

**SOMERS HIGH SCHOOL
HANDBOOK
2020-2021**



Non-Discrimination Statement

The Somers Public School System is committed to equal opportunity for all students, applicants and employees. The district does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, disability (including, but not limited to, mental retardation, past or present history of mental disability, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, gender identity or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Inquiries regarding the district's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to Dina Senecal, Title IX Coordinator, 1 Vision Boulevard, Somers, CT 06071, (860) 749-2270 x 2039 or Dr. Denise Messina, Section 504 Coordinator, 1 Vision Boulevard, Somers, CT 06071, (860) 749-2270 x 2052.

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School Directory

Telephone 749-2270 for entire district; Press 5, 4 for High School - Press 2,1 for Central Office

Fax: 860-749-9264

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Vision, Mission, and Beliefs

Vision

The Somers Public Schools strives to be an exceptional and innovative educational community.

Mission

The mission of the Somers Public Schools is to prepare each student to contribute and succeed in an ever-changing global society.

In pursuit of this Vision and Mission we believe in:

The pursuit of excellence
Life-long learning
An environment conducive to success
Student, family, and community partnerships
Responsible citizenship
Honoring equity, individuality, and diversity
Educating the whole child

Portrait of a Graduate

Somers Student Success Skills

“Using appropriate tools for learning in a socially/civically responsible manner.”

The Somers Public Schools are committed to preparing students to be responsible and effective contributors to society. Our students must not only possess core content knowledge, they must also have the following critical skills to be successful in an ever evolving world society:

Communication

- Read, view, and listen to demonstrate mastery of content and skills
- Write, speak, and present to demonstrate mastery of content and skills
- Effectively utilize multimedia tools
- Demonstrate interpersonal discourse

Collaboration

- Lead, cooperate, and contribute to groups
- Recognize and accept diverse perspectives
- Support consensus to reach a common goal
- Adhere to and participate in multiple roles
- Regulate personal behavior in responsiveness to self and others

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving

- Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information from multiple sources
- Define problems and implement appropriate processes
- Propose and defend solutions
- Reflect on processes and generate conclusions

Creativity/Innovation

- Generate a variety of options
- Be aware of own learning strengths
- Use various questioning techniques
- Demonstrate adaptability and a growth mindset
- Learn from mistakes
- Demonstrate intrinsic motivation
- Be curious about the world

Accreditation and Memberships

Somers High School is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the Connecticut State Department of Education. The school maintains a chapter of the National Honor Society, which is sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. It is a member of the Connecticut Association of Schools, the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference and the North Central Connecticut Conference. The high school is also a member of the New England Association of College Admission Counselors.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Young adults who reside in Somers, who have not earned a high school diploma and are under 21 years of age have the right to be educated in the Somers Public Schools in an appropriate program where they and their parents have the opportunity for input. Students have the right to be treated with respect and not be discriminated against. Students must realize that the responsibility for, and commitment to their education belongs with them. Rules in any educational institution are established so that the school will operate for the benefit and best interests of all. Students must abide by these rules to be able to meet their responsibilities. Involvement in sports, other extra-curricular activities, dances, award programs, assemblies, ceremonies and any other school function are privileges which can be revoked by the school administration at any time from students who act in a manner detrimental to the successful operation and enjoyment of others.

Confidentiality

Parental consent must be obtained prior to the collection of information for the following:

1. In depth family case studies requested by PPT.
2. Referrals to professionals outside the school system.
3. Evaluations completed outside the school system.

Written parent consent is required before the school may permit access to, or the release of personally identifiable records of students to any individual, agency, or organization, except for the following:

1. Teachers involved with the student
2. The administration involved with that particular student
3. Members of the pupil services staff

For more information, refer to BOE Policy 5125.

Disposition of Educational Records

The District adheres to the Connecticut State Library and the Department of Education records retention and disposition schedule. Per Section 7-109 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the District procures prior approval before destroying records and notifies the public of its intent. More information may be obtained by contacting the Office of Pupil Services at 749-2270.

Chapter 1 - Student Attendance Policies

Attendance (BOE Policy 5113)

It has been well demonstrated that regular attendance is a key factor in the success a student achieves in school. Much of what a student learns and is graded on deals with facts, concepts, and theories that are presented and discussed in class. In addition, other learning processes take place in the classroom that may not be measurable, but are most important to a student's overall growth and education.

The Board of Education discourages students from missing school when school is in session. Upon return to school it will be the student's responsibility to complete any work missed due to absence and the parent's responsibility to ensure the work is completed in a timely manner.

Connecticut State law requires parents to cause their children to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. A student, therefore, should not be absent from school without a parent's knowledge and consent.

The Board of Education requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child. It also requires that parents and students are provided with policies on attendance, including tardiness, for each school building.

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:

- A. **For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered excused when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence;** and
- B. For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are only considered excused for the following reasons:
 1. student illness (*After a student has exceeded 9 excused absences, ALL student illness absences must be verified by an appropriately licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of absence*)
 2. student's observance of a religious holiday;
 3. death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
 4. mandated court appearances (additional documentation required);
 5. 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); or
 6. extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by district administrators and in accordance with guidance provided by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

Unexcused Absences

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

- A. The absence meets the definition for an excused absence (including aforementioned documentation requirements); or
- B. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence.

Disciplinary Absences

Absences that are the result of school or district disciplinary action are excluded from these definitions.

Monitoring of Absences

Student attendance is closely monitored. Parents are contacted and kept informed on all questions regarding absences. **If a student is going to be absent from school, the student's parent should call the school at 749-2270 and then press "5", then "1" before 7:45 AM stating the reason for the student's absence on that day.** Student or sibling calls will not be accepted. If the student's absence has not been verified by the parent via telephone, then a written note signed by the parent must be submitted when the student returns to school.

Chronic Absenteeism

According to the Connecticut State Department of Education, "Chronic absence is defined as missing 10 percent or greater of the total number of days enrolled during the school year for any reason. It includes both excused, unexcused, out-of-school suspensions, and in-school suspensions that last more than one-half of the school day."

A high school attendance review team reviews the cases of chronically absent children and discusses school interventions to support the student and his / her family. The attendance review team meets on a monthly basis.

Truancy

Somers Board of Education Policy 5113.2 identifies a student as "truant" when he/she has four unexcused absences in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school year. A student will be identified as a "habitual truant" when he/she has twenty unexcused absences within a school year. Any series of unexcused absences may require a conference with the Principal or Assistant Principal to discuss the details of the absence. The policy further states that the superintendent will be required to file a written complaint with the superior court alleging that the acts or omissions (i.e. failure to attend school) of any child designated as an "habitual truant" are such that his/her family is a family with service needs. DCF can be contacted for educational neglect for truancy as well.

Absence and Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Students who are participating in school-sponsored activities will be considered present for attendance purposes. Students who miss class due to field trips or other school-sponsored activities are responsible for obtaining missed work or homework assignments and are expected to submit this work upon their return to class.

Students in extracurricular activities, including athletes who plan to participate in a game, practice or performance must be in attendance for a minimum of 4 ½ hours on that school day. Extra-curricular activities include but are not limited to participating in or attending interscholastic sporting events, clubs, dances, and other school events that occur after school hours. Students who arrive late must be in no later than 9:40 AM or have proof of a medical/professional/legal appointment. Students cannot leave school early that day unless they have a documented medical/professional/legal appointment. Athletes must be in school on the last day of the week preceding a Saturday game or practice. Circumstances beyond the student's control that result in absence or tardiness on the day of a game or practice must be reviewed by an administrator when permission to participate is requested. Absence from team activities due to other school-related activities, family obligations, or medical appointments are acceptable when prior approval is received from the coach. Absence from the team activities due to non-school related activities must have prior approval of the coach and principal.

Family Vacations

With the distribution of the school calendar several months before school begins, parents are expected to make every effort to plan family vacations during scheduled school recess periods. **Teachers are not required to prepare work in advance of student absences for family vacations. In addition, teachers are not required to re-teach work or tutor students when they return.**

Loss of Credit

At Somers High School credit for courses taken is conditional on the satisfaction of attendance requirements. **The attendance requirements for credit will be affected by the total number of absences, excused and unexcused.** Warning letters are sent out to parents when students are at risk and loss of credit letters are also sent when a student is absent from class beyond the maximum days allowed to gain credit per class. Students who exceed the allowable number of absences for a course will have the opportunity to appeal to administration to have the credit awarded.

Since attending class is the only method for students to avail themselves of many kinds of learning experiences, absence from class has a direct effect on their education, and subsequently on the grade earned. Students absent from class without permission will not receive credit for missed work, including a zero grade on tests or quizzes.

Loss of credit is very serious and can ultimately affect a student's graduation from high school based on State and local Board of Education requirements. The final graduation ceremony is held to recognize all students who have successfully met these specific requirements.

Students and their families will be notified regarding credit loss as follows:

Course Credits	First Warning	Second Warning	Credit Loss
Quarter	5 th absence	N/A	9 th absence
Half	8 th absence	N/A	13 th absence
One-Credit	12 th absence	18 th absence	25 th absence

Students losing credit for a course must continue their attendance in order to fulfill their course requirement and to have the grade recorded on their permanent record. If a student remains in the class and causes disruption to the learning process of others in the class, the administration retains the right to remove the student from the class immediately. Students are expected to maintain full-time status while a member of the school. Students who have exceeded the allowable number of absences for a course will have the opportunity to appeal to administration to have the credit awarded.

COVID-19 Remote Learning - For those students who have opted to live stream full time, and for days when students' cohort is scheduled to livestream, students are expected to log in and participate on all days. Attendance is mandatory on those days and will be recorded. Chronic absences will result in parent meetings, home visits, and possibly, depending on circumstances, a referral to the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

Tardiness to School and Class

Late arrival to school will be looked upon as tardiness to first period class. **Students who arrive after the starting time to school must report immediately to the main office for sign-in.** At that time they will then proceed to their class. The supervising teacher will record a class tardy. *Further disciplinary action can be taken when students arrive at school late and fail to report to the main office to sign in.*

A class absence will be recorded for students who miss ten minutes or more of their class. Parents of students tardy by more than ten minutes or absent to school will receive a phone call from a staff member to verify the whereabouts of the student, unless the school is called as required procedure by the parent. Student phone calls for this purpose are unacceptable.

Students who arrive on the school campus or in the school building before the start of the school day, but fail to report to their first class, study hall or intervention tutoring will be considered to be cutting class and subject to disciplinary consequences.

On the third tardy to any scheduled class period in a quarter, a detention will be assigned. If tardiness continues in that particular class, an office referral will be made and one-hour after school detention will be assigned for each subsequent tardy. Each student starts off with two "grace" tardies each term to handle emergency situations. The administration will excuse tardiness only in extremely rare and extenuating circumstances. **Parental notes do not excuse students from their class commitments.**

Dismissal - Leaving School Buildings or Grounds

Students may not leave school unless a valid request is made by a parent in writing or via phone call to the main office. Parents are asked to communicate dismissal requests as early in the day as possible. Once a dismissal has been authorized, the student will report to the main office and obtain a blue early dismissal slip to show to the classroom teacher. At dismissal time, students must report to the main office to sign out, and then present the blue early dismissal slip at the entrance monitor's desk. A parent or authorized adult must sign the student out at the entrance monitor's desk. Under no circumstances shall students be allowed to leave school without a parental request and administrative approval. Such action will subject the student to disciplinary action. Students are not permitted to return to cars during the school day unless they have prior administrative approval.

Inclement Weather

Cancellations, Delays, and Early Dismissal

Parents are encouraged to sign up for the SchoolMessenger application to receive cancellation related announcements. Instructions will be given to parents at the beginning of the school year about the SchoolMessenger notification system.

In addition to SchoolMessenger, announcements of school cancellations, delays, and early dismissals will be communicated to students and families via local radio (WTIC, WHYN, WDRC), and television stations (WFSB, WVIT, and WTNH) starting at 6:30 a.m.. Families may also call the school 749-2270 or view www.somers.k12.ct.us for emergency closing or cancellation announcements. Many local news stations also offer text notification services through their websites. All school delays will be for two hours and school will begin at 9:40 a.m. Bell schedules are included near the end of this handbook. If school must be canceled, the days will be made up at the end of the school year.

In the event of an early dismissal for weather, holiday, or professional development, dismissal time will be 11:00 a.m.

During midterm and final exams, dismissal will be at 11:55 a.m.

Chapter 2 - Academic Information

Graduation Requirements/Standard of Proficiency (BOE Policy 6146)

To graduate from Somers High School, students in the Class of 2021 must earn 22 credits according to the credit distribution plan listed.

The Class of 2022 must earn 23 credits, and the Class of 2023 and subsequent classes must earn 25 credits which includes a Senior Capstone project. Additionally, beginning with the Class of 2022, students must earn 4 credits in mathematics. Please reference the matrices below for a detailed credit requirement breakdown by class.

Class of 2021 - Credit Distribution Requirement

Subject Area	Credits	Description
English	4	
Social Studies	3	<i>1 each in World History, US History/Civics 1 and II or AP US History</i>
Science	3	<i>1 credit each in Integrated Science, Biology, Electives</i>
Math	3	
Physical Education	1	<i>.5 in grade 9 & .5 in grade 10</i>
Health	.5	<i>.25 credit in grades 11 & 12 and part of PE in grades 9 & 10</i>
Fine Arts	.5	<i>Art or Music</i>
Practical Arts	.5	<i>Business, Technology or Food Service. Computer Literacy requirement also needs to be satisfied. See Course Selection Guide for appropriate course.</i>
Computer Literacy*	.5*	<i>Students must earn .5 credits in computer literacy, which may be fulfilled through a Practical or Fine Arts course. (The course would satisfy both the computer literacy requirement and a Practical or Fine Arts requirement.)</i>
Electives	6.5	<i>Additional Credits</i>
Total Credits	22	

Class of 2022 - Credit Distribution Requirement

Subject Area	Credits	Description
English	4	
Social Studies	3	1 each in World History, US History/Civics 1 and II or AP/UCONN ECE US History
Science	3	1 credit each in Integrated Science, Biology, Electives
Math	4	
Physical Education	1	.5 in grade 9 & .5 in grade 10
Health	.5	.25 credit in grades 11 & 12 and part of PE in grades 9 & 10
Fine Arts	.5	Art or Music
Practical Arts	.5	Business, Technology or Food Service. Computer Literacy requirement also needs to be satisfied. See Course Selection Guide for appropriate course.
Computer Literacy*	.5*	Students must earn .5 credits in computer literacy, which may be fulfilled through a Practical or Fine Arts course. (The course would satisfy both the computer literacy requirement and a Practical or Fine Arts requirement.)
Electives	6.5	Additional Credit
Total Credits	23	

Credit Distribution Requirement (Beginning with the class of 2023)

Subject Area	Credits	Description
Humanities (9 credits)		
English	4	
Social Studies	3	1 each in World History, US History / Civics I and II, or AP / UConn ECE US History
World Language	1	
Humanities electives	2 (.5 credit must be satisfied in the fine arts - music / art, and 1.5 of humanities electives)	English, Social Studies, Music, Art, World Languages
STEM (9 credits)		
Math	4	
Science	3	Integrated Science, Biology, 1 credit science electives
STEM electives	2 (.5 credit must be satisfied in Technology, Innovation, Design, and Engineering)	Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, Food Services, and Business
Physical Education and Wellness	1	.5 in grade 9 & .5 in grade 10
Health and Safety	1	
Electives	3	Business, Tech Ed, Family Consumer Sciences, World Languages, Social Sciences, Arts, etc.
Mastery Based Capstone Project	1	.5 credit for required course, .5 credit for successful completion of project.
Carnegie Units Total	25	

Credit Distribution Requirement (Beginning with the class of 2024)

Subject Area	Credits	Description
Humanities (9 credits)		
English	4	
Social Studies	3	1 each in World History, US History / Civics I and II, or AP / UConn ECE US History
World Language	1	
Humanities electives	2 (.5 credit must be satisfied in the fine arts - music / art, and 1.5 of humanities electives)	English, Social Studies, Music, Art, World Languages
STEM (9 credits)		
Math	4	
Science	3	Integrated Science, Biology, 1 credit science electives
STEM electives	2 (.5 credit must be satisfied in Technology, Innovation, Design, and Engineering)	Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, Food Services, and Business
Physical Education and Wellness	1	.5 in grade 9 & .5 in grade 10
Health and Safety	1	
Personal Finance	.5	Credit can be received through Computer Applications, Personal Finance or through Consumer Math
Electives	2.5	Business, Tech Ed, Family Consumer Sciences, World Languages, Social Sciences, Arts, etc.
Mastery Based Capstone Project	1	.5 credit for required course, .5 credit for successful completion of project.
Carnegie Units Total	25	

To be considered a full-time student, freshmen and sophomores must carry a minimum of 6 1/2 credits each year and juniors and seniors 6 3/4 credits. After consultation with the Counseling and Career Center, approval for a reduced schedule load may be obtained from the Administration for extenuating circumstances. (Due to COVID-19, for the 2020-21 school year, Seniors may carry a minimum of 4.25 credits, and students in grades 9-11 may carry a minimum of 6 credits.)

Class Standing/Promotion

Class standing is determined by accumulation of credits. For students in the class of 2021 and 2022, in order to attain Sophomore status, a student must have earned 5 credits. To attain Junior status, a student must have earned 10 credits. To attain Senior status, a student must have earned 15 credits.

Beginning with the class of 2023, in order to attain Sophomore status, students must have earned 6 credits. To attain Junior status, a student must have earned a minimum of 12 credits, and to attain Senior status, students must have earned 18 credits.

Course Prerequisites

Per the Somers High School Course Selection Guide, certain academic courses, because of content and knowledge necessary for satisfactory completion, require that other courses be successfully completed beforehand. The proper progression of course work is necessary for academic completion. If any question exists, contact the subject area teacher or school counselor for clarification.

Course Audits

As a general rule, the auditing of any class taught at Somers High School is not allowed. If a student enrolls in a course, it is expected that he/she will complete the requirements for that course for a grade and credit. There may be, however, extenuating circumstances under which a student may be allowed to audit a course. Permission to audit under these circumstances must be granted by administration. It is expected that the auditing student will perform all of the work required of those students receiving credit. The audited course will not appear on any official documents.

Homework Policy, Study Habits

Homework will be assigned in all subjects at the teacher's discretion. It is considered necessary and a significant factor in the learning process. For students having extended illness or disciplinary absences, students and parents may secure homework assignments by checking Google Classroom or by calling the Counseling and Career Center office. Twenty-four hours will be needed to collect homework from teachers before the parent or guardian can pick up the assignments.

The development of sound study habits is essential to success in high school. If a problem exists, students should seek help from their teachers and school counselor to review the basics of study skills. It is advisable for a student to have a home study schedule with a definite time and place. Proper study habits instill self-discipline so necessary for success in school and at work.

Extra Help - Learning Center / Peer Tutoring

Teachers are available for extra help during learning center periods during the school day. In the event that a student's teacher's learning center does not line up with the student's study hall, other teachers from the department should be available to assist. Teachers may also be available before or after school for extra help or make up work. Students are asked to arrange extra help sessions directly with their teachers for before or after school sessions.

Peer tutors are students who have demonstrated excellence in a variety of different subject areas. They will be available to assist students in the Library Media Center. A schedule will be established in the weeks after the add/drop period has closed and it will be published on the school website and in the LMC.

Make Up Work

It is the student's responsibility to see the teacher and make arrangements to make up work missed upon returning to school. Students will be given adequate time to make up work (3 school days for work assigned while absent) when it is an excused absence. **Work assigned to the student prior to the student's absence will be due when the student returns to school.** Students participating in field trips are considered 'in attendance' and are responsible for obtaining assignments from their teachers and must submit assignments upon their return to school. Failure to complete assignments on time will result in a grade

of zero. These grades will be averaged in with the other grades to determine the grade shown on the report card. In the case of serious and prolonged illness, individual arrangements may be made with the teacher and school counselor. All teachers are available Monday through Friday until 2:30 PM when not attending meetings after school.

Grade Point Average

Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated using a 100 point weighted scale. This weighted GPA is used to determine class rank and is recorded on the students' official high school transcripts. Academic and College Preparatory courses will carry a 1.0 weighted factor. Honors level courses will carry a 1.1 weighted factor. AP and AP/ECE level courses will carry a 1.2 weighted factor. The students' numerical average on the 100 point scale will be multiplied by the designated weight factor in determining course GPA.

Academic Honesty

A primary objective of Somers High School is the development of a student's intellectual potential. To provide an assessment of a student's progress and offer appropriate instruction in pursuit of that goal, teachers have designed tests, homework assignments, and various projects, including reports and research papers. It is expected that throughout the educational process high academic standards will be maintained. Most importantly, all work submitted by students **MUST** represent their own personal efforts. Any departure from this policy is dishonest and will result in a severe penalty.

In the process of researching the issue of academic honesty, the faculty committee came upon two definitions of academic impropriety:

Cheating

"There are two forms of academic dishonesty, one of which is cheating. In academic terms, cheating takes the form of copying someone else's work or giving or receiving assistance on an exam, test, paper or other work for credit, in an attempt to deceive the teacher into thinking that the work is the student's own. Examples include: using illegal notes or copying from another student during a test; having someone else write a paper, or part of a paper . . . and obtaining or giving information about a quiz or test given to an earlier section of a course" (The Taft School Student Handbook 1991-1992).

Plagiarism

"The other form of academic dishonesty is Plagiarism. The American Heritage Dictionary defines the verb 'to plagiarize' as 'to take and use as one's own the writings or ideas of another.' Plagiarism is the direct copying of someone else's words or ideas without giving the author credit for them, thereby presenting them as evidence of your own work and thought. It is also the rewording of a sentence, a paragraph, a page, an entire article, or a story plot and calling it your own. To avoid plagiarism, you must footnote everything that is not the result of your own thinking. Direct quotations, the exact works of another person, must be put in quotation marks and footnoted. Single words or phrases which are particularly appropriate or illuminating, the organization of ideas, and the ordering of examples given in a source, must also be documented."

The above is quoted and its source is cited in recognition of the responsibility of all writers to give due credit to the authorship of others (The Taft School Student Handbook 1991-1992).

It is also important to note that students must not resubmit work that they have previously submitted or published (in another course or elsewhere). According to the Office of Research Integrity of the Department of Health and Human Services website, "...when applied to research and scholarship, self-plagiarism refers to authors who reuse their own previously disseminated content and pass it off as a "new" product without letting the reader know that this material has appeared previously" (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2019). For more information you may refer to <https://ori.hhs.gov/plagiarism-13>.

Refer to the *Somers Guide to Documentation* created by the SHS Language Arts Department for more information on how to properly cite sources. Copies of this publication are available in the Library Media Center. Our guidelines are based on the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.

The following policy regarding grading and response for evidence of cheating or plagiarism in student work (tests, quizzes, homework, projects, papers, group work, etc...) shall apply in all departments at Somers High School. The Assistant Principal shall maintain a record of documented cases of cheating and plagiarism.

Grade 9

1. Zero on assignment/test/quiz/project
2. Offer a retake/redo for 50% credit of what is earned on the second attempt.
3. Inform parent
4. Office discipline referral on file

Grade 10-12

1. Zero on assignment/test/quiz/project
2. Inform parent
3. Office discipline referral on file

In all cases, the teacher makes a copy of the assignment/test/quiz/project to keep in teacher's files for as long as the student is attending the school. Teacher files a copy of the assignment/test/quiz/project in the department files for future reference. Departments require major papers to be submitted to turnitin.com.

PowerSchool Parent Portal / Google Classroom

Parents are strongly encouraged to regularly review their student's progress by logging into the PowerSchool Parent Portal. The Parent Portal is accessible through the school website or by logging in at <https://somers.powerschool.com/public/>. Usernames and passwords are initially mailed home to families. Parents will receive directions to set up their user accounts, as well as, directions to access grades, attendance, and other important information. **It is important that login information is not shared with others!**

Parents may also view their student's Google Classroom to be aware of assignments and student work.

Parent – Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall. Parents who wish to have additional information about their student's progress may contact teachers at any time. Due to COVID-19, conferences and back to school night will be offered virtually.

Report Cards

The high school operates on a quarterly marking system with report cards published four times per year. The marking terms are approximately nine weeks in duration. Report cards are delivered electronically via SchoolMessenger. Parents will receive an email with a password-protected link to access the report card. Grades are also accessible online via the password protected Parent Portal per published guidelines.

Incomplete Policy

In extenuating circumstances and with administrative approval, students not completing course requirements may be given six (6) school days after the distribution of report cards to complete work.

If work is not completed, the incomplete work will be calculated into the final report card grade as a zero (0). Exceptions will be made by approval of the building principal. It is the student's responsibility to be certain that all course requirements are completed within the required time period.

Examinations - Mid-Year and Final Exams

Final examinations are given at the conclusion of all courses. Exams run between 7:40 and 11:55 a.m. and are usually scheduled for two hours in duration for all courses. These exams will be given during an exam week in which two exams corresponding to class periods are given daily. No exams should be given any earlier than the scheduled time without permission from the school administration.

Students who do not take a scheduled exam due to an excused reason will receive an incomplete for the course. Failure to complete this obligation within 6 school days will result in an exam grade being calculated as a "0". Students must have approved excuses for not taking exams during scheduled times. Exceptions will be made by approval of the building principal. Students

missing exams for an unexcused reason will receive a "0" for the exam without the opportunity to reschedule. Students leaving the exam room early without authorization will receive a "0" for the exam. Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to be certain all course requirements are completed.

Senior Exam Exemptions

Final examinations for seniors may be waived provided the student has a minimum class average of 87 and permission from the instructor. All exemptions are handled on an individual basis. When exemptions are granted, the final average will be determined by averaging the two term grades in the case of a semester course and by averaging the four term grades and the midterm exam grade in a full year course.

Academic Eligibility

By Board of Education Policy, academic eligibility standards have been developed to encourage students to reach a minimum level of academic achievement in order to participate in extracurricular activities. Although the Board of Education encourages participation in athletics, clubs and committees, it also believes that students need to focus their attention on classroom studies.

All students who are elected to student offices or who represent the school in extracurricular activities that meet more than 2 hours per week, must achieve an overall grade point average no lower than the equivalent of a C- (70%) with no more than one "F" grade at the end of each marking period in order to remain eligible for participation in extracurricular activities. This average is determined using non-weighted grade point values. Incompletes are considered a failing grade until they are complete. Appeals for extraordinary circumstances only for extra-curricular activities or athletics should be brought to the attention of the Assistant Principal.

According to the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (C.I.A.C.) bylaw 6.3 (Eligibility Rule 1.B.), a pupil must have received a passing mark in at least four quarter Carnegie Units (credits) to be eligible for sports at the end of each marking period. Incoming freshmen will receive a "waiver" or a "free pass" to all eligibility standards. Sophomore, Junior, and Senior eligibility for fall sports or activities will be determined by the students' fourth marking period grades from the previous academic year as well as the C.I.A.C. minimum standard attaining 4 Carnegie Units from the previous academic year.

Somers High School has embraced and will follow a more stringent standard of athletic and extracurricular activities as previously noted. Students who have fallen below the Somers High School standard but have achieved the C.I.A.C. minimum standard may appeal their eligibility for athletic or extra-curricular activities for their respective seasons or school activity. ***A student may only appeal for their eligibility once per academic year.***

Advanced Placement Courses

Somers High School offers several AP courses that are taught by trained Somers High School teachers. Students enrolled in an Advanced Placement course must take the national AP examination in May. It is the student's choice and responsibility to submit the scores to colleges. If the college deems the student qualified, the student may be given credit or advanced standing at that school.

UConn Early College Experience (ECE) Courses

The UConn ECE program is a concurrent enrollment program that allows motivated students to take UConn courses at SHS for both high school and college credit. Every course taken through the UConn ECE is equivalent to the same course taught at the University of Connecticut. Students will benefit by taking college courses in a setting that is both familiar to the students and conducive to learning.

Through our AP/ECE U.S. History, AP/ECE Biology, and AP/ECE English courses, students may also sign-up for ECE credit by paying the appropriate fee, taking the course final exam, and earning a "C" or better in the class. Please see your counselor for additional information.

Regulations on Outside Courses

An outside course is any course taken outside of Somers High School while the student is attending Somers High School. This definition does not include summer school courses taken for remediation of a failure or lack of grade prerequisite.

All courses taken outside of Somers High School must receive prior approval from the administration. The only courses acceptable for credit from an outside agency must be earned in the elective areas, not in core graduation requirements. Students will be allowed to take no more than one outside course per semester during their junior and senior years for a maximum of four courses to be applied towards a SHS diploma.

It is the student's responsibility to obtain prior approval of an outside course and to provide documentation of course registration to the school counselor. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the final grade information is sent to SHS. An acknowledgment of the final grade and credit received will appear on the student's transcript. A 3-credit college course will receive 1/2 credit from Somers High School. Any course taken outside SHS will not be included in the calculation of grade point average, National Honor Society eligibility, honor roll, or class rank.

If a student takes an outside course during the school year, the student will be allowed to reduce the number of courses taken at SHS by the number of outside courses thereby still complying with the BOE credit policy.

Questions about outside courses and summer school options should be directed to the counseling and career center and administration.

Summer School Eligibility (BOE Policy 5123.1)

The Somers Board of Education encourages students who have failed one or more courses (a grade of F) to attend summer school or enroll in an approved online course in order to complete graduation requirements. Somers High School students who have failed an academic course are eligible for summer school if they have a cumulative course average of **50% or higher** or administrative approval. Summer school is offered at Somers High School for a fee. Information and applications are available in the Counseling and Career Center and due in June. At the end of the third term, students/parents will be notified in writing of the courses for which the student may be summer school eligible. Parents and students are also encouraged to call their child's counselor at the end of the year to ask about eligibility and information to begin the process promptly. A grade of C- or better will be recorded on the student's transcript as satisfactory completion of course requirements. Any summer school grade below C- will require the student to retake the course. Summer school/online course grades will not be calculated into the GPA.

Class Rank

Class rank is established at the end of a student's junior year. All courses that a student takes at Somers High School are used in determining rank - except those receiving a pass/fail grade, Partnership, summer schools and other outside courses. In order to be included in rank, a student must enter SHS by the 2nd semester of their sophomore year.

Valedictorian

Senior who has attained the highest weighted GPA of all seniors and has been at Somers High School a minimum of 3 semesters beginning no later than the sophomore year.

Salutatorian

Senior who has attained the second highest weighted GPA of all seniors and has been at Somers High School a minimum of 3 semesters beginning no later than the sophomore year.

Honor Roll

Students are recognized at the end of each quarter. High Honors or Honors status may be achieved by meeting the criteria established for this designation. For students to be considered in the High Honors group, they must have an unweighted average of 93 with no more than one grade of 89 or lower. . For students to be considered in the Honors group, they must have an unweighted average of an 87 with no more than one grade of 79 or lower.

Regulations for Transfer Students

A student must attend Somers High School for a minimum of three semesters beginning no later than the second semester of sophomore year in order to be included in SHS class rank, which is determined at the end of junior year. Only classes taken at Somers High School will be included in GPA and rank.

Official transcripts from previous school(s) will be included in all transcript requests.

National Honor Society Membership

Grade point averages will be computed for all junior and senior students who might be academically eligible for membership in the Spartan Chapter of the NHS. Students whose weighted grade point average is at least a cumulative grade point average is A- (90) or better shall be given an application packet. **In order to be considered for membership, students who choose to accept the packet must return their completed application no later than 5 days after applications are distributed to candidates.**

The application packet shall consist of:

1. A letter offering the student the opportunity to apply and explaining the purpose of the NHS;
2. An application form to be completed and returned by the student;
3. Three letters of recommendation to be submitted by two faculty members and an adult from the community who can attest to the student's leadership, service and character.

All eligible students who apply shall be considered for membership to the NHS by a selection committee made up of members of the faculty at the high school. Students who are not admitted shall be given the specific reasons why their applications were not accepted. Decisions of the selection committee will be final unless the procedural process has been compromised.

Once inducted into the Spartan Chapter of the National Honor Society, students must maintain a A- (90) or better cumulative grade point average. Students will be placed on NHS probation if they fall below the selection standards. Students may be placed on probationary status or removed from the Chapter for serious and/or repeated disciplinary infractions. Students have a right to a hearing with the faculty council prior to dismissal.

Beta Club Membership

The Beta Club is a national school service organization that recognizes academic achievement and service involvement. Students who are invited and elect to join must attend monthly meetings and participate in 1-2 service projects each year.

Chapter 3 – Student Support Services

Advisory Program

The objective of the advisory program is to personalize and support each student's educational experience at Somers High School. Students are assigned an adult advisor with whom they meet regularly and get to know on a personal level. Discussions, activities and personal conversations in advisory are meant to provide student support in the social and academic arenas.

Counseling & Career Services

The services of the counseling staff are available to all students, parents and staff having a need for educational, vocational, social relations or personal counseling and information. Each student is assigned to a school counselor.

Students wishing to meet with their counselor must make an appointment in the Counseling and Career Center (CCC) with the secretary who is responsible for the coordination of all appointments. Only during exceptional circumstances will appointments be scheduled during regular class time, although emergency cases will be seen immediately. It is imperative that students honor these appointments and arrive within three minutes after signing out of study hall. Due to emergency situations, there may be times when a counselor will be unable to keep appointments. In these cases, students will be reassigned and be sent back to study hall with a CCC pass to sign back in with the supervisor.

The Counseling and Career Center is primarily concerned with assisting the student in the following areas: academic, career, and personal/social development. Workshops in career and college information will be offered during the year along with visitations from college admissions representatives.

Course Selection Counseling

Course selection is one of the most important activities in which students and their parents participate. Careful selection will help students achieve their educational goals. Students will take part in the scheduling process along with their teachers and parents. Counselors meet with students to review each student's past coursework and suggest course opportunities for the following year. The course selection guide is available on-line at the CCC website for additional information. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves and to strive to improve their academic background through careful course selections.

SCOIR

SCOIR is a web-based college and career planning resource. Each student has a username and password to access a personal account. The CCC staff utilizes SCOIR for a variety of college and career related classroom workshops. Students and parents are strongly encouraged to become familiar with and use SCOIR as a post-secondary planning tool.

Scholarships

Student scholarships in all areas of academics, athletics and student activities are bestowed upon Somers graduates every year at our annual awards night. Achievement of excellence is a very important part of a student's high school career. **Information about available scholarships can be found in the CCC.**

Standardized Testing

Standardized testing is conducted across grade levels to evaluate student growth and mastery of grade-level content. The data derived from standardized testing is utilized by administration and teachers to identify areas of strength and to target areas for growth. To follow are descriptions of the various standardized tests conducted at Somers High School:

PSAT 8/9

This assessment is the first in a series of assessments meant to prepare students for the SAT. The PSAT 8/9 provides baseline performance data that will assist students, families, and faculty to target skills in need of improvement and to monitor performance as students progress through their studies.

PSAT - NMSQT (Preliminary SAT / National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)

Practice for the SAT, personalized score report with feedback to help students prepare for the SAT that is administered in the spring. In addition, college planning resources and students will have the opportunity to opt into the College Board's Student Search Service and receive information from colleges and universities whose programs align with the individual student's college and career goals. In addition to being a great way to prepare for the SAT, the PSAT -NMSQT provides students with scholarships and college exploration opportunities.

SAT Reasoning Test

The SAT Reasoning Test from the College Board is a standard college admissions test and statewide assessment for all juniors. Students are required to take the SAT in the spring of their junior year. Specific dates and times will be announced as soon as they are available.

Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA - MAP)

The NWEA - MAP test is a nationally-normed computer-adaptive assessment. It is utilized at Somers High School to identify levels of performance and to track individual and school-wide student growth in the areas of mathematics, reading, and language use.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) test

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) test is a computer-based assessment that all juniors must take in the spring. The NGSS test assesses student performance surrounding the new science standards adopted statewide and nationally. For more information regarding the NGSS test and the NGSS standards, please visit <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Student-Assessment/NGSS-Science/NGSS-Science>.

Standardized testing schedule

The following matrix details which assessments are administered to the various grade levels and when:

GRADE 9	
PSAT 8/9	Administered in Fall
NWEA - MAP*	Administered in Fall 2020 for all Freshmen - This is a change due to COVID-19.
GRADE 10	
PSAT	Administered in Fall (Due to COVID, will not be offered 2020)
NWEA - MAP*	Administered Fall, Winter, Spring (Due to COVID-19, only students in grade 9 will be universally assessed in the 2020-21 school year.)
GRADE 11	

PSAT - NMSQT	Administered in Fall
SAT	Administered in Spring
NGSS	Administered in Spring
NWEA - MAP*	
GRADE 12	
NWEA - MAP*	

* Students enrolled in Intervention services may participate in NWEA-MAP testing to evaluate intervention needs and to monitor academic progress.

Schedule Adjustment Policy

For the first 3 days of the new school year, schedule adjustments will only be made for courses in which students were inappropriately placed. The fourth through the sixth school day is the open add/drop period. Written parental permission is required for all academic graduation requirements and world language prior to any schedule change. At the start of the second semester, no course changes will be made for the first 3 days of classes. The fourth through the sixth day of the second semester will be the open add/drop period.

Due to COVID-19 programming, the add / drop period has been adjusted. For the first 4 days (2 days per cohort) of the new school year, schedule adjustments will only be made for courses in which students were inappropriately placed. The add/drop period will then take place for the next 4 days (2 days per cohort).

Changes made within these add/drop periods will carry no penalty on official academic records. Changes made after the add/drop period will carry a designation of WD, WDP, or WDF on official academic records depending on the circumstances of the withdrawal. A WDF will be considered a failing grade in the calculation of class rank, admission to the National Honor Society, academic eligibility, and in determining “good student” status for car insurance discounts. It is recognized that occasionally because of illness or injury, a student may have to withdraw from a course after the sixth school day. In this situation, the term medically withdrawn (MED) will be used.

Withdrawals / Transfers

Students withdrawing from school must notify the CCC office one week in advance of their last day. At that time, they will be given forms for their parents to complete. Included will be a formal written statement of withdrawal and release of records form. On their last day of attendance, students will be given a form that must be signed by each of their teachers. This form will indicate their grade at the time of withdrawal and that all owed materials have been returned. Records cannot be forwarded until all materials have been returned to the CCC office. Students withdrawing from school must meet with their counselor to discuss various options that are open to them, such as night school, equivalency degrees, the military, etc.

Working Papers/Labor Law

Students in need of working papers for employment should see the CCC secretary to fill out the necessary forms. A written statement from a prospective employer referring to hiring is required.

Connecticut Statutes dictate the legal age of employment and the number of hours minors (ages 15-18) are eligible to work. Students seeking employment need *Statement of Age forms*, also called “working papers” that are issued through the Counseling and Career Center (CCC). Other relevant employment information is also available in the CCC.

Health Services - School Nurse

A full time registered nurse is available during the regular school year. The health office is located in the math hallway on the first floor. Students who feel the need to visit the nurse due to illness should first report to their classroom teacher to obtain a pass. Students should not call a parent to pick them up, go to the lavatory or leave the building in place of going to the nurse. Students who fail to report to class, to the nurse, or the main office when ill, will be considered cutting class and subject to disciplinary action. During passing time, the nurse's door will be closed. Students who need to see the nurse at that time must report through the main office.

It will be expected that the duration of time a student is in the nurse's office will be a maximum of 10 minutes, regardless of reason. A student may stay longer if there is a verified illness or administrative permission to do so. Lastly, please make sure you have a valid pass when you come to the nurse's office. Students without passes, who are not present for things such as routine medicine administration, medical check in, etc. will be sent back to their sending location with a call to the teacher.

Required Health Screenings

The following health screenings are required:

- Connecticut law states that any new entrant must show proof of having had all required immunizations and physical exams before entering school;
- A physical is required during the 10th grade (with blue Health Assessment Record form)
- Scoliosis screening for male students in grade 9 (unless already completed during physical exam, or if parent does not consent)
- Student-athletes must show proof of having an appropriate physical exam according to timelines determined by the policies of the CIAC and the school district. Athletic physicals are valid for 13 months.

Medications

If a student needs to take medications, every effort should be made to schedule the taking of the medications outside of school hours. Medications, including over the counter (OTC) medications (ie. Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, Benadryl, etc.) that must be taken during school hours cannot be administered without a medication authorization form completed by the physician or dentist, and parent / guardian. This documentation should be submitted to the school nurse. These forms are available in physicians' offices, emergency rooms, and the school nurse's office. Medication deemed necessary by a parent, but not prescribed by a physician, should be scheduled around school hours by the parent.

Medications must be brought to the school nurse and picked up by an adult. Medications will be locked in the health room. Students are not permitted to carry medication, including over-the-counter medications, on their person. Students found in violation and carrying medication in class or on school grounds will have the medication confiscated and brought to the school nurse immediately. Any incident of confiscation will be reported to the administration. After consulting with family and physician, the school nurse will determine the best time for administering medications.

If it is necessary for school personnel to administer medication during school hours, we must abide by the Connecticut State Law, Public Act 723, which reads as follows:

1. Medication can only be administered to children legally when there is a physician's written order and a written authorization of a parent or guardian on file in the child's health office.
2. Parents or a responsible adult must bring the labeled medication to the school health office.
3. Asthma inhalers and EPI-PENs may be self-carried (in backpacks) and self-administered when the medication form is completed and signed by the physician and parents stating the student may do so. The forms must be given to the school nurse.

Students are responsible for coming to the nurse's office to take the medicine at the proper time. This includes all over-the-counter medication. School personnel cannot assume any responsibility for adverse effects of medication they administer.

The forms for administration of medicine in school are available in your physician's office and the school health office. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter and will continue to assist you in any way that we can with the health and safe care of your children.

Accidents

If an accident should occur, the student must report it immediately to the supervisor of the activity or the nearest staff member. The student should then report to the school nurse's office. Depending on the type of accident, there may be certain forms to be completed and turned into the office within twenty-four hours. Reporting of all accidents includes athletes who get hurt during practices and games.

Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

There are various levels of support available to assist students. Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a framework that helps meet the needs of all learners through a tiered approach to teaching and learning. Our intervention tutoring program, which consists of two intervention tutors as well as a certified Math and English teacher, assists students who have been identified by teachers and the MTSS committee. For students that need further instruction during tutoring, those students will receive individualized support from our Math and/or English intervention teachers.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The PBIS Leadership Team is composed of administration, teachers, school counselors, the school social worker and the school psychologist. PBIS is a part of the MTSS process at Somers High School that assists students who are facing behavioral challenges over an extended period of time. The PBIS committee develops strategies of intervention to improve the academic and/or behavioral performance of students who are exhibiting patterns of academic and/or behavioral concerns in the school setting.

Special Education

Individual programs and services are available to students with exceptional needs. Within the Somers Public Schools, special service personnel include a psychologist, social worker, speech/language specialist, behavioral specialist, and a staff of special education teachers with a district-wide coordinator. Parents and students needing further information on special education opportunities may speak to their school counselors or to the special education district office.

Chapter 4 - Student Life

Student life at Somers High School focuses on student rights and freedoms in addition to personal and school responsibilities to our school community. Principles of respect and responsibility between staff and students are emphasized within the educational framework, which calls for academic excellence, a strong co-curricular network of activities, and an environment which fosters growth, challenge, and full development of potential. Students are expected to apply self-discipline in managing their own behavior. When behavior falls short of meeting expectations, students can expect to face a range of disciplinary actions. The administration is employed by the Board of Education to provide for the educational process to be maintained, to protect the rights of all students to learn in a disciplined environment, and to carry out disciplinary procedures in support of these ends as necessary and appropriate.

After School Activities and Events

Extracurricular activities at Somers High School are an important and enjoyable part of school life. For the enjoyment and safety of all participants and audiences, behavior expectations at these events are no different from those during the school day. Students are expected to adhere to all school rules and use good judgment. The following general rules apply to all events unless otherwise stated by the school administration:

1. Students should be in school for a minimum of 4.5 hours on the day of the event in order to participate.
2. Parents should plan to be at the school for pick up promptly at the end of the activity.
3. Alcohol detection devices may be used to screen students for entry to school sponsored activities both on and off school grounds per Board of Education Policy 5131.62. This policy also covers guests of students who attend school dances.
4. Students who leave the events will be denied readmission and will be expected to leave the campus or venue of the school event.

Bullying (BOE Policy 5131.11)

The Board of Education promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment, and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

Bullying is defined per Connecticut Public Act 11-232 as *“the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral, or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that: a.) causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property, b.) places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, c.) creates a hostile environment at school for such student, d.) infringes on the rights of such student at school, or e.) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.”*

Bullying which occurs outside of the school setting, may be addressed by school officials if it has a direct and negative impact on a student’s academic performance or safety in school.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:

1. physical violence and attacks
2. verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, including, but not limited to, ethnically-based or gender-based verbal put-downs
3. threats and intimidation

4. extortion or stealing of money and/or possessions
5. exclusion from peer groups within the school

Such conduct is disruptive of the educational process and, therefore, bullying is not acceptable behavior in this district and is prohibited. It is necessary for students to promote the concept that caring for others is a valued quality, one that is accepted and encouraged. Students who engage in any act of bullying, while at school, at any school function, or in connection to or with any district-sponsored activity or event are subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

Bus Safety Rules

For the safety and convenience of all, rules for continued bus use are enforced. Proper behavior on the bus is expected of all students, and it should be understood that this service could be terminated if the safety of other children is endangered. All students are expected to ride their assigned bus. High School students are not permitted to board the bus from MBA. If there is a need to ride a different bus, a parent note should be submitted to the Main Office prior to 1:00 p.m.

The following is an explanation of rules and safety procedures for riding on buses. Also, an explanation of disciplinary procedures for violation of these rules is included. Please spend a few minutes with your parents and go over these procedures.

While riding the bus all school rules and BOE policies apply, including:

1. Be courteous, use no profane language.
2. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
3. Keep the bus clean.
4. Cooperate with the bus driver.
5. Do not smoke, vape, or use any illicit substances.
6. Do not damage the bus or equipment.
7. Stay in your seat.
8. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
9. Do not fight, push or shove.
10. Do not tamper with bus equipment.
12. Do not bring pets on the bus.
13. Do not bring flammable material on the bus.

Note that the bus driver and / or administration is authorized to assign seats.

In the case of an indefinite suspension, a hearing will be necessary in order to reinstate bus privilege.

Due to COVID-19, students riding the bus will be required to wear a mask at all times on the bus.

Bus Discipline Referral Process

When a student is issued a bus disciplinary referral:

1. The principal/assistant principal will receive the disciplinary referral.
2. Disciplinary consequences will be administered in alignment with the SHS Disciplinary Matrix. *A student may also lose bus privileges for repeated disciplinary infractions. (See table below.)*
3. Parent(s) / Guardian(s) will be contacted.

Loss of Bus Privileges

1st referral	Warning
2nd referral	3 Day Suspension

3rd referral	1 Week Suspension
4th referral	Indefinite Suspension

If deemed necessary by the Superintendent of Schools and the bus company, riding privileges may be suspended without using the above system. Procedures for transportation safety and emergencies are detailed in BOE Policy 3541.35.

Chromebooks

Chromebooks are provided in support of school curriculum and related activities. Students are expected to bring their charged Chromebook and charger cord to class with them each day. Students must have explicit day-to-day permission from a teacher to use school computers. Access to the computer network is permitted only when network resources are required for the completion of assigned work. Computer labs are available for student use only while the lab is under the supervision of a staff member.

Any form of unauthorized access, tampering, theft or willful destruction of any part of the computer system is considered to be a very serious offense. A student using any part of the computer system without authorization is in violation of school policy.

Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy (BOE Policy 6141.321)

It is the policy of the Somers Public Schools to maintain an environment that promotes ethical and responsible conduct in all Internet and online network activities. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to engage in any activity that does not conform to the established purpose and general rules and policies of the Somers Public Schools.

The use of Somers Public Schools computer equipment, Internet accounts and commercial online accounts must be in support of education and research and must be consistent with the educational objectives and goals of the Somers Public Schools. Any material transmitted must meet federal, state, local, and district regulations including, but not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities, product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited. Any viewing or dissemination of objectionable materials from any source into the system is strictly prohibited.

The Board of Education has the right to monitor computer usage by electronic means. Staff and students will be given proper notice of the monitoring. A statement notifying staff and students will be attached or included in the telecommunications form required of all users. Other forms of notification will also be used including but not limited to school handbooks, student handbooks, employment policies, postings at computer labs.

Each district computer with Internet access shall have a filtering device that blocks entry to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic or harmful or inappropriate for students, as defined by the Children’s Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall enforce the use of such filtering devices. An administrator, supervisor, or other authorized person may disable the filtering device for bona fide research or other lawful purpose, provided the person receives prior permission from the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Special Responsibilities of Telecommunication Users:

1. All students must sign the Somers Public Schools Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy Agreement for use of telecommunications services and equipment provided by the Somers Public Schools.
2. All telecommunications services and equipment must be used for academic related purposes.
3. Student use of personal online accounts with school equipment for non-academic purposes is not allowed.
4. Students may not utilize school equipment or networks to participate in non-academic chat sessions.
5. Students may not use email unless authorized to do so for academic related purposes.
6. Subscriptions to listservs must be reported to the Director of Technology & Information Services. Prior approval for

listservs is required for students.

7. Students may not communicate their name, address, telephone number, picture or other personal information while using the Internet or an online service.
8. Students may not violate the rules of common sense or “netiquette”. They are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette: be polite; do not use vulgar or obscene language; do not reveal your address or phone number or those of others; do not disrupt the network or the data of others.
9. The use of district telecommunication services and equipment for cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Any such cases must be reported to the building administration for disciplinary action. In accordance with Public Act 11-232, this may include instances of cyberbullying in and outside of school. This also applies to the CT State Law regarding school threats passed on October 1, 2016.
10. BOE Policy 6141.32, Curriculum: Computer Usage is an integral part of the Student Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy and is in effect at all times.

Electronic Devices (BOE Policy 5131.81)

During instructional time, from the official school start time to the end of the day school dismissal, which includes class periods and other specified times as determined by the administration, electronic communication devices must be kept powered-off and out-of-sight unless:

- a. Permission is granted by an administrator, teacher or school staff member;
- b. Use of the device is provided in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 education plan; or
- c. It is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals.

Phones and/or electronic communication devices, and accessories (i.e. earbuds, headphones, etc.), should remain concealed and be turned off unless in use pursuant to this policy. Such phones and other electronic communication devices may be used in compliance with the individual school's guidelines for usage. This time of usage may include before/after school as well as during the student's lunch time and in designated locations.

The building administration reserves the right to limit the use of cell phones in the building wherever they deem appropriate.

Unauthorized Use of Devices

A student's possession, display or use of a cellular telephone and other wireless communication devices on school property contrary to the provisions of this policy shall be viewed as the unauthorized use of the cellular phone or other wireless communication devices when such possession, display or use of such devices results in conduct which includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Interference with or disruption of the instructional or educational environment.
- b. Use which violates academic integrity, as the reproduction of images of tests, communication of test or examination contents or answers, to provide access to unauthorized school information, or assistance to students in any aspect of their instructional program in a manner that violates school Board policy or the Student Code of Conduct.
- c. The communication of the marks or grades assigned to students resulting from evaluation or the actual contents, or parts thereof, of any evaluation activity being completed by an individual(s).
- d. Use to commit a crime, under federal or state law.
- e. Violation of a student's or other person's reasonable expectation of privacy, by using such devices with photographic capabilities in student locker-rooms, restrooms, any other student changing areas, or the classroom, whether such use occurs during the instructional school day or on school property. Cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices may not be utilized

to take "photographs" or "videos" while on school property, while on school-sponsored transportation or while a student is engaged in school-sponsored activities.

f. Use in a manner that is profane, indecent, obscene, threatening, discriminatory, bullying or harassing language, pictures or gestures. Cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices which have the capability to take "photographs" or "moving pictures" shall not be used for such purposes while on school property, while on school-sponsored transportation or while a student is engaged in school-sponsored activities.

Unauthorized use of these devices is grounds for confiscation by school officials, including classroom teachers. Repeated unauthorized use of such devices may lead to disciplinary action.

Responsibility/Liability

Any student who chooses to bring a cellular telephone or other wireless communication device to school shall do so at his or her own risk and shall be personally responsible for the security of his or her cellular phone or wireless communication device. Neither the school personnel or Board will assume any responsibility or liability for loss, theft, damage or vandalism to a cellular phone or other wireless communication device brought onto school property, or for the unauthorized use of any such device.

Cell Phones in the Classroom

In an effort to reduce distractions, improve interpersonal and relationship skills, and to cultivate a positive classroom culture characterized by human connection, ***personal cell phones are not permitted in the classroom during instructional time.***

Students may use their cell phones, however, in the hallways during passing time, in the cafeteria during lunch, and during their study halls.

Upon entry to class, students are asked to turn off their cell phones and place them in cubbies for the duration of the period. Students may not leave the classroom with their phone unless granted permission by the teacher. During safety drills, phones are to be left in the cubbies.

During gym class, as there are no cubbies available in the gym students must stow their cell phones in their gym lockers.

Any phones that are visible in class (except those stowed in cubbies) will be confiscated by the teacher and taken down to the office for the remainder of the school day. A parent will be contacted to pick up the device from the school.

If the student violates the cell phone policy, they will be issued a 3-hour Saturday Detention. Additional consequences including in-school suspension will be administered for students who refuse to surrender his / her phone to the teacher.

Photography, Video / Audio Recording without Consent

As most personal electronic devices have the capacity to take photographs and record video, students must be aware that it is strictly prohibited to violate the privacy of others by photographing or recording fellow students, faculty, or staff members without their consent. Furthermore, Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-189a prohibits knowingly photographing, filming, or recording another person without consent in situations where the person is unaware of the filming, not in plain view, and has a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Students should also be aware that the administration may also search confiscated personal electronic devices (both personally-owned and school-owned) when there is a reasonable suspicion that the device has been used for unauthorized activities. The school reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary measures for any violations of this policy.

Dances

Somers High School dances are sponsored by school organizations. The dances serve as fund-raisers and are also intended to be an enjoyable activity for students. For the enjoyment and safety of all attendees, behavior expectations at dances are no different from those during the school day. Students are expected to adhere to all school rules and use good judgment. The following rules apply to dances unless otherwise stated by the school administration:

1. Only Somers High students are permitted to attend Somers High School dances with the exception of the semi-formal and prom. All accompanying guests must be under 21 years old and must have administrative approval. Middle school students in district or from outside the school district will not be allowed to attend SHS dances.
2. Dances are scheduled from 7:00 PM until 10:00 PM. Parents should plan to be at the school for pick up promptly at 10:00 PM.
3. Students must arrive no later than 8:00 PM to be admitted unless prior permission to do so is obtained from the administration.
4. Once students enter the building for the dance, they must not leave the building. Those who leave without permission during the dance must leave the campus or event site.
5. A fee may be charged at the door for each student.
6. Alcohol detection devices will be used to screen students for entry to dances and at other times per Board of Education Policy 5131.62.
7. Set-up crews are expected no later than 6:30 PM and will be expected to clean up after the dance.
8. Special rules regarding times and cost will apply to dances such as semi formal and prom. These events can have higher fees due to expenses.

Dress Code

While the type of clothing one decides upon wearing is often a matter of personal taste, certain standards with regard to attire should be followed while a person is in school. At any time when a student's clothing is deemed inappropriate, the student may be directed to call home or return home to find more suitable school attire. Other disciplinary consequences may be assigned for repeated or willful violations of the dress code.

Dress Code Requirements:

1. For health and safety reasons, anyone who enters any part of the school building must wear shoes. For safety purposes, footwear policies in labs, food service, PE, and technology classes is at the teacher's discretion.
2. Pants / Shorts must be worn on the hips and waist at all times.
3. A complete top that covers the midriff and chest must be worn during the school day. Sleeveless tops should completely cover undergarments. Tops of dresses must also comply with this requirement. See-through clothing that exposes undergarments are also prohibited.
4. Any clothing with vulgar, profane, lewd, or disruptive language or clothing bearing illustrations that promote alcohol, tobacco, any other forms of substance use and guns or violence is prohibited.
5. The hoods of hooded sweatshirts or other forms of attire must not be worn in the school building.
6. Sunglasses may not be worn anywhere in the school building unless required by a doctor's order.
7. Spiked or studded rings, bracelets, belts, collars, or other articles of attire with spikes attached are prohibited.
8. Individual curriculum areas will establish regulations for safety where and when necessary.
9. The administration may prohibit any attire deemed:
 - a. unsafe either for the student, or those around the student;

- b. disruptive of school operations and the education process in general;
- c. contrary to law.

The administration reserves the right to dismiss any student who is not in compliance with the dress code. Any student who is defiant of dress code rules and causes disruption to the learning environment may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Exceptions: Exceptions to respect religious customs can be made with prior administrative approval. In the event of a heating system failure, a staff member who has received administrative approval may allow students to wear coats and jackets in a cold classroom. The administration may, on a limited basis, allow the wearing of prohibited articles of clothing in the interest of school spirit in events such as pep rallies or as a part of charitable fund-raising activities.

Driving Privileges

Driving a vehicle to Somers High School is a privilege given to students based on rules and regulations administered by its staff. All the rules of road safety apply on the school grounds, including passenger restrictions for new drivers. The speed limit on school grounds is 15 MPH, which is the legal limit for all school zones. Once student drivers and their passengers enter the school building to start the school day, they must obtain permission from the Main Office to return to their vehicle should a need arise before dismissal time. Those who do not obtain permission will face disciplinary consequences.

Infractions of safety and discipline rules can result in loss or suspension of driving privileges without reimbursement. Of special concern will be the monitoring of tardiness and the leaving of school grounds without permission.

Safety must be everyone's primary concern. Thus, good judgment and mature responsibility is expected in respect to the use of motor vehicles. Abuse of common safety regulations of the law will result in forfeiture of driving privileges and possible referral to local police. The Administration may assign other consequences for moving violations.

Parking Regulations

Licensed students may contact the main office staff to arrange for a parking permit. Students who earn the privilege to drive a vehicle and who have submitted the required paperwork and parking fee will be assigned a designated parking spot in the student parking area. The fee will be \$100 for the year. Cars registered after the first semester will have a fee of \$50. After the third quarter, a \$25 fee will apply. There will be no other pro-rating. Any student who parks on campus without administrative approval is subject to disciplinary consequences.

Parking request forms are available in the main office. Requests must be filled out completely, signed by all required, and returned to the main office for issue of a parking permit. All hold list items including detentions must be settled before the assignment of a parking space.

Permits, once issued, must be on display on vehicle at all times. Eligible juniors and seniors will be granted parking space on a space available basis with preference being given to seniors. In some cases, juniors may have to relinquish their spaces for seniors with as little as one day's notice. In such cases, refunds will be consistent with billing rates as explained above.

Students granted parking permits must park in their assigned space. Students are not permitted to park in the Somers Elementary School, M.B.A. Middle School, the Somers Public Library, the SHS Faculty, or the Parks and Recreation Field Road parking lots. Students are expected to honor the no parking fire lanes in front of and adjacent to the school building at all times. Student vehicles should not be parked in faculty-reserved areas, handicapped areas, visitor areas, or on the grass. Students should not move their cars out of the student lot after school unless they are leaving campus, as this creates extra traffic and limits space for visitors. Disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to suspension or loss of privilege, will apply for violations of the parking rules. Somers High School is not liable for damage to vehicles parked on school property.

Drop-off and Pick-up of Students

To avoid congestion and corresponding safety issues, please review the following drop-off and pick-up instructions. Of special concern is bus safety. At no time may a school bus be passed when in operation and especially when lights are on, signaling picking up or dropping off of passengers. The police will invoke severe penalties for the breaking of safety rules regarding school buses.

Morning Drop-off

All drivers, including parents/guardians, are prohibited from driving their vehicles into the faculty parking lot to drop off riders as this blocks handicapped and other parking spots and makes an unsafe situation for pedestrians.

Students should be dropped off as follows:

1. Cars must pull through the elementary school drive, down to the exit from the SHS faculty lot (**without driving into the faculty lot**). Students must be dropped off at the sidewalk that crosses the road where you turn left to exit the school complex. (Students must walk on the sidewalk, not in the faculty parking area.)
2. Cars may enter the bus drop-off area on the main circle, **except during the peak time between 7:15 and 7:35**. In the event there is a bus unloading, drivers must not pass the bus when students are disembarking.

Afternoon Pick-up

Parents and guardians may pick up students at the entrance to the faculty parking lot as described above. **Drivers must not enter the bus line or pull into the faculty parking lot during peak time between 2:15 and 2:45 p.m.**

Early Release and Late Arrival Privileges

There can be first period late arrival and last period early release for juniors and seniors when their study halls fall during these times. This privilege is given at the discretion of the school administration and may be revoked based on the student's academic performance or discipline record. Participating students must have parental permission.

Students in grades 11 and 12 are academically eligible for early dismissal and late arrival if they have achieved in the immediately preceding marking period:

- 1) A grade point average no lower than C-
- 2) No failing grades

Eligibility for these privileges will be reviewed quarterly with submission of the appropriate permission forms available in the Counseling and Career Center. This privilege can be revoked by administration for disciplinary measures.

After signing out of school in the afternoon, students are not to return and loiter around the school building while classes are in session. Students who fail to sign in and out of school in the main office will risk losing this privilege and be returned to study hall.

Due to COVID-19, early release and late arrival privileges have been extended to underclassmen. Students who are passing all classes may be granted late arrival and early release privileges. These privileges allow students who have written parental permission to arrive late to school or to leave early if they do not have a class scheduled during the first or last blocks of the day. Families must arrange their own transportation for students who would like to take advantage of this opportunity. For the 2020-21 school year, we are extending this privilege to all eligible students grades 9-12.

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco (BOE Policy 5131.6)

It is the policy of the schools to take police action in the handling of incidents in the schools involving the possession, sale and /or use of behavior affecting substances. These substances shall include, but not be limited to marijuana and alcohol.

In the interest of maintenance, health, and safety, school and police authorities may inspect properties. Inspections for the location of drugs, narcotics, liquor, weapons, poisons, and missing properties are matters relating to health and safety and may be regarded as subject to reasonable search by school personnel.

Drugs and Alcohol

The Board of Education prohibits student possession, use, and/or distribution of any drugs, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia or being

under the influence of any drug or alcohol. Any student found to be violating this student conduct policy will be dealt with in accordance with the regulations set by the school system. The consequences of such violations may ultimately result in expulsion from school and/or criminal prosecution.

Recognizing the potential of each student and that drug or alcohol abuse and dependency can seriously impair a student's ability to learn, it is the policy of the schools to take positive actions to prevent drug and alcohol abuse. These actions will be through education, early intervention, parental involvement, medical and/or assessment referral, and police referral in the handling of incidents in the schools involving the possession, sale, and/or use of behavior-affecting substances. These substances shall include but not be limited to marijuana, LSD, inhalants (which have behavior affecting ingredients), alcohol, and barbiturates (cf. 6164.11 - Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol).

School properties may be inspected by school authorities in the interest of maintenance, health, and safety. Inspections for the location of drugs, narcotics, liquor, weapons, poisons and missing properties are matters relating to health and safety and may be regarded as reasonable purposes for inspection by school personnel (cf. 5145.12 - Search and Seizure).

Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interests of the student, school population, and community in mind. Personal privacy rights of students shall be protected as provided by law.

Tobacco / e-Cigarettes

Smoking, possession of smoking materials, including e-cigarettes and vaping products, or other use of tobacco products by students of Somers Public Schools is prohibited by BOE Policy 5131.6.

- In all school buildings;
- Any student found to be in violation of the tobacco/smoking policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Additionally, each student found to be in violation of the tobacco policy will be referred to the Connecticut State Police for prosecution under Connecticut General Statute 1-21b.
- On school grounds and recreational fields;
- On transportation provided by the Board of Education, or at any time when the student is subject to the supervision of designated school personnel such as when the student is at any school function, extracurricular events, field trips, or school-related activities such as a work-study program.

An ongoing program of student support and counseling will be offered to provide support for students who wish to break the smoking habit.

Emergency Procedures

According to state law, it is necessary for a school to conduct regular fire/evacuation drills and lockdown drills. Lockdowns may be the result of a number of emergency situations within the building, the school campus, or the greater community. Building evacuations and lockdowns will be coordinated with emergency personnel. Student use of cell phones during emergency operations without the express consent of adults in charge is strictly forbidden. Emergency personnel will coordinate information communicated from the school to protect everyone's safety.

Due to COVID-19, emergency drill practices may be adapted as indicated by the State of Connecticut.

Fire Drills/Building Evacuation

The following procedures are to be observed by all students during a building evacuation:

1. Move quietly and together listening to the directions given by your classroom teacher or other adult during the evacuation.
2. Move as quickly as possible in a single-file line and leave the building by the designated exit.
3. Once outside the building, remain with your class, close to the adult to whom you are assigned.

4. If you are outside of the classroom when the alarm sounds, leave through the nearest exit and report to the flagpole in front of the building so you can be accounted for.
5. Teachers will take attendance outside and upon returning to the building.
6. An audible signal will designate the proper time to return to the building.
7. If the evacuation occurs during passing time between classes or before or after school, students should report to the track area and find their advisor. Advisors will be lined up alphabetically along the fence by the track. In case of snow, line-ups will be in the student parking lot.
8. If the evacuation occurs during the lunch block, students and their classroom teachers (who are out of class at lunch) will report to the track with the teachers lining up alphabetically. (Teachers whose last names begin with A will be closest to the high school building, lining up in ascending order; teachers at the end of the alphabet will be closest to the elementary school). All other students and teachers who are in class will exit together and will report to their usual evacuation spot.

Lockdowns

The following procedures are to be observed by all students during a lockdown:

1. Move quietly to the designated area within the room where you are out of sight.
2. Remain silent and wait for further instructions from the staff member you are with.
3. If the lockdown is announced when you are not in a room, retreat immediately to the nearest occupied room.

Secure School

A secure school can be initiated when suspicious activity or crime has been reported to have occurred in the community surrounding the school. Occupants of the building are notified of the increased security and exterior doors, interior doors and windows are closed and locked. Students and teachers are advised to stay put in the classroom, and normal school operations continue.

A secure school may also be initiated in the event of a medical emergency in order to clear hallways for emergency medical personnel and to maintain the privacy of the individual(s) involved in the medical situation.

Financial Assistance

Students will not be denied the opportunity to participate in any class or mandated school sponsored activity because of inability to pay for material fees, transportation costs, admission prices, or any other related expenses. Any student who needs financial assistance for school activities should contact a school counselor, advisor, or administrator to request confidential help.

Financial/Personal Obligations/Hold List

Failure to pay for damaged or lost books or school equipment or noncompliance with school discipline rules can result in the following courses of action:

1. restriction from participating in any athletic team or in other extracurricular activities;
2. withholding or suspension of parking privileges;
3. withholding of records and transcripts to be forwarded to the next grade, secondary school or college;
4. not issuing textbooks at the start of the following school year;

5. time spent during the summer to complete obligations; and
6. withholding from and/or suspension from school or senior activities.

Food/Allergies and Special Dietary Needs

The Board recognizes that students with documented life-threatening food allergies are considered disabled and are covered by The Disabilities Act and Public Law 93-112 and Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A clearly defined "504 Accommodation Plan" shall be developed and implemented if necessary for all such identified students in which necessary accommodations are made to ensure full participation of identified students in school activities. Such plan shall be signed by the appropriate staff, the parent/guardian of the student and the student's physician, if so required. (BOE Policy 5141.25)

Further, in accordance with BOE allergy policies, students shall not bring latex based products into the school building, such as latex balloons, gloves, and glue. Somers Public Schools is a latex-free district.

Gambling

No gambling or related activities are permitted at Somers High School.

Graduation Ceremony and Senior Activities

The graduation ceremony is the highlight of the high school experience for most students. Leading up to graduation are the traditional activities of prom, the senior outing, the senior banquet, and senior awards ceremony. Students should be advised that participation in these activities is a privilege that can be revoked by the administration, regardless if payment for such activities has been submitted. *Students may be excluded from any or all of these activities for disciplinary purposes in cases where there are serious or repeated behavior infractions.* For the safety and enjoyment of all, students need to behave responsibly and respectfully at all of these events. Alcohol detection devices may be used at any or all of these events.

Hazing/Initiation (BOE Policy 5131.10)

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the school district and are prohibited at all times. Under this policy any individual engaging in hazing activities, including being a recipient, may be subject to discipline upon investigation.

Hazing means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a risk of physical or emotional harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization or for any other purpose. The term hazing includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, or placing a substance on the body that may cause harm.
2. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics, or other activity that subjects a person to a risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health of a person.
3. Any activity of affiliation or initiation involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects a person to a risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental health of a person.
4. Any intentional activity of affiliation or initiation that intimidates or threatens a person with ostracism, that subjects a person to significant embarrassment or humiliation that significantly and adversely affects the mental health or dignity of a person, or discourages a person from remaining in school.
5. Any activity of affiliation or initiation that causes or requires a person to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies or regulation.

Related school policy notes that:

1. No student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall plan, direct, encourage, aid, engage, or consent to hazing.

2. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate hazing.
3. Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
4. Hazing activities are seriously disruptive of the educational process in that they involve the students with violence, threats of violence, or emotional harm. This policy applies to behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and/or after school hours.
5. A person who engages in an act that violates school policy, including this policy, or law in order to initiate another person or to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization shall be subject to discipline for that act.
6. The school district will investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

Reporting Procedures:

1. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy.
2. The building administration is responsible for receiving reports of hazing at the building level. Any person may report hazing directly to the Superintendent or his/her designee.
3. The building administration will notify the Superintendent of any reported incidents of hazing.
4. Teachers, administrators, volunteers, contractors, and other employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events, which might include hazing. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute hazing, must inform the building administration immediately.
5. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing by a non-participant will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, education, or participation in school programs or work assignments.

Action Taken will be:

1. Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by school district officials, local police, or a third party designated by the school district.
2. The school district may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students, or others pending completion of an investigation of hazing.
3. Upon completion of the investigation the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, detention, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, applicable statutory authority, including school district policies and regulations.

Reprisal

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged hazing, or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or against any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such hazing. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment.

Insurance

School insurance is offered through a specific program. Information is distributed to all families via Infosnap at the beginning of each academic year. While the program is not mandatory, it is suggested that parents take advantage of the opportunity to provide adequate protection for their students while in school.

Lavatory Use

Students who wish to use the lavatory during class time must get a pass from the classroom teacher. In order to access the lavatory, students will need to use their ID badge key card. In addition to unlocking the main lavatory door, the key card records

student traffic in the bathrooms. Students are not to be in the lavatories during class time without explicit permission from the nurse, main office, or classroom teacher. Students found entering, in, or leaving lavatories without an appropriate pass, may be assigned disciplinary consequences with consequences escalating for repeat offenders.

Students loitering in the lavatory will be subject to disciplinary consequences as well. Between periods, students may use the lavatory within the passing time only. Under no circumstances may a student go to a lavatory instead of the nurse due to sickness. While at lunch, students use the lavatories adjacent to the cafeteria only. Locker room lavatories are for physical education classes only. During class time, students who are on pass restriction must use the lavatory in the nurse's office.

Due to COVID-19, student key cards will not be required to enter the bathroom.

Library Media Center

The Library Media Center staff welcomes all students from 7:20 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. The media center opens early and closes late to allow our students a full opportunity to complete assignments and have access to materials and media in all formats. Books circulate for 4 weeks with renewals possible. Lost and damaged items will be billed to the student at the replacement cost.

Students are encouraged to participate in the library media program by working in the library as student aides. Students interested in this opportunity should see the library media specialist for an application. This is an excellent opportunity for students to boost their high school resumé in preparation for college transcripts.

The Library Media Center staff is committed to providing an atmosphere that is conducive to study. In order to accomplish this goal it is expected that students come to the media center prepared to complete assignments, read or study. Consideration of others and cooperation is expected at all times. Misbehavior may result in a disciplinary referral and/or loss of library privileges.

The Library Media Center and MAC Lab are open to students throughout the day and closed only when they are in use by a full class of students. Access is from regularly scheduled study halls only. Students may not come to the media center from a regularly scheduled class unless directed by a teacher. Students are expected to be working on school assignments as is dictated by Board of Education Policy code 6141.32. Students should be aware that Board of Education policy reserves the right for staff to monitor computer usage by electronic means. Language and policy code numbers are posted on all desktop computer terminals in the media center.

Inappropriate usage can result in a loss of privileges and disciplinary referral. Food may not be consumed in the media center. Water is the only beverage allowed, and students are requested to handle this carefully around our computers.

Due to COVID-19, the LMC will be open from 7:40 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Though library circulation, access to MakerSpace, and services will be restricted during the pandemic, online assistance from LMC personnel will be available virtually.

Lockers

Each student is assigned a hall locker for his/her four years at Somers High School. All lockers are to be kept locked when not in use to prevent problems with lost textbooks and personal items. All lockers are the property of the high school and are lent to students for their convenience during the school year. School lockers are to be kept in good order and not abused. If a locker is in need of repair, students are to obtain a work order from the main office. Students should not attempt to repair their own lockers. Any damage done to lockers will be the responsibility of the person to whom it was lent for the current year. Under Board policy "locks and lockers are the property of the Board and are subject to search when and if the administration has reason to suspect that materials injurious to the best interest of the school are being kept on school property." Students may not bring in locks from home and apply them to any lockers within the school. Students are warned not to bring large sums of money or valuables to school and leave them in lockers located in hallways, locker rooms, or the music room. Students must not allow other students to store belongings in their locker. Liability for these items remains with the student regardless of ownership. All belongings must be locked in the hall and gym lockers. Students who, against the recommendation of the school, bring personal electronic devices to school, are advised to lock them in their locker during the school day.

Due to COVID-19 and the need to promote social distancing and sanitation, gym and hallway lockers will not be issued for the 2020-21 school year.

Lost and Found

Any articles that are found in the school or on school grounds should be turned in at the main office. Unclaimed articles will be discarded at the end of the school year. Loss of personal or school property should be reported to the main office promptly.

Lunch Rules and Regulations

1. Students are assigned specific lunch periods. Students may go to their lockers before arriving at the cafeteria, but under no circumstances are they to be loitering in the hall during the lunch period when classes are in session. Students are expected to walk quietly to and from the cafeteria so as not to disturb classes that are in session. Students will have approximately five minutes to arrive on time.
2. Students may not leave the lunchroom to go to any classroom or other areas until the bell has ended the lunch period unless they have a pass from the receiving teacher. Only students who have been granted permission by a lunch duty monitor may leave prior to the passing bell.
3. Students acting in an undisciplined manner may lose the privilege of eating in the cafeteria. These students will be able to bring lunch from home and eat under supervision elsewhere. The administration will not tolerate students showing poor manners and not cleaning up their area when finished eating.

Eating Outside

This area is located adjacent to the cafeteria and extends along the sidewalk up to the two brick pillars. Students may only enter or exit this area from the cafeteria doors. While traditionally the area has been open only to seniors and only during lunch, due to COVID-19 and concerns about social distancing, the privilege of eating outside has been opened up to students in all grade levels for the current school year. Teachers on duty will strictly monitor student behavior. Students are not permitted to play football, frisbee, wiffleball, or similar games. While in this area, students must remain visible to staff members on duty in the cafe. Therefore, students must not stray away from the immediate vicinity of the picnic tables. **This privilege may be suspended if students are not keeping the area clean or do not demonstrate positive behavior.**

Passes

In order to use the bathroom, drinking fountain, or to go to their lockers, students must be issued a hall pass from their teacher which details the student's destination as well as dismissal times from the classroom. Students must arrive at their destinations indicated on the pass within three minutes of the time on the pass or receive a tardy and/or office referral. Disciplinary consequences will be applied in situations when a student is not in possession of a school pass, if the pass has been falsified, and / or if the student is not in class or the appropriate room designated on the pass.

Property Damage

It is the policy of the Board to hold pupils responsible for any loss of or damage to the property of the Town of Somers or its employees under the jurisdiction of the Board when such loss or damage occurs through fault of the student. Any student damaging or defacing school or personal property will be financially liable for restoring that property to its original (new) condition regardless of the condition of the property at the time of the destructive act. In addition, anyone who witnesses such an act and fails to report it to the proper authorities will be considered as having contributed to that action. Such charges for damaged property should be exactly those that the school must incur to repair the damage or replace the damaged item(s). Additional disciplinary action may also be taken by the school administration.

Public Display of Affection - PDA

Students may not engage in PDA inappropriate for a public building. Students engaged in such behavior must stop when told to do so by a staff member. If this warning does not change the behavior, the parents of both students will be notified and asked to come in for a conference. If the behavior still does not change, additional school discipline will be imposed via a discipline referral. The school staff and administration determine what is appropriate behavior in this area.

Sexual Harassment Policy (BOE Policy 5145.5)

The Board of Education is committed to safeguarding the right of all students with the school district to a learning environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment does not only depend upon the offender's intention but also upon how the target perceives the behavior or is affected by it. The Board recognizes that sexual harassment can originate from a person of either sex against a person of the opposite or same sex, and from peers as well as school personnel.

Therefore, the Board condemns all unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature which is either designed to extort sexual favors from a student that will influence any decision concerning that student, or which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. The Board also condemns any retaliatory behavior against complainants or any witnesses.

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the alleged misconduct immediately so that appropriate corrective action, up to and including significant disciplinary action, may be taken at once. In the absence of a victim's complaint, the Board, upon learning of, or having reason to suspect, the occurrence of any sexual misconduct, will ensure that an investigation is promptly commenced by appropriate individuals.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

A. Sexual harassment can usually be defined by three specific types: verbal, non-verbal, and physical:

Verbal: Humor, jokes and stories about sex and sexual behavior; repeated phone calls with requests for contact; sexual propositions or demands; sexual innuendo, insults and threats; statements designed to humiliate or embarrass; stereotypical comments based on gender, sexual identity or sexual orientation; vulgar sex-based or related language.

Non-verbal: Obscene and/or physically intimidating gestures; whistling, leering, suggestive or insulting sounds, obscene gestures; display of pornographic and/or obscene materials, sex-based graffiti.

Physical: Inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, stroking, grabbing; physically threatening behaviors such as forceful restraint, forceful contact, fondling, stalking; coerced sexual or sex-related activity.

B. Sexual harassment is prohibited in the school system. Sexual harassment can occur when, but is not limited to:

1. When submission to, or rejection of, conduct by an individual is used as the basis of academic or other school-related decisions affecting a student.
2. When the conduct has the purpose or the effect of having a negative influence upon the individual's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.
3. When suggestive or obscene letters, notes, invitations, derogatory comments, slurs, jokes, epithets, assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement, leering, gestures, display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons are directed to a student
4. When continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome.
5. When coercive sexual behavior by district personnel is used to control, influence, or affect the educational opportunities, grades, and/or learning environment of students, including promises or threats regarding grades, course admission, performance evaluations, or recommendations; enhancement or limitation of student benefits or services (e.g. scholarships, financial aid, work study job).
6. When inappropriate attention of a sexual nature as defined above from peer(s), i.e. student to student, student to school employee occurs.

Complaint Procedure

1. If a student believes that he/she is being or has been harassed, that person should immediately inform the harasser that his/her behavior is unwelcome, offensive, in poor taste, unprofessional, or highly inappropriate.
2. As soon as a student feels that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, he or she should make a complaint to the appropriate school personnel, guidance counselor, social worker, teacher, or the principal or his/her designee.

Skateboarding/Rollerblading

Skateboarding and rollerblading are not permitted on sidewalks, stairs, roads, or areas adjacent to the school buildings at any time, as this can be a hazard to others.

Study Halls

All students assigned to study hall may fall into one of two categories depending upon space considerations. Classroom study halls will be quiet in nature and be used for individual study, review, reading and homework. Cafeteria study hall will be more casual in nature but still assigned by school counselors for the purpose of study, review, reading and homework.

All grade 11 and 12 students will initially be assigned to cafeteria study halls. All sophomores and freshmen will be assigned to classroom study halls. Students wishing to change their assignment to a quiet study should see their school counselor. The privilege of cafeteria study is contingent upon academic success and compliance with behavioral rules and regulations (11th and 12th graders may be assigned classroom study hall). For safety reasons, all students must remain inside the cafeteria.

Student Activities & Interscholastic Athletics

Student Activities

The student activities program at Somers High School has been developed to provide vital experiences that supplement the regular academic program. It is in the student activities programs that direct experience in the development of character, personality and citizenship is attained. There are four primary purposes of this program that embraces social changes and needs of contemporary society as well as individual needs:

1. To open new fields of interests that may be pursued outside of school;
2. To use recreational time for worthwhile activities;
3. To give students an opportunity for self-expression; and
4. To provide opportunities for the coordination of mind and body.

Although the activity program seeks to educate students for creative use of leisure time, preparation for active participation is its ultimate goal. Its effect on the spirit of the total community should never be underestimated nor undervalued. It is our hope that all students will join the faculty and administration in helping develop our school to its fullest potential and that they will make their stay a positive and productive experience.

A list of activities available to students follows. We strongly urge all students to become active in as many different activities as possible:

Athletics	FBLA	SAC
BETA Club	GSA	SADD
Big Brothers / Sisters	Helping Hands	Scriptura
Class Officers	Interact	SSS
Drama	Newspaper	Unity Team
eSports	Robotics	

Suggestions for new clubs and activities are always welcome. However, they must be approved by the principal and have an adult sponsor. All activities must be scheduled at least two weeks in advance. School sponsored events, whether on or off campus, are a continuation of the educational program of Somers High School. All school rules and guidelines for behavior will apply. Some clubs or organizations will have by-laws or contracts as guidelines for participation. These guidelines or contracts are approved by the administration and will be reviewed at the beginning of the year with the expectation that rules and guidelines of each club are respected and followed. With any extra-curricular activity, participation is a privilege and not a right for students at Somers High School. Students who do not follow the clubs rules and guidelines may be deemed ineligible with administrative approval.

Due to COVID-19, clubs with more than ten members will meet virtually. Students who are participating in remote learning may participate remotely as well. Some clubs may not be offered.

Interscholastic Athletics

Philosophy and Board of Education Policy

Athletics at Somers High School is considered an integral part of the school's educational program. Interscholastic competition provides students with physical, mental, and emotional experiences that benefit not only the individual, but also the school and the whole community. The participants have an opportunity to acquire qualities of fitness, self-discipline, loyalty, and sacrifice. For the privilege of participating in athletics, students must realize that more is expected of them. Sacrifices must be made and special rules and regulations adhered to per team.

CIAC-NCCC Membership

Somers High School is a member of the North Central Connecticut Conference (NCCC) along with Bolton, Canton, Classical Magnet, Coventry, Ellington, Granby, East Granby, East Windsor, HMTCA, Rockville, SMSA, Stafford, Suffield, Windsor Locks. Somers is also a part of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) and is qualified to compete with Class S schools in state tournaments.

Athletic Policy

The purpose of school athletics is both educational and recreational. Athletics can play an important role in the learning and growth process of the student and in his/her character development, encouraging the acceptance of responsibility to self, team, and school.

The athletic program should encourage participation by as many boys and girls as possible and should be carried out with the best interests of the participants as the primary consideration. This should be done without unreasonable interference with other school obligations. The program should discourage any pressures that might tend to neglect good sportsmanship, good mental health, and the development of good attitudes.

Each level of sports in the Somers Public Schools has a certain purpose in the development of the athletic team.

The role of the middle school level is to:

- develop skills and learn the sports;
- enable the student to determine if he/she wants to continue in the sport;
- provide fair playing time for all on the team during a short interscholastic season.

The role of Junior Varsity sports is to:

- further develop skills;
- increase the intensity of competition;
- prepare athletes for varsity sports and competition; and
- place more emphasis on winning.

The role of Varsity sports is to:

- develop the skills and physical conditioning of the athlete to the fullest potential;
- allow the talented athlete to excel and to reach a higher level of competition;
- allow the athlete to be a role model for younger athletes; and
- have more focus on winning, but not at the expense of good sportsmanship, character building, and enjoyment.

The following guidelines will be followed in the implementation of the school athletic program:

1. Rules and regulations in the Somers High School Student Handbook shall be adhered to by all coaches and students.
2. Academics will take precedence over sports schedules and activities. Whenever possible, students will notify coaches when academic issues may impact the student's full participation in a sport.

3. Coaches will develop a written set of expectations and a schedule of practices and games, to be followed as closely as possible, to give to athletes and parents. Orientation meetings with parents are encouraged to provide more explanations concerning the needs of each particular team.
4. Six days shall be the maximum number of days per week for practices, games, meetings, etc... In unusual circumstances, the Athletic Manager and Principal may approve a seventh day.
5. The length of practices should not exceed 2 1/2 hours; exceeding the limit should be pre-approved by the Athletic Manager and Principal. Practices should end promptly at the scheduled time.
6. If the practice time has been exceeded, notification should be given to the Athletic Manager and Principal within twenty-four hours.
7. Sunday practices will be avoided. If necessary, they may be scheduled after 12:30 p.m. with the approval from the Athletic Manager and Principal. Allowances must be made for athletes with religious or family obligations.
8. During vacations or holidays students may have academic or family obligations. The coach should be notified at the beginning of the season or as soon as an absence is anticipated. While emphasizing the importance of commitment to team, students will not be excluded from a team for meeting these obligations but can expect that their absence away from the team may affect playing time, position, etc... when they return.
9. Participation in other school extracurricular activities is encouraged. Athletes must notify the coach ahead of time and report to practice as soon as the other activities have concluded. Abuse of this guideline may result in disciplinary consequences for the athlete.
10. Student athletes are expected to travel to and from team events on the team bus. In exceptional circumstances, the Administration may give prior approval for a student to travel with a parent.
11. The following are not tolerated in any athletic activity:
 - a. demeaning, abusive, or profane language (coach or student);
 - b. disrespect toward coaches, athletes, officials, or spectators; and
 - c. use of any physical force beyond what is involved in the normal playing of the sport.

Spectator Conduct

Student spectators represent their school just as the athletes do. The conduct of student spectators and others at athletic contests is as important to the climate of sportsmanship as is the quality of athletic play on the field. All spectators therefore should:

1. Refrain from abusive remarks;
2. Recognize fine play and sportsmanship on the part of both teams;
3. Be considerate of opposing teams' players, coaches, cheerleaders;
4. Exercise self-control and personal responsibility in relation to others;
5. Familiarize themselves with the spirit and rules of the game; and
6. At all times abide by all rules and regulations for appropriate and safe behavior.

Participation on Athletic Teams

Somers High School offers a comprehensive and well-rounded athletic program. Every student is encouraged to participate in one or more sports. The following sports are offered at Somers High School:

Fall	Winter	Spring
Field Hockey	Basketball	Track & Field
Soccer	Wrestling	Lacrosse
Football Coop	Hockey Coop	Softball
Cross Country	Cheerleading	Baseball
Girls Swimming Coop	Indoor Track	Golf

Attendance / Early Release for student athletes

All student athletes must be in school for 4.5 hours in order to be eligible for participation in sports. Students cannot leave school early and participate in sports unless they are juniors or seniors who are eligible for early dismissal, or have the appropriate documentation submitted for medically approved personal reasons by the administration.

Student Sports – Concussion, Head Injuries - (BOE Policy 5141.7)

The Board of Education recognizes that concussions and head injuries are commonly reported injuries in children and adolescents who participate in sports and other recreational activities. The Board acknowledges the risk of catastrophic injuries or deaths are significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed.

For the school year beginning July 1, 2011, and each school year thereafter, and after the completion of the initial training course regarding concussions and head injuries, each coach shall annually review current and relevant information regarding concussions and head injuries prior to the start of the coaching assignment. This annual review is not required in any year the coach is completing a refresher course. Beginning July 1, 2015, and each school year thereafter, a coach must complete an approved refresher course not later than five years after the initial training course in order to maintain his/her coaching permit and to coach in the District.

The District will also utilize protocols developed by the Connecticut Concussion Task Force, information promulgated by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Association (CIAC), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other pertinent information and forms to inform and educate coaches, youth athletes and their parents and/or guardians of the nature and risk of concussions or head injuries, including the dangers associated with continuing to play after a concussion or head injury.

Annually the District will distribute a head injury and concussion information sheet to all parents/guardians of student participants in competitive sport activities. The parent/guardian and student must return a signed acknowledgement indicating that they have reviewed and understand the information provided before the student participates in any covered activity. This acknowledgement form must be returned and be on file with the District in order for the student to be allowed to practice or compete in the sports activity.

Further, in compliance with applicable state statutes, the coach of any intramural or interscholastic athletics shall immediately remove any student athlete participating in intramural or interscholastic athletics who (1) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following an observed or suspected blow to the head or body during a practice, game or competition, (2) is diagnosed with a concussion, or (3) is otherwise suspected of having sustained a concussion or head injury because such student athlete is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred.

The coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any supervised team activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices, games or competitions, until such student athlete receives written clearance to participate in such supervised team activities involving physical exertion from a licensed healthcare professional* trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

Following medical clearance, the coach shall not permit such student athlete to participate in any full, unrestricted supervised team activities without limitations on contact or physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices, games or competitions, until such student athlete (1) no longer exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion, and (2) receives written clearance to participate in such full, unrestricted supervised team activities from a licensed healthcare professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

Concussion, Head Injury, and Cardiac Arrest Information (Online)

The District will include head injury/concussion and cardiac arrest information sheets on all online sign-ups to all parents/guardians of student athletes who participate in competitive athletic activities. The parent/guardian and student must electronically sign the online concussion and cardiac acknowledgement forms for all sports sign-ups indicating that they have reviewed and understand the information provided before the student participates in any covered activity. This online acknowledgement forms will be on file with the District in order for the student to be allowed to practice or compete in the sports activity. Coaches will review concussion and cardiac protocols with all student athletes during preseason.

All student athletes evaluated by any medical staff (including trainers) must be cleared by the appropriate medical personnel and documented through the school nurse in order to participate in sports at any level.

Substance Abuse Policy - Pertaining to athletics and extracurricular activities (adapted from MIAA policy)

Students in violation of the substance abuse policy will have a meeting with parents, coach, athletic manager and principal in order to review consequences.

During out of school suspension, students may not participate in any school activity. Terms of suspension from athletics and extracurricular activities will begin concurrently with out of school suspension.

During the season of practice or play, a student shall not use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance not prescribed by the student's doctor. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer". This standard is not intended to render "guilt by association", e.g. many student athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury, academics, or otherwise, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

Minimum Penalties:

First Violation: The student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. The student shall be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. The decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. any fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season (see below).

Second And Subsequent Violations: The student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. The decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. any fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season (see below).

If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that the student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If a student does not complete the program, the penalty reverts back to 60% of the season. The decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. any fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season (see below).

1st Offense: 25%

# of Events/Season	#Events/Penalty
1-7	1
8-11	2
12-15	3
16-19	4
20 or over	5

2nd Offense: 60%

# of Events/Season	#Events/Penalty
1-3	1
4	2
5-6	3
7-8	4
9	5
10-11	6

2nd Offense w/ Dependency Program

# of Events/Season	#Events/Penalty
1-4	1
5-7	2
8-9	3
10-12	4
13-14	5
15-17	6

12-13	7	18-19	7
14	8	20 or over	8
15-16	9		
17-18	10		
19	11		
20 or over	12		

If the athlete’s period of ineligibility extends beyond his or her current season, consequences will be exacted in the next season in which the athlete participates. The carryover period will not exceed one calendar year from the date of the offense.

These consequences will apply to in season participants. Any athlete that is not currently in season or any extracurricular activity not currently running, consequences will only be administered per BOE/Administrative Regulation policy. This policy is in effect for violations that occur on or off school grounds. Any additional penalties to the above policy made by an individual coach must be pre-approved by the athletic manager and the Building Principal.

Telephones

Office phones may be used for emergency use with the permission of the office staff. No incoming personal calls will be permitted during school unless placed by a parent through the main office. Any form of unauthorized use of classroom or office phones, or the school telephone system by students is considered to be a very serious offense.

Video Surveillance

The Board authorizes the use of video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare, security, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent.

Visitors

As a general rule, visitors are not permitted to attend classes at Somers High School. Any exception to this rule must be authorized by an administrator.

Weapons and Dangerous Instruments (BOE Policy 5131.7)

Students shall not possess firearms, knives, weapons or dangerous instruments of any kind, including martial arts weapons, or facsimiles of any of the aforementioned weapons, in school buildings, on school grounds, on school transportation or at any school-related or school-sponsored activities away from school facilities. Violators shall be subject to suspension and/or expulsion from school.

Possession of or bringing such weapons or devices on school grounds or other areas under the control of the Board of Education may also be a violation of criminal law and, therefore, any violation of this policy shall be reported immediately to the proper law enforcement agency and the Board of Education. The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall also be notified immediately. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to appropriate school disciplinary action, as well as possible criminal or civil action.

A student who, off school grounds, unlawfully possessed a firearm as defined in 18 USC 921 or used a firearm, dangerous instrument or deadly weapon in the commission of a crime as defined by law, shall be subject to expulsion proceedings and the length of the expulsion shall be one calendar year, subject to reduction on a case-by-case basis.

Chapter 5 - Student Discipline Code

Code of Conduct

Students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the educational process and the mission of the school. Disciplinary interventions will be initiated to improve behavior when it is not consistent with these goals. The administration reserves the right to apply at their discretion additional or different consequences/requirements to the guidelines outlined herein. Such consequences may include, but are not limited to students being required to provide an apology, perform community service, or participate in outside treatment programs.

Teacher Detentions

Teacher detention is assigned by the teacher and served in the classroom. It is an opportunity for the teacher and student to work out a minor behavior issue that is interfering with the learning process. The student will be given a minimum of 24 hours' notice. This detention assignment has precedence over all other after school activities. If the student is absent on the assigned day, it will be served on the day of his or her return. A student who fails to report for teacher detention will be assigned 2 office detentions.

Office Discipline Referrals (ODR)

Teachers will handle all preliminary cases of a minor nature through their own detention & parent contacts before more serious office referrals are used. Teachers will speak with the students and contact parents when issuing a minor ODR. The first two interventions for a minor discipline will be handled and documented by the classroom teacher. If a student receives a 3rd "minor", the student will receive a "major" office discipline referral which will be addressed by the administration. When appropriate, the student will be brought before the PBIS committee for possible intervention.

When a student is asked to leave the classroom for disciplinary reasons, the student must report directly to the office where the following guidelines will be followed under ordinary circumstances:

1. An administrator will ordinarily wait for verbal or written communication before administering discipline. The student will be kept in the main office or the in-school suspension room for the remainder of the class period. Teachers will forward to the office a formal referral form.
2. Teachers may request that students they send to the office receive no additional consequences from administration. Teachers will handle discipline within their class or on a one-to-one basis with the student and/or parent. Teachers are reminded that office referrals are for serious or repeated disruptive activity.
3. Students sent to the office will report there directly and will remain unless dismissed by administration. Students who refuse to report directly to the main office at the request of a staff member will be subject to more serious consequences. Under no circumstances will disruption or foul language be tolerated in the main office.

Penalties for office referrals will be applied per school year and are for generally disruptive student behavior. More serious matters will be handled on an individual basis and will result in additional sanctions. Each case will be thoroughly investigated. Retaliatory behavior against any complainants or witnesses will result in serious consequences. A complete list of infractions and corresponding consequences can be found in Appendix A.

Detention

Administration reserves the right to administer discipline for behavior that is not in the best interests of Somers High School and is detrimental to the learning process.

After-school Detention

After school detention is a program designed to minimize the loss of class time for students. Students may receive detentions from administration, faculty, or staff for violations of the discipline code. Failure to complete an assigned teacher detention will result in 2 hours office detention. Failure to complete and after-school office detention will result in a Saturday detention, and failure to complete a Saturday detention will result in suspension.

Students will be assigned detention hours on the next scheduled detention day. Detentions take place from 2:20-3:20 in Room 129 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. **Detentions take preference over other commitments except in extenuating circumstances as approved by the administration before the scheduled detention time.** Employment, athletics, and other school activities do not excuse the commitment of a student to serve detention on the assigned day.

After-school Detention Rules

1. Once students are referred to the administration for discipline code violations, an informal hearing will be conducted. If it is determined that students must serve hours, they will be served on the date assigned by the administration. If the detention is not served (or rescheduled due to approved extenuating circumstances) on the assigned day, the administration has the option to withhold privileges (such as participation on teams and in clubs), double the hours assigned or assign Saturday detention. **Once assigned a detention, it is the student's responsibility to remember the date(s) when the hour(s) must be served.**
2. Students who are absent on the day of detention are required to serve on the next detention day.
3. School closing for any reason will automatically result in all detentions being rescheduled for the next detention day.
4. All time in detention must be served starting promptly at 2:20 PM. Students arriving late will not be admitted without a pass from the administration.
5. In general, the detention room is to be treated like a quiet study hall. No personal electronic devices, food, drink or games are to be brought into the room. The overall supervision and determinant of discipline in the after school detention room is left to the final judgment of the detention supervisor.
6. If students are disruptive, the supervisor will issue a warning. If they are disruptive again, they will be asked to leave and will not be credited with any detention time. The student will then be assigned a Saturday detention.
7. At the discretion of the administration, individual detentions may be scheduled at other times.

Saturday Detention Rules

Saturday detention hours are 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. Detention will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. and will take place in the Senior section of the SHS cafeteria and parents are responsible for arranging transportation to and from the school. In the event of non-compliant behavior or illness, a parent will be called to transport the student home. Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. will not be admitted.

Students must bring study materials and must be engaged in work throughout Saturday detention. If students do not bring adequate study and reading materials to occupy a three-hour period, parent(s) will be contacted, the student will be asked to leave, and the student will not receive credit for Saturday detention.

Seats will be assigned by the proctors. Students who are asked to change seats must do so quietly and respectfully. Students must check around their seating area at the start of Saturday detention for any writing / graffiti / scratches on their desk or table. Students will be responsible for any vandalism that is found in their seating area that is not reported at the start of the day.

While serving detention, students will not be permitted to:

- Use cell phones / portable video games
- Go to their locker
- Talk / communicate with other students

- Sleep or rest head on table
- Other activities at proctor discretion

In order to receive credit for Saturday detention, students must be cooperative for the entire detention period. Students who do not comply with the rules and procedures of Saturday detention will be asked to leave. Parents will be contacted to pick up the student and the student will be assigned an out of school suspension for Monday following Saturday detention.

Students may use the restroom 1 at a time and will be escorted there by a proctor. Trips to the lavatory must be kept to a minimum.

If a student is ill on the scheduled date of Saturday detention, a doctor's note will be required upon return to school in order to reschedule without consequence. Students who do not attend their assigned Saturday detention (for a reason other than physician-documented illness) will be assigned an out of school suspension the following Monday and will not be permitted to make up work missed during that OSS. *Repeated suspensions or an accumulation of detentions during the school year may result in the loss of class activities, such as field trips, extracurricular activities, and other special privileges such as student parking and senior activities.*

Suspension

Students who commit repeated or serious infractions of school rules may be assigned a suspension. Being suspended means that the student will not be permitted to attend regular classes or take part in school activities during or after school. Suspension will be served either in school or out of school. Out-of-school suspension will be used for the most serious of school offenses where there is concern about the disruption of the educational process.

The purpose of the suspension is to emphasize that a student has seriously jeopardized their position in the school. Upon returning to a regular school schedule, a conference may be held to discuss a plan and its implementation for re-admittance to the classroom. The student is required to make up all class work during suspension. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with teachers to make up tests, quizzes, and projects missed during the period of suspension.

Repeated suspensions or an accumulation of detentions during the school year may result in the loss of class activities, such as field trips, extracurricular activities and other special privileges such as student parking and senior activities.

Examples of possible violations resulting in suspension are: cutting class, failure to serve detention, theft, vandalism, fighting, harassment, threats, smoking / vaping on school property, possession of illegal substances, and possession of weapons

In School Suspension (ISS)

In school suspension is assigned for serious infractions of the disciplinary code or when after school detentions prove to be inadequate deterrents to inappropriate behavior. In school suspension is designed to remove the misbehaving student from his regularly scheduled class or classes for a prescribed period of time while minimizing the impact of learning lost because of absence from school, which may be a factor during out of school suspension. Students who are assigned an in school suspension may be removed from one class period on consecutive days, or they may be confined to the in school suspension room for an entire school day. The number of days students are assigned to in school suspension is determined by the administration. The administration also reserves the right to place a student in ISS immediately if administration feels such action is warranted.

Students who are assigned to in school suspension are responsible for obtaining their assignments from their teachers before the day on which the suspension time is to be served. Students must arrive at the main office by 7:40 a.m. with all of their necessary work materials. The in-school suspension proctor will meet the student at the main office. The 7:40 a.m. arrival time also applies to students who normally have late arrival privileges. All personal electronic devices will be handed in to the Assistant Principal at 7:40 am before the student goes into ISS. Students may have access to technology from the school if required. Students who usually have early dismissal privileges must remain in the ISS room until the end of the regular school day. Students are expected to complete assignments in earnest and speak only about work-related topics when the supervisor has granted permission to do so. Students are required to complete assignments each period during ISS. Failure to complete assignments will result in students repeating the period if ISS in which no work was completed. Students who do not complete assigned work for more than one period can result in the student serving the ISS again to fulfill the consequence requirement of ISS. At all times students are expected to act in a respectful and cooperative manner and to comply with the requests and directives of the in school suspension supervisor. Failure to meet any one of these responsibilities or expectations may result in the assignment of additional

consequences as determined by the administration. The suspension is over at the end of the school day so students may participate in extracurricular activities.

Out of School Suspension (OSS)

Out of school suspension is assigned for more serious disciplinary infractions that are seriously disruptive of the educational process and/or threaten the safety and well-being of school personnel and students. The purpose of out of school suspensions is to emphasize to students and their parents that the students have seriously jeopardized their position in the school. It provides an opportunity to gain a perspective on the situation, to give careful scrutiny to their aims and to decide whether they are ready to make a commitment to the standards of the school.

Once on OSS, students will not be permitted to enter school property without permission from the administration. Students will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity during the school day, at night, or on weekends. This includes attendance and participation in athletic events, school dances, proms or other activities as determined by the administration. Eligibility for extracurricular activities resumes on the day after the last day of the suspension. It will be the responsibility of the students to make up work missed upon returning to school. Students should go online to their teachers' web pages to get homework assignments.

Continual violations can result in suspension of longer duration. In making a determination as to whether conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the administration may consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to: (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school; (2) whether other students from the school were involved or whether there was any gang involvement; (3) whether the conduct involved violence or threats of violence or the unlawful use of a weapon, as defined in section CGS 29-38, and whether any injuries occurred; and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol. Students may be temporarily assigned to ISS while they wait for a parent or guardian to take them home after being placed on OSS.

Expulsions

The Board of Education may expel any student whose conduct endangers persons or property or is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or violates a published policy of the Board, in accordance with CGS 10-233d. For additional information, refer to BOE Suspension/Expulsion Policy 5114.

Grievance Procedure

Students receive in written form a list of the school's rules and regulations. They have the right to:

- 1. Notification of discipline offenses;
- 2. Present their defense to a building administrator;
- 3. Receive notice of the decision reached.

If any students at Somers High School believe that they have been unjustly treated, they, along with their parents, may appeal through the proper channels as outlined by making an appointment to speak with the proper individual. Cases that remain contested after the Principal is involved are referred to the Superintendent.

Appeal Process

Offense

Academic in nature	1	Teacher
	2	Assistant Principal
	3	Principal
Problems in Attendance	1	Assistant Principal
	2	Principal

Discipline Problem	1	Assistant Principal
	2	Principal

Interscholastic Athletics	1	Coach
	2	Athletic Director
	3	Principal

Chapter 6 – Board of Education Policies

The Somers Public Schools is committed to equal opportunity for all students, applicants and employees. The district does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, disability (including, but not limited to, mental retardation, past or present history of mental disability, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, gender identity or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws.

Inquiries regarding the District's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to Mrs. Dina Senecal, Title IX Coordinator, 1 Vision Boulevard, Somers, CT 06071, (860) 749-2270 x 2039 or Dr. Denise Messina, Section 504 Coordinator, 1 Vision Boulevard, Somers, CT 06071 (860) 749-2270 x 2035.

Grievance Procedures

1. If a student believes that he/she is being harassed, that person should immediately inform the harasser that his/her behavior is unwelcome, offensive, in poor taste, unprofessional or highly inappropriate.
2. As soon as a student feels that he or she has been subjected to harassment, he or she should make a complaint to the appropriate school personnel: guidance counselor, social worker, teacher or the principal or assistant principal.
3. The student will be provided a copy of the relevant policy and regulations and made aware of his or her rights.
4. The complaint should state the:
 - a. Name of the complainant;
 - 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; and
 - f. Statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment.
5. Any student who makes an oral complaint of harassment to any of the above-mentioned personnel will be provided a copy of the appropriate regulation and will be offered the opportunity to make a written complaint pursuant to the above procedures. If the complainant chooses not to file a written complaint, a staff member will summarize it in writing.
6. If the student complainant is a minor, the person to whom the complaint is given should consider whether a child abuse report should be completed (refer to pertinent state law).
7. All complaints are to be forwarded immediately to the Principal or Assistant Principal unless that individual is the subject of the complaint, in which case the complaint should be forwarded directly to the Superintendent. In the case of a Title IX complaint, the complaint should be forwarded to the Director of Curriculum.
8. If possible, within five (5) working days of receipt of the complaint, the principal or assistant principal handling the complaint shall commence an effective, thorough, objective and complete investigation of the complaint. The investigator shall personally 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 discreetly, 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.

9. The investigator, i.e., Principal or Assistant Principal, shall make a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and proposed disposition of the matter to the Superintendent, and shall provide copies to the complainant, the alleged harasser, and, as appropriate, to all other directly concerned.

10. If the student complainant is dissatisfied with the result of the investigation, he or she may file a written appeal to the Superintendent, who shall review the investigator's written report with the information collected by the investigator, together with the recommended disposition of the complaint, to determine whether the investigation and disposition have been judged inappropriate. The Superintendent may also conduct an independent investigation, including interviewing the complainant and alleged harasser and any witnesses with relevant information. After completing the review, the Superintendent shall respond to the complainant, in writing, as soon as possible. In the case of a Title IX complaint, the complainant may appeal the Superintendent's decision to the Board of Education who will conduct a hearing and provide a written decision to the complainant.

The policies listed below are a selected representation of the Somers Public Schools district policies. Some of the policies and regulations have been referenced and abbreviated in the handbook. Access to the complete district policy manual, along with Board of Education meeting agendas and minutes may be obtained through our district website (www.somers.k12.ct.us/district/) located in the District menu under Central Office/BOE.

AIDS Instruction - BOE Policy 6144.1

Asbestos Management Plan – A plan is on file in the district office.

Attendance and Excuses - BOE Policy 5113

Bullying - BOE Policy 5131.11

Child Abuse - BOE Policy 5141.4

Cleaning Program - A list of environmentally preferable products used in the schools may be obtained from the district's business manager or director of maintenance.

Comparability of Services - BOE Policy 6161.3

Dietary Needs - BOE Policy 5141.25

Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco - BOE Policy 5131.6

Electronic Devices – BOE Policy 5131.81

English Language Learners - BOE Policy 6141.31

Grading System - BOE Policy 6146.1

Graduation Requirements/Standards of Proficiency – BOE Policy 6146

Grievance Procedures (Title IX) - BOE Policy 5145.6

Health/Medical Records - BOE Policy 5125.3

Homeless Students - BOE Policy 5118

Homework - BOE Policy 6154

Medication - BOE Policy 5141.21

Migrant Students - BOE Policy 6141.312

Non-Discrimination - BOE Policy 5141.4

Pesticides - BOE Policy 3516.11

Physical Restraint and Seclusion - BOE Policy 5144.1

Pledge of Allegiance – BOE Policy 611

Posting of Public Notices in Schools – BOE Policy 1110.1

Promotion/Acceleration/Retention - BOE Policy 5123

Psychotropic Drug Use - BOE Policy 5141.23

Public Schools of Choice - BOE Policy 5117.1

Recruitment Policy - BOE Policy 5125

Reporting to Parents - BOE Policy 5124

Smoke Free Environment - BOE Policy 1331.1

Student Searches - BOE Policy 5145.12 , Admin Reg 5145.12

Suicide Prevention - BOE Policy 5141.5

Survey of Students (Student Privacy) - BOE Policy 6162.51

Suspension/Expulsion - BOE Policy 5114

Student Records; Confidentiality - BOE Policy 5125

Sexual Harassment Policy BOE Policy 5145.5

Technology - BOE Policy 6141.321

Title I Parental Involvement - BOE Policy 6172.5

Transportation - BOE Policy 3541

Transportation Complaints/Procedures BOE Policy 3541.36

Use of Physical Force and Seclusion - BOE Policy 5144.1

Weapons and dangerous instruments - BOE Policy 5131.7

Youth Suicide Prevention - BOE Policy 5141.5

COVID-19 Addendum

The following changes have been implemented due to COVID-19. Note that further changes to school procedures may be implemented as the situation evolves.

Arrival Time

The school doors will be open at 7:20. We ask that students do not arrive earlier. Students will enter the building through designated entrance doors (the main entrance and student parking lot entrance doors). For social distancing and monitoring purposes, students will not be able to enter or leave the building from the faculty parking lot entrance. Every day, upon entering the building, all students will proceed directly to their first period classroom.

Credit requirement

For the 2020-21 school year, the minimum required course load has been reduced. As long as students are on track to graduate on time, seniors may carry a minimum of 4.25 credits, and students in grades 9-11 may carry a minimum of 6 credits.

Late Arrival / Early Dismissal Privileges

Students who are passing all classes may be granted late arrival and early release privileges. These privileges allow students who have written parental permission to arrive late to school or to leave early if they do not have a class scheduled during the first or last blocks of the day. Families must arrange their own transportation for students who would like to take advantage of this opportunity. For the 2020-21 school year, we are extending this privilege to all eligible students grades 9-12.

Lavatories

Due to COVID-19, student key cards will not be required to enter the bathroom.

Library Media Center Services

Due to COVID-19, the LMC will be open from 7:40 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Though library circulation, access to MakerSpace, and services will be restricted during the pandemic, online assistance from LMC personnel will be available virtually.

Lockers

Due to COVID-19 and the need to promote social distancing and sanitation, gym and hallway lockers will not be issued for the 2020-21 school year.

Lunch

Those students who wish to purchase lunch from the school will order their lunch during announcements at 8:30 each morning. A Google Form with the lunch choices will be shared with our students. Lunches are to be prepaid and families may utilize the MyPaymentsPlus meal payment system to do so. Accounts can be replenished with a credit or debit card or with a check

brought to the Main Office. It will be difficult to take cash on a daily basis, but in a circumstance where it is necessary, please place the money in a zip lock bag labelled with the student's name.

While traditionally the area has been open only to seniors and only during lunch, due to COVID-19 and concerns about social distancing, the privilege of eating outside has been opened up to students in all grade levels for the current school year. Teachers on duty will strictly monitor student behavior. Students are not permitted to play football, frisbee, wiffleball, or similar games. While in this area, students must remain visible to staff members on duty in the cafe. Therefore, students must not stray away from the immediate vicinity of the picnic tables. **This privilege may be suspended if students are not keeping the area clean or do not demonstrate positive behavior.**

Masks

Students must wear a mask at all times on the bus and in the school building. Families must provide their own masks. It is recommended that students carry 2 masks with them per day. While there are very few medical contraindications to the use of a face mask, exceptions may be made for students whose physicians feel a medical exemption is necessary, based on a severe and documented condition. Mask breaks will be offered to students throughout the day. Students may remove their masks once they are settled in their lunch space or if they are in an outdoor classroom space that will accommodate safe social-distancing. Due to COVID-19, students riding the bus will be required to wear a mask at all times on the bus.

Parent Teacher Conferences/ Back to School Night

Due to COVID-19, conferences and back to school night will be offered virtually.

