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Ad Hoc High School Committee Family Letter

January 17, 2022

Dear Families and Community Members,

In September 2020, the Canterbury Board of Education held its first Ad Hoc High School Committee meeting to review its current high school policy and determine if any modifications were necessary. A request for volunteers was sent to the community. The committee was composed of nine parents, three administrators, and two Board of Education members. The committee met on September 17, October 22, February 4, March 4, April 1, and May 6. A final presentation was made to the Board of Education on June 8, 2021.

The committee and the Board reviewed high school programming information, tuition cost, traveling times, achievement results, survey data, enrollment history, and district presentations. In the fall of 2021, the Board directed the Policy Committee to draft a new policy.

On January 11, 2022 the Board approved High School Tuition Policy 5117.1. The new policy clearly identifies which high school options will have transportation provided and which pre-approved high school options are available to Canterbury residents if they provide their own transportation. The new policy also establishes restrictions when students may transfer between high schools.

Due to a lack of enrollment at Griswold High School (GHS), this option will no longer be considered a "designated high school." GHS will be considered a "choice high school." A "choice high school" is a pre-approved high school option, however, student families are responsible for transportation to and from the school. The Board will continue to provide transportation to GHS until June 30, 2025 to support the students currently attending GHS. The Board has also pre-approved Putnam High School and Parish Hill High School as new "choice high schools." Parish Hill has notified the district it will provide transportation (at their expense) to and from Dr. Helen Baldwin Middle School for families that wish to attend Parish Hill.

The Board is appreciative of the committee's effort to provide Canterbury residents several high quality high school options for its students.

In Partnership,

Steve Rioux

High School Tuition Policy

Designated High School

The Canterbury Board of Education designates the Norwich Free Academy (NFA) and Woodstock Academy (WA) as the high schools which eligible students residing in Canterbury may attend. Students may also select and apply to other high school programs indicated below. Students shall make that election with the understanding that they shall not be permitted to transfer after October 1 of the current school year with the exception of vocational/technical schools.

Vocational Agricultural Schools

Students that wish to attend a vocational agricultural high school will attend Killingly High School. Killingly High School is offered solely as a vocational agricultural program for Canterbury students. Cost of tuition and transportation will be paid in full by the Canterbury Board of Education.

Vocational Technical Schools

The cost for education at State of Connecticut Vocational/Technical Schools is paid by the State of Connecticut. Transportation to Norwich Regional Vocational/Technical High School and Harvard H. Ellis Technical High School will be paid in full by the Canterbury Board of Education.

Students may elect to attend other State of Connecticut Vocational/Technical Schools, however, transportation will not be provided. Transportation to any other vocational/technical high school will be the responsibility of the student's guardian.

Magnet High Schools

The cost for education at any State of Connecticut magnet high schools is paid by the Canterbury Board of Education. As there are no magnet high schools in the Town of Canterbury, the Board of Education will not provide transportation to any State of Connecticut magnet schools. The Superintendent of Schools may offer transportation to a magnet school at his or her discretion, in the event that a magnet high school is within route to a high school in which transportation is provided and the district will incur no additional expenses.

Choice High Schools

The Canterbury Board of Education has identified additional public high schools choices for eligible Canterbury students. The following high schools have been pre-approved by the Canterbury Board of Education as “choice high schools”. Transportation is not provided to “choice high schools” and it is the responsibility of the student’s guardian to provide transportation. Parish Hill High School, Putnam High School, and Griswold High School have been identified as choice high schools.

*Transportation to Griswold High School will continue through June 30, 2025 to accommodate currently enrolled students.

Transfers

Except as provided below, the Canterbury Board of Education shall not be responsible for the tuition or transportation of any eligible Canterbury student who transfers out of one high school to another (with the exception of approved vocational/technical schools) after October 1 unless granted late acceptance into magnet school. Any currently enrolled student wishing to transfer from one high school to another must notify the Canterbury School Superintendent of this possibility by January 15 of the preceding school year in order for tuition to be correctly budgeted. Transfer requests due to exceptional circumstances will be granted at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.

NEASC Accredited High Schools

Requests for enrollment in an NEASC accredited public school or in a school currently in the process of obtaining accreditation through NEASC, other than "designated high schools" or "choice high schools" may be granted at the Superintendent's discretion and upon acceptance of the receiving school. The student's guardian must provide transportation and pre-pay any additional cost above that charged by the "designated high school" with the highest tuition rate.

Special Education Placements

Special education placements at any grade level at any high school may be approved by the Superintendent of Schools upon recommendations for a special education out-of-district placement by the Director of Special Education when necessary to meet a student's special educational needs identified through the special education process in the Canterbury Public Schools.

Policy approved by BOE: January 11, 2022