

# REACH

A Responsible Educational Alternative  
For  
Conard and Hall High Students

HANDBOOK

2018 – 2019



110 Beechwood Road

West Hartford, CT 06107 (860) 231-6009

*Alternative means different not less*

**WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOL - CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION**

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**THE REACH PROGRAM  
FACULTY AND STAFF**

Ms. Shelley Solomon – Program Administrator

Mr. Jamahl Hines – Dean of Students

Miss Corinne Byrne– Math Teacher/Advisor

Mr. Matthew Collins – Social Studies Teacher/Advisor

Mr. Steve Kowal – Science/Advisor

Mr. Jordan Rueckert – English Teacher/Advisor

Ms. Carol Wilkas – Business Education/Career Education

Mrs. Beverly Yirigian – Home-School Liaison/Group Dynamics

Mrs. Tracie Kelly – Physical Education Teacher

Mr. Ron Wzientko – Physical Education Teacher

Mrs. Diane Phelan – Lead Secretary

Ms. Carrie Anderson - Nurse

Mrs. Beth Vossler – Nurse

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***Students in The REACH Program also remain bound by the policies and rules of West Hartford Public Schools. Please refer to your Hall Student Handbook or Conard Student Handbook.***

*Congratulations and welcome to REACH, West Hartford's Alternative High School. REACH is a school where your individual style of learning will be accommodated and your desire to succeed can be realized. REACH, through our professional and dedicated staff, creates a sense of community and a culture that is clearly different from that of a traditional high school.*

*Recognizing that it is a privilege to be part of this unique program, the staff has assembled the following handbook to provide information about school and district guidelines necessary for your success. Feel free to contact any staff member if you have questions or need clarification regarding any of the attached material.*

*We sincerely wish you the best of luck this year and we look forward to helping you achieve your personal, academic and career goals.*

*Sincerely,*

*The REACH Staff*

## **REACH MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of REACH is to provide students with an alternative educational experience that cultivates academic, social, interpersonal and vocational development. Our curriculum exposes students to issues of diversity, tolerance, acceptance and understanding of others. Challenging, standards-based academic offerings will prepare students to pursue a variety of post-high school endeavors. REACH students will participate in curriculum-based and community opportunities designed to help them become engaged, responsible and informed citizens.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

REACH incorporates the best practices of Alternative High Schools. Students have the opportunity to develop a sense of pride and ownership in the program. Academically, the school takes a collaborative approach to learning with maximum emphasis placed on individual learning styles and the use of technology to enhance the learning experience. Focus is placed on helping students earn credit in core courses needed for graduation-Math, Science, English and Social Studies. Throughout, the students maintain a definitive career focus. Students are required to participate in a progressive Career Exploration Program. Students are also required to take an active role in a Group Dynamics course which incorporates cross-disciplinary topics into a discussion/activity based learning experience. Individual support is available for students on a daily basis.

**WHY AN ALTERNATIVE  
HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION?**

REACH is a unique program in which students are given an opportunity for change in a small setting, with significant support and resources. Students come to REACH to complete their high school credits and graduate, while others come to REACH to refocus on their academics and learn the necessary skills to return to their home school.

REACH is limited in the number and variety of course offerings because of its small staff. Occasionally a student’s credit needs cannot be fully met at REACH and a student must consider additional coursework such as summer school, The Capital Community College High School Partnership Program, online classes or class offerings at Hall or Conard.

REACH students remain a student of Hall or Conard and may participate in any after school activity or sport. REACH students retain their School Counselor at their home school and continue to have contact with their counselor throughout their education.

It is important that each student and parent/guardian realize the unique learning opportunity for success that is made available through the small, structured setting at REACH. Ultimately, the success of any student at REACH rests with the student. Success is the result of each student’s effort and attitude coming into this program; as we welcome you to REACH, we ask that you come to school each day prepared to respect yourself, your fellow students, the staff and the environment. It is our wish that you make the most of this opportunity being extended to you.

**REACH PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

The REACH Program will follow the same annual calendar as Conard and Hall. REACH hours are from 8:50 AM – 2:15 PM except short Wednesdays (12:48 PM dismissal). Reach staff is available in the morning from 7:30 AM – 8:45 AM for Academic assistance and meetings.

Mon, Tue, Thurs, Friday                      Wednesday

8:50 am	students arrive	8:50 am	students arrive
9:00 am	Period 1	9:00 am	Homeroom
9:45 am	Period 2	9:10 am	Period 1/3
10:29 am	Period 3	9:57 am	Period 2/4
11:13 am	Period 4	10:45 am	Period 5
11:59 am	Period 5	11:15 am	Period 6
12:29 pm	Period 6	12:02 pm	Period 7
1:35 pm	Period 7	12:48 pm	students leave
2:15 pm	students leave		

*NOTE: Students participating in an internship follow a modified schedule.*

**DELAYED OPENING OR EARLY  
CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

REACH follows the district delayed schedules. If the decision is made to delay the opening of school, the Superintendent’s Office will notify several media outlets prior to 6:30 a.m. Experience shows that schools are opening one or two hours late more

often than they are closing for the entire day due to inclement weather.

In the event that weather conditions require the early closing of school, each school is notified by the Superintendent's Office as to the time the particular school is to close.

When schools are closed early due to snow or inclement weather, all events scheduled to take place in school facilities, all interscholastic activities (including practices) and all late buses are cancelled.

**For information on late openings or early closing call 860-233-2334.**

### **CAREER PATHWAYS PLAN**

A strong component of the REACH curriculum is Career Exploration, a career development program. As part of the Career Exploration program, REACH students participate in a series of career awareness modules. Each level is structured to accommodate and meet students' individual needs. The goal of the program is to provide the students with the skills and knowledge necessary to develop realistic career plans. Based on credits earned, students are placed in an appropriate level of training. The complete program covers basic study skills through advanced training and preparation for future internship.

**Work Credit Potential:** Students enrolled in Career Exploration, Advanced Training A & B are encouraged to work each semester. The goal is to provide work readiness skills in preparation for their internship experience. At least prior to the end of the semester, the students who work should:

- submit a copy of their pay stubs, weekly, to verify the hours worked
- have an evaluation completed by their employer or coordinator

**In order to receive work credit, the student must work 100 hours or more in one semester (Fall,**

**Spring), and paperwork must be submitted two weeks prior to the end of the semester.**

REACH will be working closely with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce in an effort to advise the students of opportunities within West Hartford. The ultimate responsibility lies with the student to secure employment.

### **LEARNING THROUGH INTERNSHIP**

Learning Through Internship (LTI) was developed to provide final semester REACH students with an opportunity to work with local professionals in a mentoring situation based on the student's area of interest. A substantial portion of their school week is spent in "real world" settings working closely with their workplace mentors. LTI involves an active collaboration between student, mentor and teacher that creates a seamless integration of school and real world learning, enabling students to build knowledge and gain skills through this experience.

The design of LTI is to provide a special emphasis on the skills and competencies necessary for success. Interns have the opportunity to create résumés, maintain portfolios, develop workplace skills, and plan their future educational and career goals. The focus is on skills such as communication, analytical problem solving, team work and technological adeptness. Emphasis is also placed on ethical behaviors and diversity allowing students the opportunity to establish networks and foster an ongoing collaboration within the community.

***Below are the prerequisite criteria for participation in the Internship Program:***

Students participating in the Internship Program are expected to be respectful and professional in both their behavior and their personal appearance and adhere to the REACH rules and regulations.

**Note:** All interns are required to take the school

provided transportation to and from their internship site unless otherwise specified, arranged and approved by the REACH Administrator.

P Pass 60 and above

### REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

To be eligible for graduation each student must meet the following minimum requirements as established by the West Hartford Board of Education.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Credits</b>
English	4
Social Studies	3
Mathematics	3
Science	2
Fine Arts, Bus. Ed.	
Family & Cons. Sci. Tech. Ed	1
Physical Education and Health	1.75
Electives	7
<b>CAPT requirements</b>	
Technology Competencies	
<b>Total Required</b>	<b>21.75</b>

### SEMESTERS and GRADING

The REACH Program follows the same academic schedule as Hall and Conard with four quarters (two semesters). In order to ensure that all students are aware of their academic standing, teachers provide student with frequent updates of their grades. Students and parents can access the students' grades at any time through PowerSchool with the Parent or Student Portal.

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent
A+	97 – 100	C+	77 – 79
A	93 – 96	C	73 – 76
A-	90 – 92	C-	70 – 72
B+	87 – 89	D+	67 – 69
B	83 – 86	D	63 – 66
B-	80 – 82	D-	60 – 62
		F	0 – 59

### COMMON GRADING SCALE

Work/Quizzes/Tests/Projects/Labs, etc....80% (Teacher Discretion)

#### Class Participation...20%

- 4 absences excused
- 5<sup>th</sup> absence (and all consecutive for the semester) = 0 for CP that day
- 10 Points per day
  - 2 points = **On time, in class, and prepared.** You will be allowed one bathroom/drink break per class, cannot be used during instruction, and will be granted at teacher's discretion.
  - 2 points = **Respect** of school rules, including hats, hoods, phones, body language, and foul language
  - 2 points = **Respect** of self and others. This includes how you speak to others in the room and listening when others speak
  - 4 points = **Full Participation** in the class activities for that day. This includes, but is not limited to, taking all notes, participating in discussions, group projects, lab work, quiet work, being attentive during films and presentations, working actively and thoroughly on assignments during the designated time, etc.

**Student may be given a zero for class participation for phone use or any other egregious action. This could be any behavior on the student's part that the teacher feels is serious enough to result in loss of credit for the class for the day.**

#### Late Work

- 10% off per day late down to a 50%. This is a maximum score granting everything is correct.

- Work completed out of class, because student was not using class time appropriately will be considered late 1 day.

**Make-up Work From Absences Upon Return**

- 5 school days to complete for full credit.
- Refer to late work policy on the 6<sup>th</sup> day.
- Students must utilize study hall, lunch and before/after school to complete missing assignments.

**Missed Assignments**

Students are responsible for gathering and completing assignments missed during any absence. Parents may request to pick-up assignments at the REACH office for absences in excess of 3 or more consecutive days.

**POWERSCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT PORTAL**

The Parent Portal feature of PowerSchool allows parents to log into the system via a private password and view their child’s academic progress. Log-in accounts can be obtained through your child’s home school. Using the Parent Portal from home allows parents and child to review academic progress together and discuss strategies for improvement. Parents can view class grades as well as individual assignments.

PowerSchool also allows students to log into the system through the Student Portal feature. Students may log-in to the Student Portal from school or home to check their academic progress. This should be the first stop for students who have questions regarding their grades.

**NURSING SUPPORT**

The nurse at Conard is available to assist students at the REACH Program with:

- personal illness/injury
- questions concerning health and safety

- eating disorders
- medical records
- information about the dangers of tobacco and controlled substances

*Contact with the nurse should be made through one of the staff at the REACH Program who has direct contact with the Nurse’s office at Conard. Students may not leave school due to illness **unless they are dismissed by the nurse or a staff member has received parent’s permission.***

No medication (aspirin, cough syrup, etc.) or treatment, other than approved first aid, will be given to students by school personnel. If it is absolutely necessary for students to take medication during school hours, special school release forms must be completed by the parent and physician **before** the medication may be administered by the nurse.

Prescribed medication, with the original prescription label affixed, **MUST** be stored in the nurse's office and be administered by the nurse.

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**STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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Standards of good conduct and respect for persons, property and the educational process are in effect. Disciplinary action may result when a student's conduct endangers persons or property, disrupts the educational process or violates a publicized policy of the West Hartford Board of Education.

**Under no circumstance are students permitted to enter the Conard or Hall buildings before or during the school day unless attending class or participating in a sanctioned activity. Doing so will be treated as a serious offense.**

The following rules and regulations were developed to ensure a safe and orderly environment for learning. Serious violations lead to suspension or expulsion.

1. Books and equipment issued to students are their responsibility. Students are expected to reimburse the school for any books or equipment lost or damaged while issued to them. Replacement books, materials or report cards will not be issued unless the student's debts are cleared.
2. Office telephones are available for brief personal calls. Students must be considerate of others in their use of telephones. Cell phones may be brought to school for after school hours only. Use of cell phones is prohibited while school is in session. Cell phones must be turned off during the school day.
3. Gambling of any kind is prohibited. Gambling paraphernalia and money will be confiscated and not returned.
4. The use of hacky sacks, Frisbees, basketballs, footballs, lacrosse sticks, etc. in classrooms or hallways is prohibited. Skateboards are not allowed on school grounds.
5. Students are prohibited from throwing snow, ice or snowballs on school grounds.
6. Students may not leave school grounds during the school day without permission. Also, students may not go into the parking lots during the school day without permission.
7. Loitering in the school building and on school grounds is prohibited.
8. Use of offensive, lewd, vulgar or obscene language or gestures to students or staff is not permitted.
9. Overwhelming displays of affection are not allowed in the school setting.
10. Students' refusal to give their name or present their Student ID card upon the request of any adult member of the REACH or Conard community, refusal to report directly to the Main Office when told to do so, refusal to leave an area when told to do so, giving a false name or identification to any staff member, or intentionally ignoring orders or requests from a staff member are subject to school consequences.
11. Students who knowingly misuse fire and safety devices installed for the protection of the building's occupants will be subject to school consequences.
12. Knowingly presenting or being involved in the production of a forged document or signature is prohibited.
13. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to school or private property is prohibited.
14. Stealing or attempting to steal school or private property is prohibited.
15. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person or that person's property is prohibited.
16. Intentionally threatening to cause physical injury to another person or to that person's property is prohibited.
17. Intentionally or wrongfully obstructing, interfering with or inhibiting any person's access to or use of school facilities through expressed or implied threat of the use of force against such person is prohibited.
18. Engaging in hazing or "bullying" of students is prohibited.
19. Intentionally defying the valid authority of Supervisors, teachers, Administrators, or the rules and regulations published by the school is prohibited.
20. Intentionally violating other reasonable standards of conduct determined by the Board of Education is prohibited.
21. Intentionally disrupting the educational environment through individual or group actions or refusal to obey rules is prohibited.

22. Engaging in “panhandling” or soliciting students for money is prohibited.
23. Behavior that is determined disruptive to the educational environment may result in expulsion from the REACH Program.
24. An In-School Suspension will be assigned for inappropriate behavior.
25. In School Suspension: Students issued an ISS will serve their ISS at their home school from 7:30 am until 2:15 pm.

**REACH students are expected to abide by the policies and rules of West Hartford Public Schools. Please refer to your Hall Student Handbook or Conard Student Handbook for the following:**

- Policy of Non-Discrimination
- First Amendment Rights
- West Hartford Public Schools Notice of Parent/Student
- Notification: (Notification of Rights Under (FERPA)
- West Hartford Public Schools Administrative Guidelines for Use of Technology
- Consequences/Penalties
- Graduation Requirements
- Minimum Credit Requirements
- Student Directory Information
- Student Code of Conduct
- School Rules and Regulations
- Attendance Policy
- Appeals Process
- Academic Honor Code
- Consequence/Penalties
- Bullying Behavior In The Schools
- Action Leading To Suspension or Expulsion
- Mandatory Expulsion
- Notification
- Notification Of Rights Under (“PPRA”) The Protection Of Pupil Rights Amendment

- Drug And Alcohol Regulations
- Tobacco Regulations
- Search And Seizure
- WHPS Sexual Harassment Policy For Students
- Complaint Procedure
- Student Activities, Dances And Other School Events
- Student Behavior During Evening Activities
- Behavior During Athletic Contests
- Behavior In the Cafeteria
- Dress And Grooming
- Loitering (as it applies to REACH hours)
- Off Grounds (as it applies to REACH hours)

### **REACH RULES AND REGULATIONS Attendance/Absenteeism/Tardiness/ Early Dismissals**

As agreed in the statement of commitment signed in the interview process, all students are expected to be at school all day, every day. In the event that an absence is necessary, it should only be for one of the following reasons:

1. Illness
2. Family emergency
3. School sponsored off campus activity
4. Suspension

Parents are required to call the school prior to the start of the school day to inform staff when their child is going to be absent.

A note confirming and explaining the absence, signed by a parent, should accompany a student upon their return to school. This note is useful for documentation purposes but does not excuse an absence.

#### **PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

- Any student who is tardy MUST sign-in with Mrs. Phelan in the office.

- 3 unexcused tardies to first period will result in loss of phone privilege for one day
- Any tardy beyond 11:30 a.m. will be counted as an absence. However, we still encourage students to attend school on that day in order to stay current with all classes and classwork.
- Students must be signed out by a parent if leaving school early.
- Leaving the REACH building without permission will result in disciplinary action.

### **ABSENCES AND CREDITS FOR GRADUATION**

Students who have 4 unexcused absences or 12 or more total absences (excused and unexcused) during a semester will receive the academic grade earned but will not receive credit for the semester. An opportunity will be given to appeal this loss of credit. Appeals are made to the REACH Administrator and will be based on improved attendance, within the attendance policy, the following semester.

- Review of attendance by REACH administration to determine student’s status in the REACH Program.
- Last semester seniors who exceed the allowable absences must appeal credits to their home school’s principal.

### **DISMISSAL/TRANSFER FROM PROGRAM**

#### **Academic Student Dismissal from the REACH Program:**

Any student who does not demonstrate a commitment to REACH and has excessive absences for a semester is subject to removal

from REACH and will be re-enrolled in their home school.

Students who voluntarily leave REACH as part of a collaborative plan with the staff may be considered for re-admittance to REACH. Each situation will be reviewed and discussed by the staff and with the home school counselor and administrators.

If it is determined that a student will be exited from the program, every attempt will be made to exit the student at the end of the **semester**, allowing the student the opportunity to stay at REACH and potentially earn semester credit (based on the outcome of the credit appeal). HOWEVER, if a student fails to abide by the behavioral, academic and attendance expectations of REACH, this may result in removal (during the semester) from the program.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation to the REACH Program is provided for all students who live more than 1.9 miles from the school. Students who live within 1.9 miles of the school are considered “walkers” and no bus transportation will be provided.

If a student is scheduled for a first or second period class at Conard or Hall, the student will be assigned an AM Conard or Hall bus. A REACH bus will not be assigned in the AM. Those students who are at Hall for a first period class will have a bus that will transport them from Hall to REACH after their class. If you miss your morning class at either Conard or Hall, or choose not to attend said class, you must arrange your own transportation to REACH that day.

It is recommended that students take the town-provided transportation. Students are expected to be on time at their scheduled bus stop each morning and to behave appropriately, to and from school, while on the buses each day. Each student will receive a schedule and town

guidelines regarding their bus route and behavior guidelines. Offenses on the bus will be handled under West Hartford's discipline policies.

**Under no circumstances are students allowed to drive or be driven by other students to and from school and/or program-related activities, unless a student and parent have made a written request to the REACH Administrator, who will approve or deny the request.**

### **STAYING AFTER SCHOOL AT REACH**

If you wish to stay after the REACH Program dismissal at 2:15 p.m., you must do all of the following:

- Identify and arrange in advance your reason to stay.
- You must have permission from a specific teacher to stay and work on a specific subject, to meet with a teacher or attend a meeting/sporting event
- If staying to do work you must identify the work that you intend to complete for that subject during the time that you stay. All work must be turned in before leaving and you work must show real effort. If not, your opportunity to stay in the future may be denied.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXPECTATIONS**

The following expectations are required for REACH students, failure to comply will result in a zero, with no opportunity for makeup:

- All electronic devices will remain at REACH in a secure location.

- Clothing that conforms to Conard's dress code and is clean, easy to move in, and appropriate for activity, including sitting on the floor or mats.
- Sneakers must be worn during PE activity.
- Sweatshirts and windbreakers may be worn. However, coats, jackets, hoods, hats, scarves, gloves, etc. are not acceptable.
- Be kind, courteous, cooperative, caring and respectful to everyone. This includes using appropriate language.
- Every absence not made up is a zero.
- Use the bathrooms and change in the REACH building before going to PE.

### **Procedure for completing PE makeup work:**

- Report to Conard's fitness center (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 2:15 pm-4:00 pm), dressed in shorts, sweats, t-shirt and sneakers.
- Sign in and check in with teacher on duty.
- Complete assigned work and required written form (30 minute plan equals one class)
- Give the completed form to the teacher on duty.
- Outstanding PE credits may be made up in Conard's fitness center and will be discussed on a case by case basis.

### **LOCKBOX AND DEVICE POLICY**

- All students will place their phones and/or devices into the lockbox at the beginning of class. Devices will be turned off.

Students may not charge their devices during lockbox time.

- Any student who refuses to put their device in the lockbox, dishonestly claims to not have a device, or brings two devices and only locks up one, will be placed on a parentally signed device contract, whereby device violations will result in the device being locked up in the REACH office from 8:50am-2:15pm.
- If a student is seen using their device during a lockbox time they will have their phone taken away for the remainder of that day and will be required to lock their device in the REACH office the following day as well.
- Teachers may allow students to use their devices during group work, individual work and other times at their discretion.

#### **REACH LUNCH WALKOVER CONTRACT**

- I will not wear a hat, carry a hat, or wear headgear of any kind.
- I will not wear or take headphones of any kind.
- I will not display or use any phone or electronic device.
- I will not yell, speak or gesture into any classrooms or windows while walking to Conard, while in Conard, or while walking back from Conard.
- I will treat all Conard staff in a respectful manner, and comply with any requests.

- I will enter and exit Conard using the side door by the Gym.
- I will enter the cafeteria through the proper door, get my lunch, and leave through the proper door, without wandering through the Cafe and socializing.
- I will enter and exit Conard in a timely manner with the rest of the REACH students and staff.

Students should be aware the Conard Administration can remove this privilege for the entire REACH program at any time based on the behavior of REACH students. Any student not following this signed contract will lose lunch privileges for:

-one week for the first violation

-one month for the second violation

-permanently for the third violation

Outside food may only be provided by a parent or guardian and must be delivered before the end of Homeroom.

Any student who provides lunch for a student who has lost lunch privileges will also lose their lunch privileges.