monitoring

The Board of Directors and Common Ground High School shall respect the privacy of user accounts but reserves the right to review any material on user accounts and to monitor fileserver space when it is deemed appropriate or necessary.

4. No Warranties

The Board of Directors and Common Ground High School make no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The Board of Directors and Common Ground High School will not be responsible for any damages a user suffers. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, no deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the Board of Directors or Common Ground High School's negligence or by the user's errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk. The Board of Directors and Common Ground High School specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services. All users need to consider the source of any information they obtain, and consider how valid the information may be.

5. Responsibilities and Prohibitions

With the rights of membership in the Common Ground High School Network community come certain responsibilities and prohibitions. Adherence to the following is required:

1. Never share passwords or accounts. Users have full responsibility for the use of their account. All violations of this policy that can be traced to an individual account name will be treated as the sole responsibility of the owner of the account.
2. Never use the Network for any activities that are considered illegal pursuant to state or federal law. Illegal activities may include, but are not limited to, the following conduct:
 - a. Tampering with computer hardware or software, unauthorized entry into computers, or vandalism or destruction of computer files.
 - b. Fraudulent copying, communications or modification of original, authored materials.
 - c. Using the network to harass or disparage others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or religious or political beliefs.
 - d. Violations of copyright rules regarding software, information, and attributions of authorship. For this reason, commercial software may not be installed on the system without express permission of the system administrator.
 - e. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance of the Network or any other computer system or network on the Internet. Such conduct may include, but is not limited to, the development of programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer system and/or damage the software components of a computer system, and use of the network to intentionally obtain or modify files, passwords or data belonging to other users.
 - f. Hate mail, threats, harassment, and other similar communication via the Network.

3. The Network will not be used to transmit or obtain obscene or pornographic material. There is to be no display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, or cartoons, or any transmission or use of E-mail communications that contain ethnic slurs or racial epithets.
 4. Loading or use of unauthorized games, software and/or programs is prohibited.
 5. Do not post communications to a public forum without the prior consent of the author of the communication. However, messages posted in a public forum such as newsgroups may be copied in subsequent communications, so long as proper attribution is given.
 6. Use appropriate language. Profanity or obscenity will not be tolerated on the network. All network users should use language appropriate to school situations as indicated by district and school codes of conduct.
 7. Avoid offensive or inflammatory speech. Network users must respect the rights of others both in the local community and in the Internet at large. Personal attacks are an unacceptable use of the Network.
 8. Do not assume a false name or communicate on the Network using another person's name or password.
 9. Behave in an exemplary manner on "virtual" field trips. When "visiting" locations on the Internet, or using video conferencing or screen sharing communications tools, network users must conduct themselves as representatives of both their school and the community.
 10. Use of the Network for non-school purposes is prohibited.
 11. Do not reveal personal information about yourself or others, including home address, telephone numbers, social security number or credit card number.
 12. Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities and may result in the loss of user privileges.
 13. Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network by other users.
 14. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
 15. Social networking tools, chat, and instant messaging services should be used for school purposes only.
- 6. Vandalism, Harassment, and Cyber-bullying**
- a. Vandalism and harassment may result in cancellation of user privileges and/or disciplinary action, including recommendation for expulsion.
 - b. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, and destroy data of another user, Internet, or other networks that are connected to the Internet backbone. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses.

- c. Harassment is defined as the persistent annoyance of another user, or the interference of another user's work. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the sending of unwanted mail.
- d. Cyber-bullying is defined as willful and repeated harm inflicted on a person or group of people through electronic media such as e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, mobile phones, pagers and defamatory Web sites. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing.

7. Security

Security on any computer system is a high priority because there are so many users. If any Common Ground High School Network user identifies a security problem, they must notify an administrator or teacher at once. The user must not use another individual's Common Ground High School Network account. Any user identified as a security risk will be denied access to the Common Ground High School Network.

8. Consequences

Failure to abide by the provisions of this policy may result in the loss of privileges to use the Network. Violations of this policy by students may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. In the case of employees, violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

Illegal use of the Network, including intentional deletion or damage to files or data belonging to others, copyright violations, or theft of services will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution.

A Common Ground High School Network user shall be held responsible for damages to equipment, systems, or software resulting from intentional or willful acts.

The Director of Schools or his/her designee is authorized to establish guidelines for filtering, and blocking of, access to Internet sites in a manner that will not unreasonably interfere with student and staff acquisition of information appropriate to attaining the educational goals and objectives of Common Ground High School.

9. Guidelines for Student Use

Students who wish to use electronic services and networks that are available to them may do so provided that they:

1. Read and agree to the Acceptable Use Policy.
2. Sign the Internet Use Agreement contract.
3. Students 18 and over may sign their own forms. Parent/guardians must sign the contract for students under 18.
4. Submit the completed contract to the administrator.

Computers: Web Sites/Pages

The Board of Directors allows Common Ground High School to create and maintain world wide web sites for educational purposes. Web sites are avenues for educating, providing information, communicating and expressing creativity. District and individual school web sites shall be used to share information about school curriculum and instruction, school-authorized activities, and other information relating to our schools and our mission. Web sites shall also provide instructional resources for staff and students.

Materials displayed on web sites are published on the Internet. Therefore, the content should be of professional quality and consistent with the education mission of the school system. Web sites shall follow standards for ethical behavior in regard to information and technology by showing respect for the principles of intellectual freedom, intellectual property rights and the responsible use of information and technology. Pages shall reflect an understanding that both internal and external audiences will be viewing the information.

Any pages or links representing the school district shall follow guidelines and responsibilities pertaining to content standards, student records, copyright, and technical standards which are contained in the administrative regulations which accompany this policy.

Use of Computer Equipment and Related Systems, Software, and Networks by Students and Staff

Common Ground High School provides computers, computer systems, software, electronic access privileges, and networks for students and staff to carry out the mission of Common Ground in an environment which ensures access to up-to-date information, management, and communication services. Responsible use of these systems and networks is expected of all students and staff.

The computers, computer systems, software, electronic access privileges, and networks are the property of Common Ground High School and are to be used only for those activities directly related to teaching, learning, and/or management by students and staff. The equipment, infrastructure, and software are not to be used for personal gain by any student or staff member.

The computers, computer systems, software, electronic access privileges, and networks provided by Common Ground High School shall not be modified or altered by individual users without the authorization of the Director of Schools or his/her designee.

All users are hereby made aware that all information on Common Ground High School's computers, computer systems, and networks are in the public domain, unless specifically protected by the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act.

Common Ground High School reserves the right to bypass any or all individual or group passwords to determine the activity on any or all computers, computer systems, software, electronic access privileges, and networks.

Use of the computers, computer systems, software, electronic access privileges, and networks will be restricted to those users who have signed the Common Ground High School Acceptable Use Policy. In the case of minors, the Common Ground High School Acceptable Use Policy must also be signed by the minor's parent or guardian.

The Director of Common Ground High School is directed to establish guidelines and procedures for responsible use of computers, computer systems, software, electronic access privileges, and networks provided by Common Ground High School.

Bullying, Hazing, Harassment and Teen Dating Violence

Common Ground is committed to providing our students equal educational opportunities and a safe learning environment free from harassment, bullying, discrimination, hate crimes, and teen dating violence, where all school community members treat each other with respect and appreciate the rich diversity in our school. Any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of harassment, bullying, discrimination, hate crimes or teen dating violence in our school or school-related activities will not be tolerated. Common Ground will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of harassment, bullying, discrimination, hate crimes, and teen dating violence, and take prompt, effective action to end that behavior and prevent its reoccurrence. Action will include, where appropriate, referral to a law enforcement agency.

Bullying

All students deserve to feel safe, respected and free from bullying and intimidation. Bullying is defined as the REPEATED USE by one or more students of a WRITTEN, VERBAL, OR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION, such as CYBERBULLYING, or a PHYSICAL ACT OR GESTURE REPEATEDLY DIRECTED AT OR REFERRING TO another student attending school in the same school district that:

- (A) causes PHYSICAL OR EMOTIONAL HARM to the student or DAMAGE to the student's property;
- (B) places the student in REASONABLE FEAR OF HARM to himself or herself, or of DAMAGE to the student's property;
- (C) creates a HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT at school for such student (bullying among students is sufficiently severe and pervasive as to alter the conditions of the school climate);
- (D) infringes on the RIGHTS of the student at school; or
- (E) SUBSTANTIALLY DISRUPTS the educational process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying explicitly includes, but is not limited to:

A written, verbal, or electronic communications, or physical acts or gestures that are based on any ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED DIFFERENTIATING CHARACTERISTICS, such as race, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

CYBERBULLYING DEFINED:

Any act of bullying using the INTERNET, INTERACTIVE and DIGITAL technologies, CELLULAR MOBILE TELEPHONE or other MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES, or any ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Bullying can include physical attacks, verbal abuse, threats and intimidation, extortion or stealing of money or possessions, and/or exclusion from a peer group.

Bullying must be investigated when it occurs:

- (A) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the local or regional board of education, and
- (B) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed, (ii) infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school which occurs outside of the school setting will be addressed by school officials if it has a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school. This includes electronic or cyber-bullying.

If you have any concerns about bullying behavior at Common Ground High School, please notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or District Safe School Climate Coordinator. All reported incidents must be documented with a written, detailed description of events. A prompt investigation will be conducted by the safe school climate specialist or his or her designee.

Safe School Climate Specialist:
Shanequa Sturgis-Nash, Assistant Director
(203) 389-0823
Shanequa.sturgis-nash@commongroundct.org

District Safe School Climate Coordinator:
Monique Frasier, School Director
(203) 389-0823
Monique.Frasier@commongroundct.org

Students should report acts of bullying directly to the Director of School Operations (the Safe School Climate Coordinator) or the Safe School Climate Specialist (Assistant Director). Such complaints can be made in person or anonymously. School staff should make written reports of bullying acts that they witness and/or receive from students directly to the Director of School Operations (the Safe School Climate Coordinator) or the Safe School Climate Specialist (Assistant Director). Parents/guardians can direct written reports of suspected bullying to the Director of School Operations (the Safe School Climate Coordinator) or the Safe School Climate Specialist (Assistant Director).

Students who engage in any act of bullying while at school, at any school function, or in conjunction with any school-sponsored event are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

Bullying complaints can be referred to the school's Title IX Coordinator for a formal Title IX investigation, as well.

For more information about Bullying, see Appendix A—Common Ground High School Safe School Climate Plan.

Hazing

Hazing activities seriously disrupt the educational process and are not condoned at Common Ground High School. Hazing is defined as an act or acts taken by a student or group of students that result in a physical or emotional harm to a person in order for that person to be allowed into a student group. Because hazing involves violence or threats of violence, students who engage in any act of hazing at school or at any school function will incur serious discipline consequences, and referral to law enforcement officials. Hazing complaints can be referred to the school's Title IX Coordinator for a formal Title IX investigation.

Harassment

Harassment is oral, written, graphic, electronic or physical conduct on school property or at a school-related activity relating to an individual's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability (i.e., protected statuses), that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the district's programs or activities, or to interfere with or limit an individual's employment, by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational or work environment. Harassment shall also mean conduct, if it persists, that will likely create such a hostile, humiliating, intimidating or offensive educational or work environment. A single incident, depending on its severity, may create a hostile environment.

Harassment based on a person's protected status may include, but is not limited to:

- Degrading, demeaning, insulting, or abusive verbal or written statements;
- Taking personal belongings, taunting, teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors;
- Drawing or writing graffiti, slogans, visual displays (such as swastikas), or symbols on school or another person's property (e.g., books or backpacks);
- Telling degrading or offensive jokes;
- Unwanted physical contact of any kind;
- Physical violence, threats of bodily harm, physical intimidation, or stalking;
- Threatening letters, emails, instant messages, or websites;
- Defacing, damaging, or destroying school (e.g., desks, lockers or school walls) or another person's property; throwing objects (eggs, paint).

Examples of Specific Types of Harassment (depending upon the circumstances):

Disability Harassment

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her disability or perceived disability, including damaging or interfering with use of necessary equipment, imitating manner of movement, using slurs like "retard," or invading personal space to intimidate.

National Origin Harassment

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her national origin, ancestry, or ethnic background, such as negative comments about surnames, customs, language, accents, immigration status, or manner of speaking.

Racial Harassment

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her race or color, including characteristics of a person's race or color, such as racial slurs or insults, racial graffiti or symbols, hostile acts based on race, nicknames based on racial stereotypes, negative comments about appearance, imitating mannerisms, taunting, or invading personal space to intimidate.

Religious Harassment

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her religion, including derogatory comments about religious beliefs, traditions, practices (includes non-belief), or religious clothing.

Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation Harassment

Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at a person based on his/her actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, such as slurs or insults, imitating mannerisms, taunting, or invading personal space to intimidate.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is a form of sexual discrimination and is illegal under both federal and state laws. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature when:

- A. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, her/his academic status or progress;
- B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual; or
- C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment.

Depending on the circumstances, sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

Verbal forms of sexual harassment, including repeated unwanted requests for dates, sexual rumors, sexually explicit jokes, howling, whistles, catcalls, making unwanted gender-based references to a person's physical characteristics;

- **Written forms of sexual harassment**, including obscene graffiti, sexually graphic computer messages or games, love poems or letters continuing after being informed they are unwelcome;
- **Nonverbal forms of sexual harassment**, including offensive gestures, following or stalking another, cornering or blocking a person, leering, pressuring for sexual activities;
- **Visual forms of sexual harassment**, including displaying sexually suggestive or sexually provocative photographs, pictures, objects, cartoons, or posters; or
- **Unwelcome physical touching**, including grabbing, groping, squeezing, sexual fondling, kissing, brushing against another's body, body hugs, and other unwelcome contact.

Reporting/Grievance Procedure for Bullying, Hazing and Harassment, ADA, Section 504, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and other Civil Rights or Discrimination Issues

Step 1 – Reporting

Any student, who believes s/he has been the victim of hazing, harassment or discrimination of any sort by a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of Common Ground High School, or by any other person who is participating in, observing, or otherwise engaged in activities under the auspices of Common Ground, is encouraged to immediately report the alleged acts to the School Director (or the Director's designee).

Any teacher, administrator, or other school official, who has been or receives notice that a student or school employee has been the victim of hazing, harassment or discrimination of any sort by a student, teacher, administrator or other Common Ground High School personnel, or by any other person who is participating in, observing, or otherwise engaged in activities under the auspices of Common Ground, is required to immediately report the alleged acts to the School Director (or the Director's designee).

A student, employee or third party who believes s/he has been subject to discriminatory conduct is encouraged to report the incident directly to the School Director.

A school employee who suspects or is notified that a student has been subject to discriminatory conduct shall immediately report that conduct to the School Director.

The reporting party is encouraged to use the school report form; however, oral reports shall be considered complaints, as well. If the report is given verbally, a designated official shall complete the school's report form based on the oral information.

Step 2 – Investigation

Upon receiving a complaint of discrimination, the Director shall immediately notify the District Title IX Compliance Officer, who shall then authorize the Director or his/her designee to investigate the complaint. If the Director is unable to investigate the complaint or if School Administrators are the subject of the complaint, the District Title IX Compliance Officer will conduct the investigation.

The investigation may consist of individual interviews with the complainant, the accused and others with knowledge relative to the incident. Other information and materials relevant to the investigation may also be evaluated.

The obligation to conduct this investigation shall not be negated by the fact that a criminal investigation is pending or has been concluded.

Step 3 – Investigative Report

The Director or his/her designee shall prepare a written report within fifteen (15) days, unless additional time to complete the investigation is required. The report shall include a summary of the investigation, a determination of whether the complaint has been substantiated as factual and whether it is a violation of this policy, and a recommended disposition of the complaint.

Copies of the report shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, the District Title IX Compliance Officer, and School Building Title IX Compliance Officer.

Step 4 – School Action

If the investigation results in a finding that the complaint is factual and constitutes a violation of this policy, the school shall take prompt, corrective action to ensure that such conduct ceases and will not reoccur.

Disciplinary actions, in the case of students, shall be consistent with the school disciplinary practices, Board policies, administrative regulations, and state and federal laws.

Disciplinary actions, in the case of employees and third parties, shall be consistent with the Board policies, administrative regulations, state and federal laws, and applicable collective bargaining unit agreements.

Step 5 - Appeal Procedure

If the complainant or alleged perpetrator, is not satisfied with a finding of no violation of the policy or with the corrective action recommended in the investigative report, they may submit a written appeal to the District Title IX Compliance Officer within fifteen (15) days.

If the District Title IX Compliance Officer was the first investigator of the complaint, the appeal should be directed to the Board of Education.

The District Title IX Compliance Officer or Board of Education shall review the investigation and the investigative report and may also conduct an investigation.

The District Title IX Compliance Officer or the Board shall prepare a written response to the appeal within fifteen (15) days. Copies of the response shall be provided to the complainant, the accused and the School Director who conducted the initial investigation.

The School Board hereby designates Monique Frasier as the District Title IX Compliance Officer for Common Ground High School:

Monique Frasier
School Director
(203) 389-0823
monique.frasier@commongroundct.org

and Dr. Shanequa Sturgis-Nash as the Building Title IX Compliance Officer:

Shanequa Sturgis-Nash
Assistant Director
(203) 389-0823
shanequa.sturgis-nash@commongroundct.org

Copies of this regulation will be distributed to all students.

VII. Common Ground Student Identification Cards and One-to-One Chromebook Policy

Student Identification Cards

PURPOSE

- To maintain the security of the building and its occupants
- To monitor unauthorized entry/visitation
- To protect the faculty/staff from intruders
- To provide accurate photo identification

GUIDELINES/ REPLACEMENTS

- All ID badges must be carried at all times.
- ID cards are non-transferable. They may not be used by any other person other than the one whose picture appears on the front. Lending an ID card to anyone will subject the holder to disciplinary action.
- ID cards will be good for up to 4 years of student active enrollment.
- Students requiring a duplicate ID badge will have to pay the replacement fee of five (\$5) dollars.

Student One-to-One Chromebook Program

The one-to-one Chromebook program at Common Ground High School is to prepare students for a world of digital technology and information. Increasing access to technology is essential for that future, and the learning tool of these twenty-first century students is the chromebook computer. Excellence in education requires that technology be seamlessly integrated in the student's educational program. Individual use of laptops empowers students to learn at their full potential and prepares them for the real world of college and the workplace. Chromebooks encourage students to solve problems and think critically by stimulating analytical thinking and learning results from the continuous dynamic interaction among students, educators, parents and the extended community. Technology immersion does not diminish the vital role of the teacher. To the contrary, it transforms the teacher from a director of learning to a facilitator of learning. Learning with chromebooks integrates technology into the curriculum anytime, anyplace.

The policies, procedures and information within this document apply to all chromebooks used at Common Ground High School, including any other device considered by the Administration to come under this policy. **Teachers may set additional requirements for chromebook use in their classroom.** We realize that many students do own personal devices; however, we would like all of our students to be using Chromebooks within the school and at home as their school computing device.

Insurance:

Insurance will cost \$40 per year on all Chromebooks. These fees cover the annual cost of the computer's operation, including extended warranty, software and hardware upgrades, and necessary maintenance. The annual insurance fee will cover the cost of a replacement device or repair at the school's discretion if the student's device is broken. **It does not cover repairs for water damage and/or lost/stolen devices.** The insurance fee needs to be paid to Common Ground no later than **September 1, 2025.**

Training:

The students will receive training on file management and maximizing available network bandwidth during Orientation. Training documents and videos will be available online for students to refer to when needed.

Return:

All leased student Chromebooks and accessories (charger and case) will be collected at the end of each school year.

A student who transfers out of Common Ground will be required to return his/her Chromebook and accessories. **If a Chromebook and accessories are not returned, the parent/guardian will be held responsible for payment in full.** If payment is not received the parent/guardian will be turned over to a collection agency or law enforcement as appropriate.

Common Ground may hold a student's diploma and/or transcripts for lack of payment or the return of equipment. The student may also not advance to the next grade.

Student must immediately surrender any Chromebook upon request from the school, whether for routine maintenance, investigation of improper use, or any and all other reasons. There should be no expectation of privacy or network access while using this equipment. Pupils are responsible for following the policies in Student Handbook related to *Electronic Devices*, *Acceptable Internet Use* and all applicable State and Federal laws.

Personalization:

Common Ground-owned Chromebooks must remain free of any personal decorative writing, drawing, stickers, paint, tape, or labels

Students may add appropriate music, photos, and videos to their Chromebook. Personalized media is subject to inspection and must follow the Common Ground High School *Electronic Devices* and *Acceptable Internet Use* policies.

Care and Use:

Students are responsible for the general care of the Chromebook which they have been issued by the school. Chromebooks that are broken or fail to work properly must be taken to the Office. If a loaner Chromebook is needed, a limited number can be issued to the student until the Chromebook can be repaired or replaced.

General Precautions:

- Food and/or drink should not be placed next to the Chromebook while it is in use.
- Cords, cables, and removable storage devices must be inserted carefully into the Chromebook.
- Chromebooks should never be carried with open screens.
- Chromebooks should be shut down when not in use to conserve battery life.
- Chromebooks should never be shoved into a locker or wedged into a book bag as this may break the screen.
- Chromebooks should not be exposed to extreme temperature or direct sunlight for extended periods of time. Extreme heat or cold may cause damage to the device.
- Chromebooks should always be brought to room temperature prior to being turned on.

Carrying the Chromebook:

The protective shell of the Chromebook will only provide basic protection from everyday use. It is not designed to prevent damage due to dropping or abusive handling. Carrying the Chromebook in a padded backpack or padded bookbag is acceptable provided the backpack or bookbag is handled with care. For example, bookbags should not be thrown or dropped with Chromebooks inside. Protective padded cases are provided and should be used when carrying a Chromebook in a bookbag.

Screen Care:

The Chromebook screen can be damaged if subjected to rough treatment. The screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure on the screen.

- Do not lean on top of the Chromebook.
- Do not place anything near the Chromebook that could put pressure on the screen.
- Do not place anything in the carrying case that will press against the cover.
- Do not poke the screen.
- Do not place anything on the keyboard before closing the lid (e.g. pens, pencils, notebooks).
- Clean the screen with a soft, dry antistatic, or microfiber cloth. Do not use window cleaner or any type of liquid or water on the Chromebook. Individually packaged pre-moistened eyeglass lens cleaning tissues can be purchased to clean the screen. These are very convenient and relatively inexpensive.

File Management:

Students may save documents to their Google Drive, or they may save to an external memory device such as an SD card or USB flash drive. Saving to Google Drive will make the file accessible from any computer with internet access. Students using Google Drive to work on their documents will not need to save their work, as Drive will save each keystroke as the work is being completed. It will be the responsibility of the student to maintain the integrity of their files and keep proper backups. Students will be trained on proper file management procedures.

Software:

Originally Installed Software

Chromebook software is managed via a Management Console. These are web-based applications that do not require installation space on a hard drive and that are updated as needed when the computer is shut down and restarted. Some applications, such as Google Drive, are available for offline use. The software originally installed on the Chromebook must remain on the Chromebook in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times. Upon student graduation or transfer from CGHS software restrictions may be lifted and the Management Console removed upon request.

Additional Software:

Some web-based applications will be suggested for use by students across all computing platforms. Students using Chrome on Windows, mac or Linux computers will see these apps when they sign in with their Google Apps account on that device. From time to time the school may add software applications for use in a particular course. This process will be automatic with virtually no impact on students. The school needed will automatically remove applications that are no longer as well. Students are unable to install additional software on their Chromebook other than what has been approved by Common Ground High School.

Virus Protection:

Virus protection is unnecessary on the Chromebook due to the unique nature of its design.

Inspection:

Chromebooks may be selected at random for inspection. The purpose for inspection will be to check for proper care and maintenance as well as inappropriate material being carried into the school.

Data Protection:

All student created files stored on an external SD card, USB flash drive, or Google Drive will be intact after the operating system is restored. All files saved on the Chromebook that have been synced to Google Drive will be intact. However, all other data (music, photos, documents) *stored on internal memory that have NOT been synced* will not be retained.

Chromebook Identification:

Chromebooks will be labeled in a manner specified by the school and can be identified in the following ways:

- Record of serial number and NHEP/Common Ground High School asset tag
- Individual's Google Account username

Under no circumstances are students to modify, remove, or destroy identification labels.

Storage:

When students are not using their Chromebooks during the school day, the devices should be stored in their lockers *with the lock securely fastened*. Nothing should be placed on top of a Chromebook stored in a locker. **After school hours, students should take Chromebooks home and fully charge them. Chromebook should be charged fully each night at the student's home.** Chromebooks should *never* be stored in a vehicle and they cannot be left at school overnight.

Chromebooks Left in Unsecured Areas:

Under no circumstance should a Chromebook be stored in unsupervised areas. Unsupervised areas include the school grounds and campus, the cafeteria, unlocked classrooms, the farmhouse, hallways, bathrooms, extracurricular bus, in a car, or any other entity that is not securely locked or in which there is not supervision.

Repairing or Replacing Your Chromebook:

Loaner Chromebooks may be issued to students when they leave their Chromebook for repair. A \$10 charge will be assessed to replace the first broken. Each additional screen will be charged \$40. If repair is needed due to malicious damage, the school may refuse to provide a loaner Chromebook. Repaired Chromebooks will end up with the original factory image as first received. It is important that students keep their school data synced to cloud drives so documents and class projects will not be lost. Personal information that cannot be replaced should be kept at home on an external storage device. Students and parents will be charged for Chromebook damage that is a result of misuse or abusive handling. The school is not responsible for damages due to liquid spills.

Return/Check-In of Chromebooks:

Chromebooks will be returned during final checkout on the last day of class. If your Chromebook, case, and/or AC power adapter has been damaged or defaced, you will be fined respectively for the damage at the end of the year during student laptop check-in. If a student Chromebook is not returned during year-end check-in, the administration will be in charge of seeing this equipment is returned in a timely manner. If the administration is not successful, this matter will be turned over to local law enforcement and the student's grade reports/ transcripts will be withheld.

Common Ground High School will cover most of the damages and malfunctions to the student laptops through the laptop’s warranty and/or accidental damage protection. However, students might be charged a fee based on the cost of the parts needing replacement if the Technology Department and/or Administration upon inspection determines that there is intentional damage or being negligent with the use and care of the laptop. All student repair charges will be as listed below. Lost items such as carrying cases, cords and Chromebooks will be charged the actual replacement cost. Example costs are:

Estimated Costs

Chromebook	\$200.00
Chromebook Screen (1- time)	\$10.00
Chromebook Screen (each additional)	\$40.00
“Shell” of Chromebook (covered in stickers or defaced)	\$25.00
Damaged Keyboard	\$25.00
Charger	\$25.00

**One-to-One Chromebook Program 2025-2026
Policy and Pledge**

- I will take good care of my Chromebook and know that I will be issued the same Chromebook each year.
- I will never leave my Chromebook unattended in an unsecured or unsupervised location.
- I will never loan out my Chromebook to other individuals.
- I will know where my Chromebook is at all times.
- I will charge my Chromebook’s battery to full capacity each night.
- I will keep food and beverages away from my Chromebook since they may cause damage to the device.
- I will not disassemble any part of my Chromebook or attempt any repairs.
- I will protect my Chromebook by always carrying it in a secure manner to avoid damage.
- I will use my Chromebook in ways that are appropriate for education.
- I will not place decorations (stickers, markers, writing, etc.) on the Chromebook.
- I understand that the Chromebook I am issued is subject to inspection at any time without notice and remains the property of Common Ground High School.
- I will follow the policies outlined in the Chromebook Policy Handbook and the District Acceptable Use Policy while at school as well as outside the school day.
- I will be responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse.
- I understand that violations in Acceptable Use or any policy or law regarding computer usage will result in progressive limitations of network usage and parental notification
- I agree to pay the full replacement cost of my Chromebook, power cord/charger, in the event that any of these items are lost or intentionally damaged.
- If leased I agree to return the Chromebook, power cord/charger in good working condition at the end of each school year.

Staff Emails

Jamila Abou Khadra	jamila.aboukhadra@commongroundct.org
Arianna Alamo	arianna.alamo@commongroundct.org
Rosana Anoh	rosana.anoh@commongroundct.org
Kathleen Bergman	kathleen.bergman@commongroundct.org
Michell Brito	michell.brito@commongroundct.org
Amanda Byam	amanda.byam@commongroundct.org
Jonathan Carney	jcarney@commongroundct.org
Paul Clare	paul.clare@commogroundct.org
Beth Czar	beth.czar@commongroundct.org
Jared Dennehy	jared.dennehy@commongroundct.org
Jane DiPalma	jane.dipalma@commongroundct.org
Sarah Field	sarah.field@commongroundct.org
Monique Frasier	monique.frasier@commongroundct.org
Candi Fulcher	candi.fulcher@commongroundct.org
Juan Carlos Galarza	juan.galarza@commongroundct.org
Denis Granado	denis.granado@commongroundct.org
Evan Green	egreen@commongroundct.org
Deborah Greig	deborah.grieg@commongroundct.org
Rachel Haymann	rachel.haymann@commongroundct.org
Rebecca Holcombe	rholcombe@commongroundct.org
Iris Jimenez	ijimenez@commongroundct.org
Diane Litwin	diane.litwin@commongroundct.org
Christina Magnuson	christina.magnuson@commongroundct.org
Antoine Merritt	antoine.merritt@commongroundct.org
Nuria Miller	nuria.miller@commongroundct.org
Marisa Misbach	marisa.misbach@commongroundct.org
Melvin Morales	mmorales@commongroundct.org
Gamaliel Moses	gamaliel.moses@commongroundct.org
Dana Perry	dana.perry@commongroundct.org
Rachel Sharnick	rachel.sharnick@commongroundct.org
Miriam Sheffield	msheffield@commongroundct.org
Jeremy Stone	jstone@commongroundct.org
Dr. Shanequa Sturgis-Nash	shanequa.sturgis-nash@commongroundct.org
Joel Tolman	jtolman@commongroundct.org
Ericka Toney	ericka.toney@commongroundct.org
Samantha Townsend Lucero	samantha.townsend.lucero@commongroundct.org
Jessica Weimann	jessica.weimann@commongroundct.org
Thea Williams	fwilliams@commongroundct.org

Appendix A

Common Ground High School Safe School Climate Plan

A. Publication of the Prohibition against Bullying and Teen Dating Violence and Related Procedures

The prohibition against bullying and teen dating violence shall be publicized by including the following statement in the student handbook:

“Bullying behavior and teen dating violence by any student in Common Ground High School is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. “Bullying” means 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 at another student attending school in the same district that:

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

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, gender identity, or physical mental, 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. “Teen dating violence” means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing, and threatening, that occurs between two students who are currently in or who have recently been in a dating relationship.

Students who engage in any act of bullying or teen dating violence, 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 the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting may be subject to disciplinary consequences if such bullying or teen dating violence:

1. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
2. infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
3. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior or teen dating violence and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying or teen dating violence to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior or teen dating violence will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process.

B. Appropriate School Personnel

All school employees are charged with the responsibility of taking reports of bullying and teen dating violence or, if witnessing acts of bullying or teen dating violence, to notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another administrator when the Safe School Climate Specialist is not available. Reports shall be appropriately investigated by the Safe School Climate Specialist or another administrator when the Safe School Climate Specialist is not available.

Common Ground High School Safe School Climate Coordinator

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

1. Implement the School's Safe School Climate Plan;
2. Collaborate with safe school climate specialists, the Board, and the Director to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying and teen dating violence in school;
3. Provide data and information derived from the safe school climate assessments, in collaboration with the Director, to the Department of Education; and
4. Meet with the Safe School Climate Specialist at least twice during the school year to discuss bullying and teen dating violence issues in the district and make recommended changes to the School's safe school climate plan.

Safe School Climate Specialist

For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school year thereafter, each school Director shall serve, or designate someone to serve, as the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school.

The Specialist in each school shall:

1. Investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying and teen dating violence in the school in accordance with the Common Ground High School's Safe School Climate Plan;
2. Collect and maintain records of reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in the school; and
3. Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying and dating violence reports in the school.

Safe School Climate Specialist:
Shanequa Sturgis-Nash, Assistant Director
(203) 389-0823
Shanequa.sturgis-nash@commongroundct.org

District Safe School Climate Coordinator:
Monique Frasier, School Director
(203) 389-0823
monique.frasier@commongroundct.org

C. Annual Notification of the Complaint Process

The process by which students may make formal, informal, and anonymous complaints as set forth below shall be publicized annually in the student handbook. In addition, this Safe School Climate Plan shall be placed on the School website.

D. Formal Written Complaints

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file written reports of conduct that they consider to be bullying or teen dating violence. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying or teen dating violence including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, or teen dating violence and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school employee, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator, if the Safe School specialist is unavailable, for review and action in accordance with Section IV below.

E. Informal/Verbal Complaints by Students

Students may make an informal complaint of conduct that they consider to be bullying or teen dating violence by verbal report to the Safe School Climate Specialist, or to any school employee, as defined, or administrator. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying or teen dating violence, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying or teen dating violence, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school employee, or administrator or the Safe School Climate Specialist who receives an informal complaint shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the information provided. Such written report by the school employee, administrator, if not the Safe School Climate Specialist, shall be promptly forwarded to the Director for review and action in accordance with Section IV below.

F. Anonymous Complaints

Students who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school employee who receives the complaint. Should anonymity be requested, the Safe School Climate Specialist, if not the Director 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 or teen dating violence. No disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

IV. Staff Responsibilities and Intervention Strategies

A. Teachers and Other School Staff

School employees who witness acts of bullying or teen dating violence as defined above, or who receive reports of bullying or teen dating violence shall promptly notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable, not later than one school day after such employee witnesses or receives a report of bullying or teen dating violence. A written report must be filed not later than two school days after making such an oral report concerning the events witnessed or reported.

School employees who receive student or parent reports of suspected bullying or teen dating violence shall promptly notify the Safe School Climate Specialist of such report(s).

If the report is a formal, written complaint, such complaint shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable.

If the report is an informal complaint by a student that is received by a school employee, they shall prepare a succinct written report of the informal complaint, which shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the Safe School Climate Specialist or another school administrator if the Safe School Climate Specialist is unavailable. The employee shall also verbally report the matter to the Safe School Climate Specialist not later than the next school day.

In addition to addressing both informal and formal complaints, school employees and other are encouraged to address the issue of bullying and teen dating violence in other interactions with students. Teachers and other professionals may find opportunities to educate students about bullying and teen dating violence and help eliminate bullying behavior and teen dating violence through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially-appropriate behavior. All school employees including teachers and other professional employees should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating or intimidating another student, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of “bullying” or teen dating violence.

B. Responsibilities of the Safe School Climate Specialist

1. Investigation

The Safe School Climate Specialist shall be promptly notified of any formal or informal complaint of suspected bullying or teen dating violence received by any school employee. The Safe School Climate Specialist shall investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying or teen dating violence in the school in accordance with the School’s Safe School Climate Plan. The investigation must be completed promptly after the receipt by the Safe School Climate Specialist of any written report. In order to allow the school to adequately investigate all formal complaints, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied or victimized by teen dating violence will be asked to complete a consent form that allows the school to release that student’s name to those third parties who the school contacts as part of its investigation of that complaint with regard. In the investigation of informal complaints, the parent of the student suspected of being bullied or victimized by teen dating violence will also be asked to complete a consent form as long as that student has not requested anonymity. A written report of the investigation shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of bullying or teen dating violence were verified, and, when acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

The school shall notify parents or guardians of all students involved in a verified act of bullying or teen dating violence not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation. The notice shall be simultaneously mailed to the parent/guardian with whom the student primarily resides and in the case of a divorced/split situation, to the other parent/guardian if requested.

The notice will describe the school's response, measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety of the students against whom such act was directed, and any consequences that may result from further acts of bullying or teen dating violence.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complainant. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

2. Remedial Actions

Verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence shall result in intervention by the Director or his/her designee that is intended to address the acts of the perpetrator and the needs of the victim and to assure that the prohibition against bullying behavior and teen dating violence is enforced, with the goal of ending such bullying behavior or teen dating violence. Bullying behavior and teen dating violence can take many forms and can vary dramatically in severity and potential impact on the victim and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying" or "teen dating violence" as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying or teen dating violence, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (detention, in-school suspension; suspension or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the Director (or responsible program administrator or his/her designee.) No disciplinary action may be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.

The following sets forth permissible interventions for building principals (or other administrators) to enforce the Board's prohibition against bullying and teen dating violence.

a. Non-disciplinary Interventions

When verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence are identified early and/or when such verified acts of bullying or teen dating violence do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of bullying and teen dating violence and their prohibition, and students' duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered bullying or teen dating violence.

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

In any instance in which bullying or teen dating violence are verified, the Director (or other responsible program administrator) shall invite the parents or guardians of the student against whom such act was directed, and the parents or guardians of a student who commits any verified act of bullying or teen dating violence to separate meetings to communicate to such parents

or guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying or teen dating violence.

b. Disciplinary Interventions

When acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Anonymous complaints that are not otherwise verified, however, shall not be the basis for disciplinary action. In-school suspension and suspension may be imposed only after informing the accused perpetrator of the reasons for the proposed suspension and giving him/her an opportunity to explain the situation, in accordance with the Board's Student Discipline policy.

Expulsion may be imposed only after a hearing before the Board of Education, a committee of the Board or an impartial hearing officer designated by the Board of Education in accordance with Board policy. This consequence shall be reserved for serious incidents of bullying or teen dating violence and/or when past interventions have not been successful in eliminating bullying behavior or teen dating violence.

c. Interventions for Students Bullied or Victimized by Teen Dating Violence

The Safe School Climate Specialist/Director (or other responsible program administrator) or his/her designee shall intervene in order to address repeated incidents of bullying or teen dating violence against a single individual. Intervention strategies for a bullied student or student victimized by teen dating violence may include the following:

- Counseling;
- Increased supervision and monitoring of student to observe and intervene in bullying/teen dating violence situations;
- Encouragement of student to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization;
- Peer mediation where appropriate.

V. General Prevention and Intervention Strategies

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying or teen dating violence and direct intervention when acts of bullying or teen dating violence are verified, other school actions may ameliorate any potential problem with bullying or teen dating violence in school or at school sponsored activities. A focus will be placed on school efforts to improve school climate based upon the National School Climate Standards.

While no specific action is required and school needs for such interventions may vary from time to time, the following list of potential intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators, teachers and other professional staff members in each school:

- a. 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 and teen dating violence including any such program identified by the Department of Education;
- b. A safe school climate assessment on or after July 1, 2012 and biennially thereafter to determine the prevalence of bullying and teen dating violence.

- c. Establishment by the school Director of a Safe School Climate Committee or the designation of an existing committee that is responsible for fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues related to bullying and teen dating violence in the school.

The Safe School Climate Committee shall:

1. Receive copies of completed reports following investigations of bullying and teen dating violence;
 2. Identify and address patterns of bullying and teen dating violence among students in the school;
 3. Review and amend school policies relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
 4. Review and make recommendation to the Common Ground High School Safe School Climate Coordinator regarding the School's Safe Climate Plan based on issues and experiences specific to the school;
 5. Educate students, school employees and parents and guardians of students on issues relating to bullying and teen dating violence;
 6. Collaborate with the Safe School Climate Coordinator in the collection of data regarding bullying and teen dating violence; and
 7. Perform any other duties as determined by the Director that are related to the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and school teen dating violence for the school. Parent members of the Safe School Climate Committee are excluded from activities #1 and #2 above and from any other committee activities that may compromise student confidentiality.
- d. Adequate adult supervision of outdoor areas, hallways, the lunchroom and other specific areas where bullying and teen dating violence are likely to occur;
 - e. Inclusion of grade-appropriate bullying and teen dating violence education and prevention curricula in grades 7-12;
 - f. Individual interventions with the perpetrator, parents and school employees, and interventions with the bullied student or the student victimized by teen dating violence, parents and school employees;
 - g. School-wide training related to safe school climate;
 - h. Promotion of parent involvement in bullying and teen dating violence prevention through individual or team participation in meetings, trainings and individual interventions;
 - i. Respectful responses to bullying and teen dating violence concerns raised by students, parents or staff;
 - j. Planned professional development programs addressing bully/victim and perpetrator of teen dating violence/victim problems;
 - k. Student peer training, education and support. Use of peers to help ameliorate the plight of victims and include them in group activities;
 - l. Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping (e.g., males need to be strong and tough);
 - m. Continuing awareness and involvement on the part of staff and parents with regards to prevention and intervention strategies;

- n. Modeling by all school employees of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students;
- o. Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others;
- p. Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

VI. Reporting Obligations

A. Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator

If after an investigation, acts of bullying or teen dating violence by a specific student are verified, not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation, the Director/Safe School Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall notify the parent or guardian of the perpetrator regarding the finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in such notification. In addition, the school shall invite the parent/guardian of a student who commits any verified act of bullying or teen dating violence (after the completion of the investigation) to a meeting to communicate to the parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety and measures being taken by the school to ensure the student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying and teen dating violence. Records will be maintained by the Director/Safe School Climate Specialist of the bullying and teen dating violence reports, subsequent investigations and parental/guardian meetings.

B. Reports to the Targeted Student and his/her Parent or Guardian

If after an investigation, acts of bullying or teen dating violence against a specific student are verified, the Director/Safe Climate Specialist or his/her designee shall notify the parent or guardian of the victim of such finding, not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the completion of the investigation. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such bullying or teen dating violence. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the perpetrator, as reflected in the student's educational records, shall not be disclosed to the parents or guardian of the victim, except as provided by law (e.g., court order/subpoena).

In addition, the school shall invite the parent/guardian of the student against whom the verified act of bullying or teen dating violence was directed, after the completion of the investigation, to a meeting to communicate to the parents/guardians the measures being taken by the school to ensure the safety and measures being taken by the school to ensure the targeted student's safety and to prevent further acts of bullying or teen dating violence. Records will be maintained by the Director/Safe School Climate Specialist of the bullying and teen dating violence reports, subsequent investigations and parental/guardian meetings.

C. List of Verified Acts of Bullying/Teen Dating Violence

The School Director/Safe School Climate Specialist of each school shall establish a procedure to document and maintain records relating to reports and investigations of bullying and teen dating violence in such school and maintain a list of the number of verified acts of bullying and teen dating violence in the school, and this list shall be available for public inspection upon request. The list shall be reported annually to the Department of Education in such manner as prescribed by the Commissioner of

Education. Given that any determination of bullying involves repeated acts over time, each report prepared in accordance with Section V (B) (1) above that includes verified acts of bullying shall be tallied as one verified act of bullying unless the specific actions that are the subject of the report involve separate and distinct acts of bullying. The list shall be limited to the number of such verified acts of bullying and teen dating violence in the school, and it shall not set out the particulars of each verified act, including but not limited to any personally identifiable student information, which is confidential information by law.

VII. Prohibition against Discrimination and Retaliation

A. Safety

Discrimination and/or retaliation against any person who reports bullying or teen dating violence or provides information during an investigation of an act of bullying or teen dating violence, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying or teen dating violence is prohibited. The continuation and perpetuation of bullying or teen dating violence against a student through the dissemination of hurtful or demeaning material by any other student is prohibited. The Common Ground High School will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, teen dating violence, discrimination or retaliation in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school related activities. All reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, teen dating violence, discrimination and retaliation will be investigated promptly and prompt action will be taken to end that behavior and restore the student's against whom such bullying or teen dating violence was directed (target's) sense of safety. This commitment is to be supported in all aspects of the school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement. Before formally investigating the allegations of bullying, teen dating violence, discrimination or retaliation, the Director/Safe School Climate Specialist or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged student against whom such bullying or teen dating violence was directed (target) and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but are not limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the alleged victim (target) and/or the alleged perpetrator in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the alleged student against whom such bullying or teen dating violence was directed (target); and altering the alleged perpetrator's schedule and access to the alleged target.

The School Director/Safe School Climate Specialist will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The School Director/Safe School Climate Specialist will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying, teen dating violence or retaliation a student who has reported bullying, teen dating violence or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying, teen dating violence or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying, teen dating violence or retaliation.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Director/Safe School climate specialist or designee will contact the victim to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If

determined necessary, the Director/Safe School Climate Specialist will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

B. Law Enforcement Notification

The School Director or his/her designee shall notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when such Director or his/her designee believes any acts of bullying or teen dating violence constitute criminal conduct.

VIII. Training Requirements for School Staff

- A.** Certified and Non Certified staff shall be provided in-service training on the prevention, identification and response to school bullying and teen dating violence and the prevention of and response to youth suicide.
 - i. Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying and teen dating violence among students in school and outside the school setting.
 - ii. Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate and effective interventions to stop bullying and teen dating violence,
 - iii. Information regarding the interaction and relationship between students committing acts of bullying or teen dating violence students against whom such acts of bullying or teen dating violence are directed and witnesses of such acts of bullying or teen dating violence,
 - iv. Research findings on bullying and teen dating violence, such as information about the types of students who have been shown to be at-risk for bullying or teen dating violence in the school setting,
 - v. Information about the incidence and nature of cyberbullying as defined in C.G.S. 10-222d, or vi. Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.
- B.** Beginning teachers shall satisfactorily complete instructional modules as required by C.G.S. 10-145a which shall include a module in classroom management and climate, which shall include training regarding the prevention, identification, and response to school bullying and teen dating violence and the prevention of and response to youth suicide.

IX. Notification Requirements

- A.** A copy of this School's Safe School Climate Plan shall be provided in written or electronic format to all school employees annually at the beginning of each school year.
- B.** The School's Safe School Climate Plan shall be made available on the school's website. Such posting shall occur within thirty (30) days of the approval of such plan by the Board.
- C.** The Common Ground High School Safe School Climate Plan shall be included in the school's publication of the rules, procedures and standards of conduct for schools and in all student handbooks.

X. School Climate Assessments

- A.** On or after July 1, 2012, and biennially thereafter, the Board requires the school to complete a climate assessment instruments, including surveys, approved and disseminated by the State Department of Education.
- B.** Completed assessments shall be shared with the Board and then submitted by the Board to the State Department of Education.

XI. Bullying/Teen Dating Violence Through the Use of Technology (Cyberbullying)

An emerging form of bullying and teen dating violence is the use of technology to threaten, intimidate, ridicule, humiliate, insult, or harass. Technology enables aggressive expression toward others and does not rely on physical strength or physical contact. By using a cell phone or the Internet, a student can quickly and aggressively spread rumors, threats, hate mail, or embarrassing photos through text messages, e-mails, or instant messages. There are a number of social networking sites (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) available to our students that can be misused and/or abused for bullying or teen dating violence purposes. Any alleged misuse or abuse must be reported to any staff member or the Safe School Climate Specialist.

The School's discipline policy states that misuse, on or off campus, of electronic devices, for threatening/bullying/hazing, harassment or committing teen dating violence is a violation and can be the basis for discipline on or off campus. When information is received that a student or students are involved in bullying or teen dating violence through the use of technology either as the actor or a member of a group, or the victim, the following will be considered:

- If it takes place on campus or at a school sponsored event, disciplinary action will be taken.
- If it takes place off campus a school may take disciplinary action if the incident poses a likelihood of substantial disruption to the educational process or the day-to-day operations of the school.

Appendix B

School Board Policies, Regulations and Bylaws

5145.5(a)

Students

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of Common Ground High School to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment. The school therefore prohibits any form of sexual harassment in the workplace and school buildings, or at school-sponsored activities and events where staff and/or students are in contact with each other.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee of the district to harass a student or an employee through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined by this policy or as prohibited by law.

The school will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual harassment and to discipline any student or employee who sexually harasses a student or employee of the school.

Definitions and Examples

A. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical contact or communication of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining or retaining employment; or
- Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment or education; or
- The conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment or education environment.

Any sexual harassment as defined herein when perpetrated upon a student or staff member shall be treated as sexual harassment under this policy.

B. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to:

- Verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity
- Inappropriate or unwelcome touching, patting, or pinching of a sexual nature
- Intentional brushing against a student's or an employee's body

Students

Sexual Harassment (continued)

Definitions and Examples (continued)

- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or educational status.
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status.
- Use of sexually or gender degrading words or comments, verbal or written (ex., graffiti)
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, or use of sexually suggestive or obscene remarks, invitations, letters, emails, text messages, notes, slurs, jokes, pictures, cartoons, epithets or gestures in the school, at school grounds, or sponsored events.
- Transmitting or displaying emails or websites of a sexual nature.
- Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.

In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the school shall consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the sexual advances, relationships between the parties involved, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constituted sexual harassment requires a determination based upon all facts and surrounding circumstances.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods, documents, or interviews deemed pertinent by the investigator.

In addition, the school may take immediate steps at its discretion, to protect the complainant and/or other students and employees pending completion of an investigation of alleged sexual harassment.

The investigating party shall make a final written report, which shall include a recommendation as to the validity of the complaint, to the Director and the District Title IX Compliance Officer upon completion of the investigation, but no later than (30) days from the initial receipt of the complaint. If the Director is the subject of the complaint, the final report shall be submitted to the District Title IX Compliance Officer and the School Board of Education

Students

Sexual Harassment (continued)

School District Action

Upon receipt of the final written report, the Director or his/her designee shall take appropriate action based upon the results of the investigation. If the Director is the subject of the complaint, such action shall be taken by the Board of Education.

The result of the investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures shall be reported to the complainant and the accused by the Director or his/her designee. If the Director is the subject of the complaint, such report shall be made to the Title X Compliance Officer. The report shall document any disciplinary action taken as a result of the complaint.

The school may take disciplinary action against any person found to have maliciously filed a false complaint.

Reprisal Prohibited

The school will discipline any individual who retaliates against any person who reports alleged sexual harassment or who retaliates against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in the investigation, proceeding, or hearing related to a sexual harassment complaint. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

Right to Alternate Complaint Procedures

These procedures do not deny or limit the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse which may include filing charges with the State Department of Human Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, initiating civil action or seeking redress under the State Criminal Statutes and/or Federal Law.

Discipline

Any school district action taken pursuant to this policy will be consistent with the requirement of applicable bargaining agreements, state law and school district policies. The school district shall take the disciplinary action it deems necessary and appropriate to end sexual harassment and to prevent its recurrence. Such disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, the issuance of a warning, reprimand, counseling, suspension, or discharge.

Legal Reference: Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, 42 U.S.C. §2000-e2(a).

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Policy Guidance (N-915.035) on Current Issues of Sexual Harassment, effective 10/15/88.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 34 CFR Section 106.

Meritor Savings Bank. FSB v. Vinson, 477 U.S. 57 (1986)

Students

Sexual Harassment

Legal Reference (continued)

Faragher v. City of Boca Raton, No. 97-282 (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26, 1998)

Burlington Industries, Inc. v. Ellerth, No. 97-569, (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26, 1998)

Gebbs v. Lago Vista Indiana School District, No. 99-1866, (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26, 1998)

Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, No. 97-843 (U.S. Supreme Court, May 24, 1999).

Connecticut General Statutes

46a-60 Discriminatory employment practices prohibited.

Constitution of the State of Connecticut, Article I, Section 20.

Regulation

Students

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is prohibited in the school system. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to:

- Verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity
- Inappropriate or unwelcomed touching, patting, or pinching of a sexual nature
- Intentional brushing against a student's or an employee's body
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or educational status.
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status.
- Use of sexually or gender degrading words or comments, verbal or written (ex., graffiti)
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, or use of sexually suggestive or obscene remarks, invitations, letters, emails, text messages, notes, slurs, jokes, pictures, cartoons, epithets or gestures in the school, at school grounds, or sponsored events.
- Transmitting or displaying emails or websites of a sexual nature.
- Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.

Complaint Procedure

1. As soon as a student feels that they have been subjected to sexual harassment, they should make a written complaint to the Director or his/her designee. The student will be provided a copy of this policy and regulation and made aware of his or her rights.
2. If a student makes a complaint or allegation of sexual harassment to another trusted adult in the school, that adult should forward the allegation to the Director. If the complaint or allegation concerns the School Administrators, the complaint/allegation should be forwarded to the District Title IX Compliance Director.
3. The complaint should state the:
 - A. Name of the complainant

Students

Sexual Harassment (continued)

- B. Date of the complaint,
 - C. Date of the alleged harassment,
 - D. Name or names of the harasser or harassers,
 - E. Location where such harassment occurred,
 - F. Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment.
4. Any student who makes an oral complaint of harassment will be provided a copy of this regulation and will be assisted in making a complaint pursuant to the above procedure.
 5. If the complainant is a minor student, the person to whom the complaint is given should consider whether a child abuse report should be completed.
 6. If possible, within five (5) working days of receipt of the complaint, the Director or designee handling the complaint shall commence an effective, thorough, objective and complete investigation of the complaint. The investigator shall consult with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the student and the alleged harasser, any witnesses to the conduct, and victims of similar conduct that the investigator reasonably believes may exist. The investigation shall be free of stereotypical assumptions about either party. The investigation shall be carried on discretely, maintaining confidentiality insofar as possible while still conducting an effective and thorough investigation. Throughout the entire investigative process, the due process rights of the alleged harasser will be upheld.
 7. The investigator shall make a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and proposed disposition of the matter, and shall provide copies to the complainant, the alleged harasser, and, as appropriate, to all others directly concerned.
 8. If the student complainant or alleged perpetrator is dissatisfied with the findings of the investigation, they may file a written appeal within fifteen (15) calendar days to the District Title IX Compliance Officer, or, if they conducted the investigation, to the Board of Education, who shall review the District Title IX Compliance Officer or designee's written report, the information collected by the District Title IX Compliance Officer or designee together with the recommended disposition of the complaint to determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or sex discrimination. The District Title IX Compliance Officer or Board of Education may determine if further action and/or investigation is warranted. After completing this review, the District Title IX Compliance Officer or Board of Education shall respond to the complainant, in writing, within fifteen (15) school days following the receipt of the written request for review.

If after a thorough investigation, there is reasonable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred, the school shall take all reasonable actions to ensure that the harassment ceases and will not

Students

Sexual Harassment (continued)

recur. Actions taken in response to allegations of harassment may include reassignment, transfer, or disciplinary action.

The harasser and any other students or employees, if appropriate, will be informed that appropriate action shall be taken if further acts of harassment or retaliation occur. If further acts of harassment or retaliation do occur, appropriate action shall be taken.

If a sex discrimination complaint raises a concern about bullying behavior, the District Title IX Compliance Officer shall notify the Safe School Climate Specialist or designee who shall coordinate any bullying investigation with the District Title IX Compliance Officer, so as to ensure that any such bullying investigation complies with the requirements of applicable Board policies.

At any time, a complainant alleging sex discrimination or sexual harassment may file a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109-0111 (TELEPHONE NUMBER (617) 289-0111).

Copies of this regulation will be distributed to all students.

The District Title IX Compliance Officer for Common Ground High School is

Monique Frasier
School Director
(203) 389-4333
monique.frasier @commongroundct.org

The Building Title IX Compliance Officer is

Shanequa Sturgis-Nash
Assistant Director
(203) 389-4333 ext. 1303
shanequa.sturgis.nash@nhep.com

Copies of this regulation will be distributed to all students.

Appendix C

TO: Juniors, Seniors, Parents and Guardians
FROM: Common Ground High School
RE: Parking Registration/Privileges

In order to be considered for a parking permit, a Student Vehicle Parking registration form, Vehicle Rules and Regulations Form, and Million Mile Pledge Form, must be submitted together with:

- 1. A photo-copy of your proof of insurance card and...**
- 2. A photo-copy of your current driver's license.**

The non-refundable cost of the permit, to be paid at the time of registration is:
\$20.00
\$10.00 for replacement

A parking permit ***may*** be assigned based on availability or other factors. This permit must be hung from the rearview mirror with the numbered side visible from the outside of the car at all times when parking on Campus in your assigned parking space.

NOTE: You will forfeit your parking space if you let someone else use your parking permit. Vehicles not displaying a parking permit that are found on Campus during school hours are subject to towing at the owners expense!

Please Remember:
Parking on campus is a privilege, not a right. The Administration may revoke this privilege at any time if there are any violations of School Policies.

STUDENT VEHICLE PARKING REGISTRATION FORM

Students who are licensed drivers may drive to school after the following conditions are met:

1. Must have of valid Connecticut Driver's license.
2. Obtain parent/guardian permission as indicated by their signature below.
3. Complete this form. Submit form to the Main Office/Business Office together with a photo-copy of your current proof of insurance card and photo-copy of driver's license.
4. Purchase a Common Ground High School permit, available at the Main Office at a cost of \$20.00. The permit must be hung from the rearview mirror with the numbered side visible from the outside of the car. Replacement cost for lost permit is \$10.00.
5. If other vehicles are driven to school, register vehicle below at no additional charge.
6. Park only in the assigned parking space. Drive in a safe, courteous manner on and around school grounds. Please refer to student handbook and adhere to the driving/parking regulations and corresponding consequences for violations.

I understand that failure to comply with driving/parking regulations will result in suspension or revocation of my driving privileges, my parking fee is non-refundable and/or my vehicle being towed at the owner's expense for any violations.

Print name _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Student Name

I give permission for my child to drive to Common Ground High School. I will review the High School parking/driving regulations and consequences for violating the regulations which are stated in the student handbook, with my child. I understand that if my child violates these regulations my child's right to operate a vehicle on school grounds may be suspended or revoked and the parking fee will be non-refundable.

Print name _____

Parent/Guardian

Signed _____ Date _____

Parent/ Guardian

Name of Student Driver: _____ Grade: _____ DOB: _____

Driver's license number: _____ Date obtained driver's license _____

Name of car owner: _____ Relationship _____

Address of car owner: _____

Make of car:#1 _____ Make of car:#2 _____

Model of car _____ Model of car _____

Marker plate# _____ Marker plate# _____

Color of car:#1 _____ Color of car:#2 _____

Year: _____ Year: _____

Insurance Company: _____ Insurance Company: _____

THIS FORM MUST BE FULLY COMPLETED WHEN SUBMITTED WITH A COPY OF THE VEHICLE INSURANCE FORM

Vehicle Rules and Regulations:

- Every student driver must comply with Connecticut's Graduated Driver Licensing laws including the nighttime restrictions, passenger restrictions, and they must wear a seat belt. If any of these regulations are violated, the student driver will be subject to any consequences of the law. At 18 years of age, the nighttime restrictions and passenger restrictions are lifted.
- Any speeding, reckless driving, racing, or possession of drugs or alcohol will result in immediate suspension penalty.
- Parking is permitted only in the areas designated for students.
- A parking permit must be visible in the vehicle at all times.
- Students are not allow to visit their vehicles during the day unless given permission by an administrator.
- In the event that a student's car is involved in an accident on school property, an administrator must be notified immediately, who will notify the police department.
- If there are any changes regarding the student's vehicle, an administrator must be notified.
- Students are not allowed to share or lend their parking permits to other students.
- Failure to comply with any of these guidelines will result in loss of parking privileges.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Million Mile Pledge

We agree to abide by and/or enforce the following rules for drivers and passengers on our School Campus, as well as every time we drive or ride in a vehicle.

As a Driver:

- _____ Every passenger riding with me will wear a seatbelt at all times.
- _____ As a driver, I will not touch my cell phone, or even look at it while driving. If I feel that I need to check it I will pull over to a safe location first.
- _____ I will not transport passengers until I am legal to do so.
- _____ I will not drive between 11:00pm and 5am until I am legal to do so, unless there is some special circumstance like Safe Rides or work.
- _____ I will go the speed of traffic and will not drive with excessive speed.
- _____ I will not allow anyone to bring or use alcohol or drugs in my vehicle.
- _____ I will not drive after drinking, smoking marijuana, or taking pills.
- _____ I will call for a ride if I get into an unsafe situation, or if I am otherwise stuck.

As a Passenger:

- _____ I will buckle up in every vehicle in which I am a passenger, I will make sure that everyone else buckles up too, or I will walk.
- _____ I will say something to the driver if the driver is going too fast for road conditions, driving recklessly, or using their cellphone.
- _____ I will not be a distraction to the driver by being too loud, asking the driver to look at something other than the road, or encouraging the driver to do anything stupid.
- _____ I will call for a ride if I get into an unsafe situation, or if I am otherwise stuck.

Student & Parent/Guardian Sign Below:

Student _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Appendix D

Nondiscrimination Policy and Notice

Pursuant to Title IX and its regulations (“Final Rule” released on April 19, 2024), the Board of Directors has adopted and implemented a policy stating that the Common Ground District does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity it operates, including admission and employment.

Common Ground High School does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, status as a veteran, status as a victim of domestic violence, marital status, pregnancy or related conditions, national origin, protective hairstyles, alienage, ancestry, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law and prohibits discrimination, including harassment, in any education program or activity it operates.

The Board shall provide protections from all forms of sex-based harassment, including sexual violence and unwelcome sex-based conduct that creates a hostile environment by limiting or denying a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from a school’s education program or activity.

The Common Ground District shall take prompt and effective action to end any sex discrimination in its education programs or activities to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of sex discrimination complaints, prevent recurrence, and remedy its effects. To that end, the District shall act promptly and effectively in response to information about conduct that reasonably may constitute discrimination, including sexual violence and other forms of sex-based harassment. The district shall also ensure that all school employees are trained about their obligations to address sex discrimination and their obligations to notify or provide contact information for the Title IX Coordinator.

The Common Ground Board of Directors Non-discrimination policy includes protections for students, employees, and applicants against discrimination based on pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, lactation, related medical conditions, or recovery from these conditions and shall provide reasonable modifications for students based on pregnancy or related conditions, allow for lactation for employees, and access to a clean, private lactation space for students and employees.

Common Ground shall not disclose personally identifiable information obtained through complying with Title IX, with limited exceptions, such as when there had been prior written consent or when the information is disclosed to the parent of a minor.

Retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, makes a report of harassment or discrimination, files a complaint of harassment or discrimination, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation or grievance process is also a violation of Common Ground District’s non-discrimination policy and is prohibited.

P0521(b)

Nondiscrimination Policy and Notice (continued)

Common Ground High School shall notify *students, employees, parents, and others* of this policy and publish it widely. The Board recognizes that due to size and format restrictions of different publications, to ensure the broadest level of distribution, the Board shall publish a statement (Short Version) that the

District prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates and that individuals may report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator and provide a link to the “Long Version” of the non-discrimination notice on the District’s website.

Common Ground High School does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including admission and employment.

The Board of Directors has designated the following individual(s) to coordinate efforts to comply with and carry out its non-discrimination responsibilities under Title IX (2024’s “Final Rule,” applicable State laws, and court decisions). Questions regarding Common Ground’s non-discrimination commitments, as well as related laws, regulations, and policies, may be referred to this/these designated employee(s):

The School Board hereby designates Monique Frasier as the District Title IX Compliance Officer for Common Ground High School:

Monique Frasier
School Director
(203) 389-0823
monique.frasier@commongroundct.org

and Dr. Shanequa Sturgis-Nash as the Building Title IX Compliance Officer:

Shanequa Sturgis-Nash
Assistant Director
(203) 389-0823
shanequa.sturgis-nash@commongroundct.org

Common Ground High School is required not to discriminate on the basis of sex by Title IX and its implementing regulations. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the District’s Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, or both.

P0521(c)

Nondiscrimination Policy and Notice (continued)

The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights Contact Information:

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
Lyndon Baines Johnson Department of Education Bldg
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1100
OCR@ed.gov
800-421-3481

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to <https://www.commongroundct.org/about/policies/>. Any person may also report sex discrimination, including harassment, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

Grievance Procedure – For ADA, Section 504, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and other Civil Rights or Discrimination Issues

Step 1 – Reporting

A student, employee or third party who believes he/she has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy is encouraged to report the incident immediately to the School Director.

A school employee who suspects or is notified that a student has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to the School Director.

If School Administrators are the subject of the complaint, the student, employee or third party shall report the incident directly to the District Title IX Compliance Officer and School Board.

The complainant is encouraged to use the report form available from the Director, but oral complaints shall be acceptable.

Step 2 – Investigation

Upon receiving a complaint of discrimination, the Director shall immediately notify the District Title IX Compliance Officer, who shall then authorize the Director or his/her designee to investigate the complaint. If the Director is the subject of the complaint or is unable to conduct the investigation, the investigation will be undertaken by the District Title IX Compliance Officer.

The investigation may consist of individual interviews with the complainant, the accused and others with knowledge relative to the incident. Other information and materials relevant to the investigation may also be evaluated.

The obligation to conduct this investigation shall not be negated by the fact that a criminal investigation is pending or has been concluded.

Step 3 – Investigative Report

The Director or his/her designee' shall prepare a written report within fifteen (15) days, unless additional time to complete the investigation is required. If the Director is the subject of the investigation, the District Title IX Compliance Officer shall prepare the report. The report shall include a summary of the investigation, a determination of whether the complaint has been substantiated as factual and whether it is a violation of this policy, and a recommended disposition of the complaint.

Copies of the report shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, the District Title IX Compliance Officer, and School Building Title IX Compliance Officer.

Step 4 – School Action

If the investigation results in a finding that the complaint is factual and constitutes a violation of this policy, the school shall take prompt, corrective action to ensure that such conduct ceases and will not reoccur.

Disciplinary actions, in the case of students, shall be consistent with the school disciplinary practices, Board policies, administrative regulations, and state and federal laws.

Disciplinary actions, in the case of employees and third parties, shall be consistent with the Board policies, administrative regulations, state and federal laws, and applicable collective bargaining unit agreements.

Step 5 - Appeal Procedure

The complainant, is not satisfied with a finding of no violation of the policy or with the corrective action recommended in the investigative report, he/she may submit a written appeal to the District Title IX Compliance Officer within fifteen (15) days.

If the District Title IX Compliance Officer was the first investigator of the complaint, the appeal should be directed to the Board of Education.

The District Title IX Compliance Officer or Board of Education shall review the investigation and the investigative report and may also conduct an investigation.

0521(d)

Nondiscrimination

Grievance Procedure –For ADA, Section 504, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and other Civil Rights or Discrimination Issues (continued)

The District Title IX Compliance Officer or the Board shall prepare a written response to the appeal within fifteen (15) days. Copies of the response shall be provided to the complainant, the accused and the School Director who conducted the initial investigation.

- (cf. 4000.1 – Title IX)
- (cf. 4111 – Recruitment and Selection)
- (cf. 4111.1/4211.1 – Affirmative Action)
- (cf. 4118.11/4218.11 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 4118.112/4218.112 – Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace)
- (cf. 4118.113/4218.113 – Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.4 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.51 – Peer Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.52 – Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.6 – Student Grievance Procedure)
- (cf. 6121 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 6121.1 - Equal Educational Opportunity)

Legal Reference: Title VII, Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, et seq.
29 CFR 1604.11, EEOC Guidelines on Sex Discrimination.
Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.
Title IX Final Rule, May 6, 2020
Age Discrimination in Education Act, 29 U.S.C. §621
Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794
Title II of the Genetic Information Act of 2008
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000d et. Seq.
34 CFR Section 106.8(b), OCR Guidelines for Title IX.
Definitions, OCR Guidelines on Sexual Harassment, Fed. Reg. Vol 62, #49, 29 CFR Sec. 1606.8 (a) 62 Fed Reg. 12033 (March 13, 1997)
Page 73 of 78

1997) and 66 Fed. Reg. 5512 (January 19, 2001)
 20 U.S.C. 7905 (Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act)
Meritor Savings Bank. FSB v. Vinson, 477 U.S. 57 (1986)
Faragher v. City of Boca Raton, No. 97-282 (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26, 1998)
Gebbs v. Lago Vista Indiana School District, No. 99-1866, (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26, 1998)
Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, No. 97-843, (U.S. Supreme Court, May 24, 1999.)
 The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Act of 1974, as amended, 38U.S.C. §4212
 Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008
 Connecticut General Statutes
 46a-51 Definitions (as amended by PA 17-127, PA 21-2 and PA 22-82)
 46a-58 Deprivation of rights. Desecration of property. Placing of burning cross or noose on property. Penalty. (as amended by PA 17-127 and PA 22-82)
 46a-60 Discriminatory employment practices prohibited. (as amended by PA 17-127 and PA 21-69 and PA 22-82)
 46a-81a Discrimination on basis of sexual orientation: Definition
 10-15c Discrimination in public schools prohibited. School attendance by five-year olds. (Amended by P.A. 97-247 to include "sexual orientation" and P.A. 11-55 to include "gender identity or expression")
 10-153 Discrimination on account of marital status.
 17a-101 Protection of children from abuse.
 PA 17-127, An Act Concerning Discriminatory Practices Against Veterans, Leaves of Absence for National Guard Members...
 Public Law 111-256
Meacham v. Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory 128 S.Ct. 2395, 76 U.S.L.W. 4488 (2008)

P0521(e)

Mission – Goals – Objectives

Nondiscrimination

Legal Reference: (continued)

Federal Express Corporation v. Holowecki 128 S.Ct. 1147, 76 U.S.L.W. 4110 (2008)

Kentucky Retirement Systems v. EEOC 128 S.Ct. 2361, 76 U.S.L.W. 4503 (2008)

Sprint/United Management Co. v. Mendelsohn 128 S.Ct. 1140, 76 U.S.L.W. 4107 (2008)

Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia, 140 S.Ct. 1731, 2020 WL3146686
(June 15, 2020)

2024 Amendments to the U.S. Department of Education's Title IX
Regulations ("Final Rule")

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY STATEMENT

Common Ground is particularly eager for candidates who can help us to fulfill our commitment to building a racially and culturally diverse faculty and staff. Common Ground has a commitment to examining the intersection of social, environmental, and food justice issues; how systems of oppression, including white privilege, impact the organization's work; and how resistance to those systems can offer windows into a more sustainable society.

Common Ground is committed to the recruitment and retention of staff that is reflective of the communities we work with. We strongly encourage applicants from people of color, immigrants, women, people with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ community, people whose native language is something other than English, and other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

It has been the policy and will continue to be the strong commitment of the Common Ground and all contractors and subcontractors who do business with Common Ground to provide equal opportunities in employment to all qualified persons solely on the basis of job-related skills, ability and merit. Common Ground will continue to take Affirmative Action to ensure that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, mental disorder (present or past history thereof) age, physical disability (but not limited to blindness), marital status, intellectual disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and criminal record. Such action includes, but is not limited to, employment, promotion, demotion or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, professional development, attendance at conferences or other opportunities for advancement. Common Ground, its contractors and subcontractors will continue to make good faith efforts to comply with all federal and state laws and policies which speak to equal employment opportunity. The principles of Affirmative Action are addressed in the 13th,

14th, and 15th Amendments of the United States Constitution, Civil Rights Act of 1866, 1870, 1871, Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title VI and VII of the 1964 United States Civil Rights Act, Presidential Executive Order 11246, amended by 11375, (Non-discrimination under federal contracts)< Act 1, Section 1 and 20 of the Connecticut Constitution, Governor Grasso's Executive Order Number 11, Governor O'Neill's Executive Order 9, the Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Law (Sec. 46a-60-69) of the Connecticut General Statutes, Connecticut Code of Fair Practices (46a-7081), Deprivation of Civil Rights (46a-58(a)(d)), Public Accommodations Law (46a-63-64),

Discrimination against Criminal Offenders (46a-80), definition of Blind (46a-51(1)), definition of Physically Disabled (46a-51(15)), definition of Intellectual Disability (46a51(13)), cooperation with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (46a-77), Sexual Harassment (46a-60(a)-8), Connecticut Credit Discrimination Law (360436 through 439), Title I of the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972. This Affirmative Action Policy Statement re-affirms Common Ground's commitment to equity in the workplace and the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity

Contact at Common Ground: Elena Augusewitz, Director of Business and Administration, 358 Springside Ave., New Haven, CT 06515 (203) 389-4333.

Common Ground High School

2025-2026 Calendar / Calendario

Holidays/Recess	
Labor Day/Día del trabajo – Sept. 1	Three Kings Day/Día de los Tres Reyes – Jan./Enero 6
Rosh Hashanah/Rosh Hashaná – Sept. 23	M.L. King's Birthday/Natalicio de M. L. King – Jan./Enero 19
Yom Kippur/Yom Kipur – Oct. 2	February Recess/Receso de Feb.- Febrero 16-17
Indigenous People Day/Día de los Indígenas – Oct. 13	Eid al-Fitr/Eid al-Fitr – March/Marzo 20
Veteran's Day/Día del veterano – Nov. 11	Good Friday/Viernes Santo – Apr./Abril 3
Thanksgiving Recess/Receso de acción de gracias – Nov. 27-28	April Recess/Receso de Abril - Apr./Abril 13-17
Christmas Recess/Receso de Navidad – Dec./Dic. 24-31	Memorial Day/ Día de Conmemoración – May/Mayo 25
New Year's Day/Día de Año Nuevo - Jan./Enero 1	Juneteenth Observation/Día de Emancipación – June/Junio 19

182 STUDENT DAYS/DÍAS PARA LOS ESTUDIANTES
190 TEACHER DAYS/DÍAS PARA LOS MAESTROS

July/Julio					August/Agosto					September/Septiembre					October/Octubre				
M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F
										□	2	3	4	5			1	□	(3)s
										8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10
										15	16	17	18	19	□	14	15	16	17#
								(21)	(22)	22	□	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24
					(25)	(26)	(27)	28o	29o	29	30				27	28	29	30	31
									2					20					20
November/Noviembre					December/Diciembre					January/Enero					February/Febrero				
M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F
					1	2	3	4	5				□	2	2	3	4	5	6
3m	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	5	□	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13
10	□	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	□	□	(18)s	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	22	23#	□	□	□	□	20	21	22f	(23)s	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26#	□	□	□	□	□			26	27	28	29	30					
				17					17					18					17
March/Marzo					April/Abril					May/Mayo					June/Junio				
M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F	M	T	W	TH	F
2	3	4	5	6			1m	2	□					1	1	2	3	4	5
9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10#	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12
16	17	18	19	□	□	□	□	□	□	11	12	13	14	15	15#	16#	17#	18	□
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23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22					
30	31				27	28	29	30		□	26	27	28	29					14
				21					16					20					

Glyphs/Glifos		Important Dates/Fechas Importantes:	
()	Teacher's Day Only/Maestros Solamente	Student Orientation/Orientación para Estudiantes Aug./Agosto 28-29	
m	midterm report/Reporte Del Semestre	Fall Semester/ Semestre del Otoño: Aug./Agosto 28-Jan./Enero 22	
#	Early Dismissal/Salida Temprana, 12:00(no lunch/no almuerzo)	Midterm/Mitad de semestre: Nov. / Noviembre 3	
s	Staff Development Day/Día de Desarrollo de la Facultad	Parent/Teacher Conferences/Conferencia de Padres/Maestros Nov. 12 & 13	
f	End of Semester/Final Del Semestre	Spring Semester/Semestre de la Primavera: Jan./Enero 23-June/Junio 18	
G	Graduation/Graduación	Midterm/Mitad de semestre: Apr. / Abril 1	
□	No Classes/No Hay Clases	Parent/Teacher Conferences/Conferencia de Padres/Maestros April/ Abril 8 & 9	
o	Student Orientation (mandatory attendance)/Orientación de Estudiantes (atendencia es mandataria)		

School cancellation days to be reclaimed in the following order: Feb 17, April 13.
Any cancellations beyond the availability of those days will be extended into the month of June.



COMMON GROUND
HIGH • SCHOOL

New Haven, Connecticut 06515

Phone: 203.389.0823

Fax 203.389.7458

Email: cghs@commongroundct.org

Web: www.commongroundct.org