DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The Vernon Public Schools is committed to fighting the problem of substance abuse. Substance abuse jeopardizes a stable family structure, increases crime, impacts worker productivity, and presents a continuing and growing drain of government funds. For our youth, substance abuse is an especially serious threat. Drugs destroy their hopes and dreams and, all too often, their very lives.

The workplace is not immune to the influence of substance abuse. Worker safety, health and efficiency are adversely affected. Therefore, in harmony with Connecticut's three-pronged strategy of education, treatment and enforcement to combat substance abuse and in accordance with federal legislation, this Drug-Free Workplace Policy has been adopted for the Vernon Public Schools.

Effective March 18, 1989, the federal government enacted the "Drug-Free Workplace Act", (41 U.S. Code §§701 et seq.). This act requires that any employer receiving federal funding must certify that it will maintain a drug-free workplace. Among other things, the act requires that a policy be published notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of controlled substances is prohibited in the workplace. It also requires that certain actions be taken if this policy is broken.

GENERAL POLICIES

It is the policy of the Vernon Public Schools that each employee has a right to come to work and perform his or her job in an environment that is free from the illegal use of drugs. It is also in the interest of the District and the public that employees be able to perform their duties safely and efficiently. The District is firmly committed to promoting high standards of health, safety, and efficient service. Thus, our goal is to maintain a work environment free from the effects of drug abuse.

It is the policy of the Vernon Public Schools that employees shall not unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use a controlled substance while on the job or in the workplace, or be under the influence of a controlled substance, not prescribed for him/her by a physician, while on the job or in the workplace. Any employee violating this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

It is the policy of the Vernon Public Schools that employees with substance abuse problems are encouraged to participate in a counseling or rehabilitation program prior to being in a disciplinary situation. Employees should be advised of the Employees Assistance Program provided by the District and any available drug counseling or rehabilitation programs.

EMPLOYEE REQUIREMENTS

Employees shall not unlawfully use, possess, distribute, dispense or manufacture controlled substances or be under the influence of a controlled substance while on the job or in the workplace. Any employee violating this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

"Controlled substances" are specifically defined in federal law and consist of two classes of drugs: (1) those commonly thought of as "illegal" drugs; and (2) certain medications if not being taken under a physician's prescription or according to a physician's orders, which the federal government has determined have a potential for abuse, or are potentially physically or psychologically addictive.

Employees must give notification in writing to the Superintendent's Office (or other official serving in that role for the agency) within five (5) calendar days of any conviction for violation of a criminal drug statute if the violation occurred in the workplace. A conviction means a finding of guilt (including a plea of nolo contendre) and/or the imposition of a sentence by a judge or jury in any federal or state court. This reporting requirement is in addition to any agency work rules that require notice of arrests and/or convictions. An employee who is so convicted or who fails to report such a conviction is subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

"Workplace" includes any locations owned, operated or controlled by the District, whether the employee is on or off duty, and any other locations while on duty where District business is conducted, including traveling on District time to or from such work locations.

The District must notify the appropriate federal agency in writing, as well as the Office of Labor Relations, within ten (10) calendar days of receiving notice that one of its employees funded under a federal grant or contract has been convicted for a violation of a state or federal drug statute occurring in the workplace.

Since it is a federal certification requirement that employees be notified of this policy, each employee will receive a copy of it. The policy will also be available from the Superintendent's Office.

A copy of this Statement was received by _____

Print Name

_____ _____

Date Signature of Employee