

# Glastonbury East Hartford Magnet School

## Staff Handbook 2017-2018



***Common Expectations + Common Goals = Shared Success***



**Classroom Environment**

- ❖ Classroom environments are vital to student learning
- ❖ There is total alignment between the physical activities and the physical environment (Danielson 2e)
- ❖ GEHMS values student-centered collaborative and cooperative learning
- ❖ Classrooms should be organized, safe, vibrant, and conducive to student learning.
- ❖ “Critical Question” and “I Can” statements must be posted prominently and used in instruction daily (See Posting Objectives).
- ❖ Items displayed throughout the room should support learning objectives.
- ❖ Data walls, word walls, anchor charts, and sample student work should be timely, relevant, and used in instruction.
- ❖ Maintenance or cleaning needs should be communicated immediately to administration.

**Lesson Planning**

- ❖ Lesson planning is the key to effective instruction that meets the needs of all learners.
- ❖ Teachers are expected to plan highly engaging and rigorous lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of all learners.
- ❖ Lesson plans must include evidence of clear objectives, targeted differentiation, and aligned assessment.
- ❖ Teachers are provided common planning time to collaborate and plan with colleagues.
- ❖ Teachers are expected to incorporate the school’s theme as often as possible.
- ❖ The science lab and planetarium will be scheduled for use during monthly science planning sessions.
  - Teachers are encouraged to use these tremendous resources as often as possible.
  - Please correspond with Jason Archer and Donna Rand if needed
  - Please notify the main office when you are visiting the planetarium or anytime you leave your classroom.
- ❖ Evidence of such planning should be available upon request.

**Posting Objectives**

- ❖ Essential Question: In student-friendly language, ask the overarching question that students should be able to answer by the end of the lesson. This question should be at the heart of the lesson.
- ❖ Essential Questions may span the course of several lessons but I Can Statements should change frequently to align to the day’s objectives and assessment.
  - I Can Statements: In student-friendly language, describe the learning targets that students should be able to demonstrate by the end of the lesson.
- ❖ Essential Questions and I Can Statements should be part of the instructional process.
- ❖ Assessment should be connected back to these objective elements.

**Technology**

- ❖ Included in the resource section of Schoology is a section devoted to technology.
- ❖ Technology is available to support and further instruction both in and out of the classroom.
- ❖ Laptop carts and chromebook carts are available for sign out. When using a laptop cart, please be sure to return all laptops in an orderly manner that will facilitate effective use for the next person to sign out the carts.
  - Please make sure you plug in and charge devices and the cart.

- ❖ Any repair or maintenance needs should be brought to Hiroe Vestergaard's attention as soon as they become known.
- ❖ Supervision of student use of technology is critically important for student safety and well-being.
- ❖ Inappropriate use of technology should be directed to administration immediately.
- ❖ Technology is part of the core of our school's theme; the use of technology to support and further instruction is highly encouraged.

### **Data and Assessments**

- ❖ CREC utilizes an assessment calendar to guide the timely and consistent collection of data to inform instruction. A copy of this calendar is in the resource section of Schoology.
- ❖ Teachers must familiarize themselves with this calendar and plan ahead to meet the deadlines within it.
- ❖ Data and assessments are critical tools for effective instruction; teachers must know their students' data in order to effectively plan and deliver high quality instruction to promote student achievement.
- ❖ Teachers are encouraged to score assessments together in order to calibrate expectations and action plans.
- ❖ Data must be reviewed in preparation and provided according to the meeting schedule prior to grade level data and/or EIP meetings. This information will guide and inform goal setting and instructional decision-making.
- ❖ All students should have individual goals to be monitored through the use of Tier One Planning Sheets; students should know their goals and what they need to do to reach them.

### **School and Student Safety**

- ❖ School safety and security are of the utmost importance and are everyone's responsibility.
- ❖ If you are aware of a potential security or safety threat, you must contact an administrator immediately.
- ❖ If you have any concerns regarding the safety of a student at home, you must share those concerns as soon as you become aware of them. In the case of suspected neglect or abuse, we need time to file a report and receive next steps prior to sending a child home on the bus. Do not wait until the day is over to communicate such concerns, we have a time sensitive legal obligation in this regard.
- ❖ GEHMS operates a School Safety Committee. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact an administrator.
- ❖ Teachers are expected to have a clipboard with their class roster, the quick reference emergency procedure flipchart, and emergency procedure attendance forms. These clipboards should accompany teachers when evacuating the building for any reason (such as fire, evacuation, drill).
- ❖ All staff members are expected to be familiar with these emergency procedures and to teach/practice them with students.
- ❖ If you have any questions or concerns, please see and administrator immediately for clarification.

### **Nurse's Office**

- ❖ Students being sent to the nurse must be accompanied by a pass.

- ❖ Teachers should call the nurse when sending a child.
- ❖ Band-aids and gloves are provided to every teacher; minor cuts or scrapes can be treated following the nurse's guidelines to preempt the need for that student to leave class.
- ❖ Class time is vitally important. The school nurse will review situations in which students do or do not need to be sent to the nurse; if in doubt, please call the nurse before sending the student.

### **Food and Allergies**

- ❖ Student health and safety are high priority in all that we do.
- ❖ The inclusion of food in school activities creates the potential risk of allergic reactions or other health implications.
- ❖ If food is to be included as part of a school activity, the "menu" of food to be included must be shared with parents and the nurse in advance to minimize the risk of allergic reactions.
- ❖ As a Green Leaf school and in keeping with our "Healthier Kids Learn Better" initiatives, school sponsored food options must be healthy. A list of approved class snack items is available in the Parent/Student Handbook.
- ❖ Food must not be used as an incentive or reward – utilize the PBIS system and Rocket Tickets.
- ❖ Policy regarding parent donated snack and birthday celebrations is clearly articulated in the student handbook and is to be enforced. Consult with administration as needed.

### **Student Attendance**

- ❖ Taking attendance is a legal and professional responsibility.
- ❖ All teachers are expected to develop a procedure for taking attendance and collecting a lunch count at the beginning of the day – anyone in need of assistance with these procedures should work with their grade-level colleagues and administration.
- ❖ Attendance must be entered into PowerSchool by 9:15 every day to assure an accurate count of students in the building, allow for a timely automated call to go to families, and to assure that all students are safe.
- ❖ Students arriving late to class will have a pass; if a student does not have a pass, he or she has not signed into the office and should be sent to the office to check into school.
- ❖ Announcements will begin promptly at 9AM with instruction beginning immediately after announcements conclude; students arriving to school after 9AM are considered tardy and must receive a pass from the office.
- ❖ The attendance team monitors student attendance patterns; however, if you notice a child out for several days or have any concerns, please bring this to the attention of the main office for follow-up.

### **Culture, Climate, and PBIS**

- ❖ PBIS is more than Rocket Tickets – it is about examining adult actions and establishing a school culture with clear expectations that are taught, monitored, and reinforced.
- ❖ All staff members are expected to implement the PBIS system.
- ❖ Located in the Community Drive are start of the year lessons that teach students our common expectations for important parts of the day; these lessons are to be taught within the designated time period at the start of the year and retaught as necessary throughout the year.

- ❖ Grade level meetings will include an analysis of behavioral and culture/climate data which will be used for school improvement action planning and other team-based decision-making.
- ❖ Any staff member interested in joining the PBIS team should email one of the PBIS coaches (Kavitha Rogers, and Jessica Fagan).
- ❖ Additional information regarding PBIS and initial lesson can be found in the PBIS folder in the community drive.

### **Timeliness and Transitions**

- ❖ Students must be delivered to and picked up from assigned locations in a timely manner (specials, lunch, recess, bus dismissal are some examples).
- ❖ Students must be taught expectations for hallway transitions. Students should be in a line and move safely from one location to the next without disrupting learning around them.
- ❖ Songs or other transitional tools may be useful for promoting effective hallway transitions.
- ❖ Hallway transitions must reflect the same standard as classroom expectations; classes that fail to exhibit this standard must return to their original location, review the expectation, and practice until the standard is met.
- ❖ All staff members should model appropriate transition standards by using silent interactions (thumbs up, hand waves hello) to interact with students who are transitioning from one location to another.

### **Student Discipline**

- ❖ Student behavior is directly connected to engagement, safety, and achievement.
- ❖ GEHMS has clearly established expectations for student behavior and procedures for dealing with student behavioral infractions that are based in the principles of restorative justice.
- ❖ Clear expectations, consistency, highly engaging lesson plans, and strong relationships with students and families are critical steps to avoiding student misbehavior.
- ❖ When a behavioral infraction occurs, staff must determine whether or not the infraction constitutes a minor or major incident (the GEHMS Behavior Flowchart is included in the appendix of this handbook).
  - Minor incidents should be addressed through the classroom system of consequences which may include warnings, reflections, the peaceful place, a buddy classroom, parent communication, and loss of privilege.
  - Minor infractions are documented using the referral form (copies are included in the appendix of this handbook).
  - Minor infraction forms must be fully completed and submitted to Natasha Stapleton for documentation.
  - Major incidents should be referred immediately to administration and communication made to parents by the referring teacher. Time sensitive or safety-related concerns must be communicated to administration immediately – placing a referral in the box is not sufficient in these cases.
  - Major incidents must be documented on the referral form.
- ❖ Infractions and outcomes of minor incidents should be communicated to parents by teachers.

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- ❖ Once a major referral has been submitted, it is up to administration to determine appropriate consequences.
- ❖ Copies of major referrals will be provided to the referring staff member and the student's parents.
- ❖ Referrals must be written in a clear, objective, professional manner and must not include other student names or information.
- ❖ Following any student behavioral infraction, staff must be reflective how changes in adult behaviors or actions may contribute to avoiding such an infraction in the future. Remain solutions-focused and committed to student success.

### **Requesting Classroom Assistance**

- ❖ Time out of class is detrimental to student confidence and academic ability.
- ❖ Removing a student from class shifts the power of behavior management from the teacher to the administrator.
- ❖ There are times in which a student's behavior may pose a risk to the learning environment and that student must be removed.
- ❖ If a student is so disruptive or unsafe that he or she must be removed, staff is to call the main office and support will arrive momentarily.
- ❖ If for any reason the main office numbers are not answered, staff may call the nurse or security desk to reach an individual with a radio.
- ❖ Students must never be sent to the office without communication to a confirmed recipient of that student.
- ❖ Student removal from class constitutes a major referral.
- ❖ Upon return to class, students should be welcomed back and brought back into the fold of class in such a way that promotes positive choices moving forward.

### **Supervising Students**

- ❖ Effective supervision of students during non-classroom times and locations is paramount to student safety and success.
- ❖ Staff must spread out amongst the students, engage with students, and be ever-vigilant in surveying the environment.
- ❖ Proactive interaction often prevents the need for reaction.
- ❖ Staff must be cognizant of their lines of sight, physical proximity, and any potential "trouble spots" that may exist.
- ❖ While supervising students, staff must refrain from the use of electronics or engaging in personal dialogue – remain focused on the supervision and safety of the students.

### **Student/Arrival Dismissal Procedures**

- ❖ K-5 Students are dismissed to designated rooms for dismissal at 3:10.
- ❖ Pre-K students begin to make their way to cafeteria for pick up at 2:45.
- ❖ Any notes or changes in dismissal procedures for a particular student must be submitted to the office. If a parent emails the classroom teacher, please forward appropriately.
- ❖ Bus switches should only be made in an emergency and notice must be provided in writing so that contacts can be made with transportation department.
- ❖ If a student is late to school- parent must walk the student in and sign in, child will receive a pass. If the child arrives late to class without a pass, please contact office.
- ❖ Powerschool must be entered by teachers by 9:15 every day. The office will amend PowerSchool for late arrivals after that time.

### **Radios**

- ❖ Radios/walkie talkies are important tools for communication and safety.
- ❖ Radios must be charged nightly to assure effective use the following day.
- ❖ Radios and chargers will be assigned to staff for use during the day; these radios are the responsibility of the individual to whom they have been assigned.
- ❖ Staff members with radios in classrooms should keep the radios in the off position to avoid disruptions to learning. Staff members with radios in the cafeteria or at recess should keep their radios on.
- ❖ If a call must be made over the radio, remember to maintain confidentiality. Be brief, be objective, and state your need.
- ❖ If further details must be shared, do so over the phone.
- ❖ Remember that parents, students, and other visitors may overhear anything stated on the radios.

### **Special Education**

- ❖ Special education is a legal matter.
- ❖ Student Individual Education Plans must be implemented fully and consistently.
- ❖ Teachers must know their students' special education plans; if there are any questions, consult the special education case manager or an administrator for guidance.
- ❖ Teacher updates for PPT meetings must be completed in a professional and timely fashion utilizing the designated report.
- ❖ All written reports should be written in a manner that maintains objectivity and meets the highest standards of our profession.
- ❖ Special education identification is a formal process with many legal requirements; conversations regarding special education, testing, or referrals to special education must take place with administration and a special education case manager prior to taking place with parents.
- ❖ Staff members may not contact sending districts without approval and consultation from administration.
- ❖ Any concerns regarding a special education student, his or her plan, any support personnel, or any other topic should be brought to the case manager or an administrator immediately. Any parent requests or concerns (including questions about testing) should be directed to or brought to administration immediately, these topics are time sensitive and legal parameters are in place.

### **Early Intervention (EIP)**

- ❖ GEHMS strives to meet the needs of all learners and has a process for identifying extra supports or intervention strategies for students in need.
- ❖ Teachers are expected to implement and document classroom-based interventions prior to referring any student to EIP; however, teachers are encouraged to share concerns and classroom-based plans early.
- ❖ If a student is not responding to multiple fully documented attempts at classroom-based intervention, then the student should be referred for an initial EIP meeting.
- ❖ Included in the monthly meeting schedule is an allotted time for EIP meetings (focus on tier 1 and tier 2 instruction). Urgent intervention (tier 3) meetings will be held monthly with appropriate teacher coverage.

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- ❖ Teachers are expected to come to EIP meetings having reviewed current data. Please bring student work samples, or any other relevant information to guide the conversation. Conversations should be concise and data driven.
- ❖ EIP meetings must be solutions-focused and streamlined to focus on interventions attempted, impact toward the goal, and next steps to meet the goal.
- ❖ Progress monitoring reports will be shared with classroom teachers and parents on a regular basis pursuant to the child's EIP goals.
- ❖ Students may be pulled for intervention programming per the EIP process. All efforts will be made so that direct instruction and mini-lessons are not impacted.
- ❖ EIP is an important and, at times, complicated process. Please consults the EIP at GEHMS guide for specifics on referrals and EIP team functions.

### **Communication**

- ❖ Effective communication is essential for student, staff, family, and school success.
- ❖ All forms of communication must meet the highest standard for professionalism and confidentiality
- ❖ In order for the main office and administration to be aware of classroom happenings, please provide (in advance) a copy of correspondences going home to the office.
- ❖ Parent inquiries (emails, phone messages, notes, etc.) must be returned within 24 hours.
- ❖ Parents are our partners; we must communicate any concerns with as much notice as possible – no surprises when it comes to academic progress, behavioral concerns, or assigned consequences.
- ❖ Frequent positive communication builds partners.
- ❖ Please include the main office and administration on events and activities that may generate questions for the office.

### **Confidentiality**

- ❖ Confidentiality must be maintained in all forms of communication.
- ❖ Remember that all email is subject to Freedom of Information Act; please be cognizant that everything written in email is available to the public.
- ❖ Never discuss a child with another parent or community member that is not that child's parent or guardian.
- ❖ When receiving any requests for information from outside agencies or individuals, be sure to check with administration – for your protection and the protection of the child.
- ❖ When in doubt, do not share information without checking first with administration.

### **Schoology**

- ❖ Schoology is a powerful and important mechanism for communication and instruction.
- ❖ Staff will continue to be trained in the uses of Schoology with the expectation that it will be used for both communication and instruction.
- ❖ Internal staff communication will be posted via Schoology course *GEHMS Professional Learning Community*. Staff is expected to check frequently
- ❖ Schoology is a user-friendly and secure method of sharing timely information; staff should post a brief update or picture weekly.
- ❖ Moving forward, the expectation will broaden to include the diverse instructional applications of the program.

### **Parent Meetings**

- ❖ Parent meetings are an important way to further our relationships and partnerships with parents.
- ❖ Avoid making recommendations that fall outside the realm of teaching and learning without carefully vetting the conversation in advance.
- ❖ Feel free to invite administration or student services personnel to any parent meeting; please provide enough advance notice to account for scheduling arrangements.

### **Room Parents**

- ❖ Room parents are selected by the classroom teacher and names will be sent to the PTO.
- ❖ The PTO will coordinate communication to all room parents, and other whole-school initiatives as in the past.
- ❖ Teachers are encouraged to tap into potential Room Parents with whom they will have an effective working relationship and families that represent the diversity of our student body.

### **Staff Absences**

- ❖ If any staff member is going to be late or absent, they must notify Kristi and/or Ryan via text or a phone call as soon as possible.
- ❖ GEHMS utilizes Kelly Services for substitute coverage for classroom teachers and classroom paraprofessionals.
  - Classroom teachers and classroom paraprofessionals who are going to be absent must log into Kelly Services to request a substitute. Associate Instructors and non-classroom paras are not required to log into Kelly to request a substitute (but must still notify administration).
- ❖ Classroom teachers and classroom paraprofessionals who have more than 24 hour notice of an absence (such as a medical appointment or personal day) must submit a time off request document found in the main office and in the appendix of this document.
- ❖ Completed time off request forms may be placed in the attendance box for administrator approval; once approved, coverage needs with more than 24 hour notice will be filled by the office.
- ❖ Staff who are feeling ill or believe that there is a strong possibility they will be absent the following day are encouraged to request a substitute through Kelly Services the night before. It can be extremely difficult to arrange for sub coverage late in the morning on the day of an absence.
- ❖ All staff who are absent must complete the time off request upon return, documenting their absence.
- ❖ Timesheets must be filled out accordingly and submitted to main office on designated dates.
- ❖ The success of a substitute often hinges on the plans that are left by the teacher. Sub plans must be provided (left on the desk or emailed to a teammate). Emergency sub plans should also be available. Class lists and other relevant information should also be left for the substitute.

### **Professional Development and Meetings**

- ❖ Included on Schoology is a monthly calendar detailing all of the professional development sessions and meetings for the year; these dates and topics are subject to change.

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- ❖ After school meetings begin promptly at 3:30 and end by 4:30.
- ❖ Please use this calendar to plan ahead to avoid any potential conflicts.
- ❖ Staff members are expected to be fully prepared and entirely engaged in the important work at hand. Staff must avoid checking email, grading papers, or engaging in other work during meetings.

***If you have suggestions for others topics to be included or questions that are not answered, you are encouraged to communicate these ideas to administration for inclusion in future iterations.***