

Needs a policy number

## Belonging Policy

The Haverhill School Committee is dedicated to fostering ALL students' support, acceptance, diversity, and feeling of belonging in its schools. This cannot be done without or capable students, devoted families, and the wonderful teachers who add to these values through their dedication and unwavering support.

The School Committee shall strive to:

- Prioritize student safety.
- Encourage civics engagement
- Enhance parental involvement
- Establish and continue community resource and establishments
- Emphasize the critical relationships

This policy aims to create a more equitable and inclusive learning environment through a sense of belonging for ALL students regardless of their background and income. The multiplicity of our students' diverse and varied backgrounds is our greatest strength. Students do their best when they are surrounded by others who have different capabilities, life experiences and cultures.

## Belonging Procedure

**Prioritize** safety of all students both physically and emotionally by:

- Providing full access to both guidance and adjustment counsellors
- Regularly notifying all students and families about the Hillie tip line and comprehensive guidelines on how it should be used

**Encourage** Haverhill Public School Students grades 7-12 to participate and become involved by:

- Ensuring there is a wide array of input from student leaders from all with revolving meeting locations or virtual options to ensure equitable access, including but not limited to:
  - BIPOC Union
  - Student Council
  - Language-based clubs
  - Pride Club
  - Honor Societies
  - Gateway Academy
  - Greenleaf Academy

- Encouraging the attendance of at least 2 school committee members, Haverhill School district leadership, and other community leaders to ensure students are being listened to through a minimum of 2 hour bi-yearly meetings hosted by the school committee in an equitable fashion as mentioned above.
- Emphasizing the inclusion and engagement of students of all abilities and linguistic background for out-of-school events and extracurricular activities, including but not limited to athletics.
  - Through the continued implementation of bi-yearly club fairs with the opportunity of every student to see the opportunities for involvement at the highschool and middle school level.
  - Making sure every student organization receives equitable distribution of resources like announcement time and posters.

**Enhance** the involvement of interested parents and faculty through the integration of but not exclusive to:

- Haverhill High School Site Council
- Special Education Parent Advisory Council
- Participation of faculty representatives from each school in the district
  - Including the Gateway Academy and Greenleaf Academy
- More clarity in how to get parents involved in ‘calm times’
- Continued workshops on how parents can advocate for their students
  - With attention to brevity in order for every parent to be able to gain the same knowledge while respecting everyone's time

**Establishment** of a list of community resources including but not limited to:

- Haverhill Latino Coalition
- Haverhill YMCA
- Haverhill YWCA

**Emphasizing** the importance of strong relationships between teachers and students.

- Striving for a diverse staff that feels supported and grows with the school district
- Encouraging teacher-teacher and/or teacher-student mentorship programs
- Remediation as part of district wide expectations to foster positive communication in the district's young leaders
  - Greenleaf Academy teaching communication, self reflection, and respect:  
<https://greenleaf.haverhill-ps.org/philosophy/>

Further background

- Boston public schools implement student representatives in their school committee
- Haverhill school committee already has a “student advisory council”
  - Currently consists of the highschool student council president giving an update on school events

- The goal is to expand the student advisory council to include more of the above-stated groups (see section “Encourage”). This body will be represented by the student council president in the regular school committee meetings.
- Alongside this, the student advisory council as a whole will meet with the school committee or a/ various subcommittee(s) to speak about policy concerns for at least two hours bi-yearly in an equitable setting as mentioned above hosted by the school committee.

Thank you to all the Hillies who worked on this document to make Haverhill Public Schools a better place for the next generation.