



Derby Board of Education – Health & Safety Sub-Committee

Derby Youth Service Bureau (YSB)

Presentation Summary

1. YSB Representation at the State Level

- Serves on multiple state boards/committees.
- Brings back best practices, resources, and legislative updates.
- Ensures Derby stays aligned with state youth development priorities.

2. Public Act 24-25: YSBs as School Officials

- New law formally recognizes YSBs as “school officials.”
- Allows improved data sharing and collaboration with schools.
- Enhances student identification and wraparound supports.

3. Juvenile Justice Initiative: “Diversion First”

- Statewide effort to reduce youth court involvement.
- Prioritizes intervention and school/community-based supports.
- Focus on prevention and restorative practices over punishment.

4. CSDE Discipline Initiative

- State mandate to reduce suspensions and expulsions.
- Encourages supportive, non-punitive approaches.
- YSB can assist with alternatives: mentoring, conflict resolution, restorative practices.

5. Proposed School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI)

- Partnership model between Derby Public Schools & YSB.
- Provides in-school supports: counseling, mentoring, family engagement.
- Goals:
 - Reduce disciplinary referrals.
 - Lower suspension/expulsion rates.
 - Prevent juvenile court involvement.
- Committee input requested on implementation approach.

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Data Initiatives + Progress **Community Level**

YSB and School Collaboration

Passed during the last Legislative session, Public Act #24-45 connects YSBs with local schools and facilitates the sharing of important school-level data.

**Deeper insights, early identification
and prevention efforts.**

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THE NEW LAW YSBs & STUDENT DATA

Section 23 of Public Act #24-45 states that Boards of Education must enter into a memoranda of agreement with YSBs upon their request to establish procedures for the release of student information.

Through the MOU, YSB staff will be considered a “school official” and in accordance with FERPA entitled to receive relevant personally identifiable student data.



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Questions for Consideration

Q: Have school districts been alerted to this new Public Act?

A: Yes, CABA and CAPPs shared information about the MOU with school superintendents and Boards of Education on August 7th.

Q: Is parental permission required to access the data through the MOU?

A: The MOU codifies the YSB staff person as a school official, therefore the release of information is allowed under FERPA.

Q: What data should a YSB consider requesting initially from their school districts through the MOU?

A: YSBs should initially consider requesting access to school data systems such as PowerSchool and working with school administration to obtain truancy, attendance, and support meeting information.

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Connecticut State Board of Education

Hartford

To: State Board of Education
From: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education
Date: April 2, 2025
Subject: 2023-24 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools

Executive Summary

Please find attached the *2023-24 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools*. This report presents analyses of trends in student disciplinary behaviors in Connecticut public schools. It fulfills the requirements in Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-233n.

Connecticut schools have made significant progress in reducing exclusionary discipline, but broader challenges have emerged that continue to have adverse effects on education.

- From 2018-19 to 2023-24 (pre-to post-pandemic) the total number of in-school suspensions (ISS) decreased by 6.9 percent, but the total number of out-of-school suspensions (OSS) increased by 6.4 percent and expulsions (EXP) increased by 1.3 percent. There were significant declines from 2022-23 to 2023-24 in the number of OSS (37,376 to 34,578) and EXP (979 to 755).
- While some incident categories showed lower rates in 2023-24 than in 2018-19 (e.g., School Policy Violations declined 6.9 percent, Sexually Related Behavior declined 30.0 percent, and Fighting and Battery declined 7.1 percent), other categories showed higher rates (e.g., Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco increased 10.8 percent, Physical and Verbal Confrontation increased 44.1 percent, and Weapons increased 25.0 percent).
- The total number of incidents reported for marijuana possession or use has increased nearly five times from 2021-22 (261 incidents) to 2023-24 (1,269 incidents); however, incidents coded as possession or use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) (e.g., vapes, e-cigarettes) (2,720 incidents) far exceed those coded as marijuana (1,269 incidents) or tobacco (370 incidents). ENDS possession/use and tobacco use declined from the prior year.
- In 2023-24, nearly 37,000 students (7.0 percent) or approximately one out of approximately every 14 students statewide, received a suspension or an expulsion. Disparities remain in these suspension rates between Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students and their White counterparts. While one out of 23 White students received at least one suspension, one out of seven Black/African American students and one out of 11 Hispanic/Latino students experienced the same sanction. In other words, Black/African American students are more than three times as likely and Hispanic/Latino students are more than twice as likely as their White counterparts to be

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suspended or expelled. This pattern exists in many districts across the state. Males receive a suspension/expulsion at greater rates (8.9 percent) than females (5.1 percent).

- When analyzing suspension rates by grade, the data reveal that suspension rates in middle school grades in 2023-24 are substantially greater than pre-pandemic levels. Suspension rates increased from 2018-19 to 2023-24 in Grade 6 (8.2 percent to 10 percent), Grade 7 (11.0 percent to 13.1 percent), and Grade 8 (11.1 percent to 13.6 percent). Conversely, most elementary and high school grades show lower suspension rates in 2023-24 than in 2018-19. One bright spot is that the middle school suspension rates in 2023-24 are slightly lower than in 2022-23.
- The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is grouping districts into four tiers based on overall and disproportionate use of suspensions and expulsions in order to provide a system of supports and targeted action planning. The 2023-24 district tiers will be used to identify those districts needing support and the type of support needed.
- Among young children in Pre-K through Grade 2, the number of suspensions (ISS and OSS combined) declined by 17.2 percent from 2018-19 (1,926 sanctions) to 2023-24 (1,595 sanctions). In 2023-24, fewer than 900 students in Pre-K through Grade two (approximately one half of one percent) received at least one suspension. Note that C.G.S. 10-233(f) prohibits the suspension or expulsion of students in pre-K through Grade 2 unless the incident was “of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.”

The CSDE continues to engage the Connecticut School Discipline Collaborative to advise the CSDE on strategies for transforming school discipline to reduce the overall and disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline and use data to drive the implementation of a statewide systems approach to address disproportionality in school discipline. This includes developing an infrastructure to support high-quality and effective fidelity of implementation that is data-driven, evidence-based, scalable, and sustainable within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS).

Prepared by: Keryn Felder, Education Consultant
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John D. Frassinelli, Division Director

Approved by: Sinthia Sone-Moyano, Deputy Commissioner
Educational Supports and Wellness

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Purpose Statement: Our commitment is to reduce the risk of future youth justice system involvement by promoting equitable access to education for all youth involved in the justice system, fostering academic efficacy and achievement, and reinforcing positive education protective factors through strategic engagement and comprehensive support.

Goals:

1. Reduce chronic absenteeism and truancy statewide and increase attendance at school
2. Significantly reduce the use of discipline in schools
3. Review education provision in justice facilities through DCF-JJEU and review efforts, metrics, and success

Initiatives	Status	Timeline
<p>1. <u>Reduce chronic absenteeism statewide and increase attendance at school</u></p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review policy, protocol, guidance for schools to make referrals ii. Review the number of schools with MOU's with YSB, and which ones iii. Review data from CSDE following 2025 Education Workgroup legislation iv. Review process of school referrals to YSB's 	<p>(i)(ii)(iv): update from Erica Bromley at March Meeting – follow up on any additional clarity/responses from districts.</p> <p>(iii): legislation pending</p>	<p>January 1, 2026, receive first report on (iii)</p>
<p>2. <u>Significantly reduce the use of discipline in schools</u></p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review AEO Report and discuss its findings ii. Continue to look at evaluation and expansion of SBDI-E or like programs iii. Design initiative in collaboration with Fran Rabinowitz, CSDE and the Education Workgroup chair(s) to engage districts experiencing disproportionately high rates of exclusionary discipline. iv. Review 2025 school discipline report and: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Cross reference by municipal arrests of young people (i.e., equity dashboard) b. Review expulsions school-based arrest vs non-school based arrest 	<p>(i) CSDE provided report and presentation to Education Workgroup – any questions to follow up should be sent to CSDE</p> <p>(ii) Received an update 4 months ago</p> <p>(iii) Proposal discussed with Education Chairs on 4_9, and follow up had with CSDE to hear about the initiatives they are already doing – email sent out to CSDE to request this update and how this work might make sense in relation to the work they already do.</p> <p>(iv) SDE stated at the</p>	<p>Should request this data for the July meeting (iv)</p>

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are being expelled for	it was releasing this report soon	
<p>3. <u>Review Provision education in youth justice facilities</u></p> <p>Strategies:</p> <p>i. DCF-JJEU</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to follow the rate of recidivism for kids who have been in jj facilities all kids, and eventual graduation and diploma rates for those kids. 2. P20WIN proposal / and moving this forward if P20WIN doesn't happen, regardless 3. PSS matching for youth outside of REGIONS (i.e. detention) (serve wider group of kids?) 4. Updates on current metrics and outcomes at present 5. CTECS discussion on 2018 legislation <p>ii. Monitor and oversee the provision of education services to youth in all jj facilities, to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. school attendance/sped hours delivery, including transition services/grade level assessments; teacher absenteeism and availability of substitute teachers 2. Review and discuss quality of education services provided at the facilities, including education levels/needs of the students, attendance, discipline, academic progress, credit attainment, career and technical education, special education status, career planning, and teacher development 	<p>JJEU presented in March on (iii), DCF connecting with C-TECS following re-introduction from Cathy, DCF submitted proposal to P20WIN</p>	<p>DCF-JJEU presenting to JJPOC in May, and can update Education in May as to progress on (i)(iv)</p>

Meeting Frequency:

Education Workgroup will meet every other month, the last Monday of those months, 2- 3:30pm

2025 Schedule

- 1/27
- 3/31
- 5/26
- 7/28
- 9/29
- 11/24

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STATEWIDE POLICE DIVERSION POLICY

FINAL DRAFT

I. Purpose

This policy establishes a statewide standard for police referrals to youth diversion to prevent formal arrest and judicial involvement for eligible youth. It emphasizes early intervention, rehabilitation, and restorative practices while promoting public safety and accountability.

II. Policy Statement

All Connecticut law enforcement agencies shall prioritize pre-arrest diversion as a preferred response for eligible youth. Eligible youth shall be diverted, in lieu of arrest, for, at a minimum, their first and second-time offenses. Police officers retain their discretion and are not restricted from diverting a youth beyond their first two offenses or for offenses beyond misdemeanors. Diversion offers structured alternatives to prosecution, reduces recidivism, and fosters positive youth development by engaging youth in community-based services tailored to their needs, while prioritizing accountability.

III. Definitions

- Diversion: A structured alternative to arrest or prosecution that redirects youth into community programs while prioritizing accountability.
 - Eligible Youth: Individuals aged 10–17 who could be charged with first and second-time misdemeanor offenses; other offenses and additional referrals will be subject to police discretion.
 - Juvenile Review Board (JRB)/Youth Diversion Team (YDT): A multidisciplinary, community-based team that assesses referred youth and coordinates diversion efforts.
 - Referral Officer: The officer who initiates the diversion referral and explains the rights and responsibilities to the youth and guardians.
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IV. Eligibility Criteria

Youth are eligible for diversion if all the following apply:

1. Between the ages of 10 and 17
2. Could be charged for an offense that is eligible for Juvenile Court

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3. First or second-time offenses; or additional offenses with police discretion.
 4. Youth and guardian agree to participate at the JRB/YDT diversion intake meeting
-

V. Procedures

A. Officer Discretion & Referral

- Officers encountering an eligible youth must consider diversion before arrest.
- If diverting, the officer issues a Diversion Referral Form in lieu of a summons.
- The youth and guardian sign an initial agreement to participate and contact the diversion program within 2 business days, if applicable.

B. JRB Role and Responsibilities

- JRBs/YDTs can include, but are not limited to, representatives from law enforcement, probation, schools, youth services, mental health providers, and the community.
 - Upon referral, the JRB/YDT conducts an intake and risk screening and/or assessment to determine potential appropriate services (e.g., counseling, community service, restitution, or mentoring) to go along with the reparation of harm.
 - The JRB/YDT sets a diversion plan with defined expectations and timeline for completion.
-

VI. Program Outcomes

- **Successful Completion:** If agreement is completed, youth avoids court for the diverted incident, and does not have a criminal record. Support services continue if needed.
 - **Non-Compliance:** If the youth fails to initially engage, or disengages during the process, the case may be forwarded to the juvenile court via a police summons/court referral
-

VII. Tracking, Data, and Documentation

- Agencies must maintain:
 - A secure Diversion Tracking Log to include:
 - Documentation of each referral, outcome, and youth demographics
 - A record of the explanation for why an officer chose not to divert and eligible youth

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- Annual reporting to POSTC and local oversight bodies
 - All diversion records are sealed and subject to data retention limits consistent with confidentiality statutes.
-

VIII. Training Requirements

- Officers must be trained on this pre-arrest diversion policy as part of their 14 hours of statutorily required juvenile justice trainings and through POST accreditation requirements.
 - Agencies shall provide annual refresher training during roll call or in-service sessions provided by a Supervisor or other entity deemed suitable by POST.
-

IX. Law Enforcement Supervisor Responsibilities

- Supervisors must:
 - Review all juvenile contacts for diversion eligibility
 - Ensure documentation is complete and timely
 - Provide guidance and feedback on diversion decisions
-

X. Oversight and Review

- The Connecticut POST Council will oversee statewide implementation and evaluation.
- Each police department must designate a Diversion Liaison.
- Policy effectiveness will be reviewed biannually, incorporating feedback from stakeholders, youth, and community partners.

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Proposal for Interventional In-School Suspension (ISS) Support Program

Introduction

The Interventional ISS Support Program is a student suspension diversion initiative designed to promote a restorative approach to disciplinary actions within Derby Public Schools. This program aims to help students understand how their behaviors affect themselves, others, and the overall school climate. By integrating structured interventions and clear behavioral expectations, the initiative seeks to reduce repeated behavioral issues and minimize the length of suspensions through targeted support and education.

Program Objectives

1. Behavioral Awareness & Accountability – Support students in reflecting on their actions and understanding their consequences.
2. Recidivism Reduction – Equip students with tools and strategies to help prevent repeated behavioral infractions.
3. Structured Suspension Approach – Establish a clear framework for student accountability and parental involvement.
4. Enhanced ISS Teacher Training – Provide ISS teachers with essential intervention skills to guide student development.
5. Parental Engagement – Promote communication among students, parents, and school staff to support long-term behavioral improvement.

Training for ISS Teachers

To ensure program success, ISS teachers will receive specialized training in key areas, including:

- QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer): Suicide prevention and mental health intervention techniques.
- Signs of Suicide (S.O.S.): Early identification and response strategies for students at risk.
- Motivational Interviewing: Techniques for encouraging positive behavioral change.
- Interactive Intervention Programming: Methods for engaging students in meaningful discussions and activities that support behavioral growth.

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Interventional Programming for Students

Based on the nature and severity of the incident, students will participate in targeted interventions, which may include:

- Anger Management: Strategies for recognizing and controlling emotions.
- Conflict Resolution & Mediation: Techniques for resolving disputes peacefully.
- Anti-Bullying Education: Understanding the impact of bullying and fostering respectful interactions.
- School Violence Prevention: Identifying and mitigating potential threats.
- Decision-Making Skills: Promoting thoughtful and responsible choices.
- Substance Use Screening (SBIRT): Risk assessment and support services provided by the Youth Bureau.

Parental Involvement & Follow-Up

Parental engagement is a key component of the program's success. Follow-up may include:

- Phone calls to review student progress and reinforce behavioral expectations.
- Parent conferences with administrators, ISS teachers, and Youth Bureau representatives to develop individualized support strategies.

Conclusion

The Interventional ISS Support Program offers a proactive, restorative approach to student discipline. By providing structured interventions, targeted training, and collaborative support, the program seeks to reduce repeat offenses, encourage positive behavioral change, and foster a safer, more respectful school environment. Through partnership with the Derby Youth Service Bureau, school administrators, teachers, and parents, this initiative ensures that students receive the guidance they need to make meaningful improvements in their behavior and overall academic experience.

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Derby Youth service Bureau Annual Report 24-25 school year

1) Residency/welfare /truancy checks

The Derby Youth Bureau conducted **106** home visits, calls and or meetings with parents to address residency issues, attendance, truancy or behavioral health concerns the schools may have.

- Truancy, behavioral health issues **14**
- Probate court cases **4**
- Department of social services **1**
- Families not found to be residing in Derby **24**

The displacement of families due to eviction, the inability to pay for rising housing costs as well as other contributing factors continues to be a growing transportation budget concern for the school district. In my collaboration with Bob Lisi at the Ansonia Youth Bureau they are experiencing similar issues concerning the unhoused population.

The Youth Bureau remains committed to work with families and landlords to prevent evictions and displacement of families.

Juvenile Diversion Referrals

This year the youth bureau received fourteen juvenile referrals for service through the schools and juvenile court.

Offenses include disorderly conduct, interfering with police, breach of peace, substance use, criminal mischief, assault, larceny, defiance of school rules and reckless endangerment (arson).

The juvenile justice system continues to move forward with the “diversion first” approach in dealing with delinquent behavior. The goal of this movement is to divert juveniles from arrests for all misdemeanors to youth bureaus for community-based services.

This does NOT mean however that schools cannot have a student arrested for serious violations such as fights, drugs or weapons.

As this legislative session has come to an end, I will be following these issues very closely so I can advise schools on how these issues may affect the relationship with law enforcement.

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As a member of the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC) education subcommittee there is a major initiative by CSDE to reduce exclusionary discipline such as OSS and expulsions. As a result, the Youth Bureau will be working with the middle and high school on a proposed suspension support initiative to help reduce suspension and expulsion days making that time more effective in helping to improve behavior.

Implemented Programs 2024-2025

1. College Day Sponsorship

- **Investment \$1,000**

The Youth Bureau sponsored a college day to encourage students to explore higher education opportunities. This event provided information on the college application process, financial aid, and the importance of post-secondary education.

2. Career Day Sponsorship

- **Investment \$1,000**

Career Day provided students with access to professionals from various industries, giving them insights into different career paths, the skills required and networking opportunities to inspire future aspirations.

3. Pre-post prom events

- **Investment \$4,000**

These events were held to provide safe, alcohol-and drug-free environments for students during the prom season.

They were a combination of entertainment and education to encourage students to make responsible decisions while celebrating. In addition, an assembly was held in the auditorium for those attending the prom. Comments were made to the students by police, EMS and rescue personnel about the grave consequences of driving under the influence as well as distracted driving. A video followed with a powerful message concerning the consequences when driving under the influence.

A very graphic simulated MVA extrication was given outside by the Storms Ambulance, fire and rescue.

4. Interactive Theatre Group- Elementary, middle, and high schools

- **Investment: \$2,000**

This program utilizes interactive actors who roll play social situations that involving bullying, alcohol, drugs and developing communication skills along with conflict resolution.

5. The Derby High School running club

- **Investment \$3,000.00**

These dollars are used to support the running club and track teams to purchase equipment and post season awards.

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6. The middle School running club

- **Investment \$1,000.00**

These funds support the cost for runners and coaches for the annual Thanksgiving Day Road Race

7. Vocational education bus trip

- **Investment \$500.00**

These funds paid for tickets to a vocational hands -on bus trip to Wallingford.

Program Reviews

In-School Clinician Counseling Program

The Derby Schools completed the second full year of our in-school clinician program. This program provides critical behavioral health services directly to our students and works in partnership with our staff. The Schools, Board of Education along with the Youth Bureau and BHCare have been working together in partnership to make this vital program successful. Our school social worker staff along with the leadership of Brigitta and Stacey McCourt have made this a successful and growing program. Their efforts have remained consistent and effective in helping to provide these critical services to our students and families.

Medication Take-Back Day: Held in partnership with the Derby Police, the Valley Health Department and Youth Bureau. Held at Bradley school, this initiative allowed for the safe collection and disposal of unused and expired medications to prevent misuse or accidental overdose.

Programs Integrated into Health Classes

In addition to standalone events, the Youth Bureau contributed to the health curriculum in both the middle and high schools, providing students with education and awareness on important health and prevention topics.

- **Vaping and Marijuana use:** Education on short- and long-term health risks along with effects on academic performance and social impacts.
- **Brain Science and Addiction:** Effects substances have on the brain and understanding how the process of addiction occurs over time.
- **Fentanyl and Illicit Counterfeit Pills:** An urgent topic addressing the dangers of illicit synthetic opioids, counterfeit medications, and overdose.
- **SOS (signs of Suicide):** A strong evidence-based program that teaches students how to recognize signs or symptoms that a friend

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may be considering taking their own life and getting them to a trusted adult.

- **QPR (question, Persuade, Rafer):** An evidence -based program that teaches noticing and awareness skills when another student may be experiencing a mental health crisis.

It should be recognized that all grades at the middle school have had the SOS program putting students in a position to be able to help a friend in need and get them to see a trusted adult.

In addition, it should be recognized that three grades at the high school have had both the SOS and QPR programs. After the 25-26 school year all four grades will have completed these important mental health awareness programs.

Looking Ahead

The Derby Youth Service Bureau is committed to continuing its work in addressing the current and emerging challenges our schools and community face.

Our focus over the next school year will continue to support the efforts in delivering behavioral health services to students in our schools.

Our efforts will continue in advancing preventative programs concerning substance use and addiction in our health classes by staying ahead of emerging and ever-changing trends.

Changes in juvenile justice legislation will create challenges as we enter the new year and into the 26-27 school year.

I will be meeting with probation, law enforcement and schools to communicate these changes in juvenile diversion cases. I am confident that we will meet these challenges by continuing to build strong partnerships between schools, the Youth Bureau, and police.

As always, the Derby Youth Bureau is committed to continue working with the Central Office, our homeless liaison regarding the important issues of residency and families at risk of losing housing.

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Students

Dress and Grooming

P5132

Policy Takes Effect September 2025

Purpose: The purpose of the uniform policy is to foster a sense of unity and equality among students, reduce distractions, and promote a positive educational environment. This policy applies to all students in grades Pre-K-12 across the district.

Uniform Requirements:

1. General Guidelines:

- All students are required to wear the designated school uniform each school day.
- Uniforms must be clean, neat, and in good repair.
- Uniforms should be worn as intended, with no alterations or modifications that deviate from the policy.

2. Pre-Kindergarten - Grade 12:

- **Shirts:** Solid-colored polo shirts (red, white, gray, black) or crew neck shirts as displayed on the website.
- **Bottoms:** Khaki or black pants, shorts, or skirts. Shorts and skirts should be of an appropriate length for school activities.
- **Outerwear:** Solid-colored sweaters, sweatshirts, or cardigans in red, black or white.
- **Footwear:** Shoes/sneakers/appropriate everyday boots; no sandals, flip flops, slides or slippers.

3. Uniform Compliance:

- Students are expected to wear the uniform correctly and adhere to the guidelines outlined. Non-compliance with the uniform policy will result in:
 - i. First Offense: Consultation with parent/guardian
 - ii. Second Offense: Verbal warning and notification to parent/guardian
 - iii. Third and Subsequent Offense: Referral to administration

4. Exceptions:

- **Special Dress Days:** On designated days, students may be allowed to wear non-uniform clothing as part of school events or spirit days. Prior notice will be given for such days.
- **Physical Education Day Attire:** Elementary students may wear sweatpants/shirts to school on scheduled physical education days. School-approved tee shirts and shorts are permitted.
- **Religious and Medical Exceptions:** Requests for exemptions due to religious beliefs or medical reasons must be submitted in writing to the school principal for review.

5. Uniform Purchases:

- Uniforms may be purchased through designated vendors or school-approved suppliers. Specific details on purchasing options and pricing will be provided by the school.

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6. Review and Adjustments:

- The uniform policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the school community. Adjustments or updates to the policy will be communicated to parents, guardians, and students.

By implementing this uniform policy, Derby Public Schools aims to create a cohesive and respectful learning environment for all students. We appreciate your support and cooperation in adhering to these guidelines.

Policy Adopted: January 19, 2017

Revised: October 17, 2019

Revised: April 20, 2023

Revised: December 19, 2024

DERBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Derby, Connecticut

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