

Niobrara Public Schools



Student Handbook

2024-2025

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Introduction To Niobrara Public Schools

NIOBRARA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

247 North Highway 12

P.O. Box 310

Niobrara, NE 68760

(402) 857-3322

Mission Statement

The mission of the Niobrara Public Schools is to equip all students to succeed in a complex changing world.

Vision Statement

The students of Niobrara Public School will continuously show growth in academics and character throughout their educational journey.

Parent Welcome Letter

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are asking for your help as parents/guardians to support our school system in trying to teach students about the rules and regulations that govern our district. **The full version of the student handbook is available at <http://www.niobraraschools.org>. If you would like a hard copy please contact the school office and one will be provided.** This handbook provides basic knowledge and rules for the upcoming year at the Niobrara Public School District. Please read through it with your child(ren)

The acknowledgement form and student medication forms are sent home with each student during the first week of school and need to be completed and returned to school by **August 31, 2024**.

EACH STUDENT (not family) MUST RETURN SIGNED FORMS.

Please ensure your child(ren) understands the District's support, expectations, and policies and regulations at school. If you have any questions about the student handbook, feel free to contact the school at your convenience.

Superintendent (Mrs. Sandoz):	857-3323
Principals (Mrs. Higgins & Mrs. Mullanix):	857-3322

Thank you for your continued support of the Niobrara Public Schools.

Sincerely,
NIOBRARA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Foreword

The school is a community with rules and regulations, and those who enjoy the rights and privileges it provides must also accept the responsibilities that membership demands, including respect for and compliance with school rules. Without discipline, the school cannot fulfill its responsibility for the development of citizenship. Without commitment and discipline, students cannot realize their greatest opportunities for personal growth.

The school has a shared responsibility to help the parent/guardian educate, lead, and when necessary, discipline their child. In the final analysis, however, these basic responsibilities rest with the parent/guardian and the school should never be reluctant to insist that the parent accept their role.

The information contained in this booklet is designed to give you some guidelines about what is expected of you as a responsible student at Niobrara Public Schools. Please study this handbook carefully. It would be an impossible task to write a rule for everything that happens. Therefore, **the most important rule is that all students are expected to conduct themselves in a reasonable manner at all times.**

The image you present is long lasting. It is a reflection on you, your family, and your school. Make that image a positive one and remember, what you do today will echo in eternity.

Title 1 Parent-School Learning Compact

Teacher:

It is important that students achieve. All teachers agree to do the following:

1. Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction to enable children to meet state academic achievement standards.
2. Regularly communicate with parents on their child's progress.
3. Promote active family engagement through opportunities to participate in their student's education throughout the year.
4. Provide a safe, positive, and healthy learning environment for the children.
5. Demonstrate professional behavior and positive attitude.

Parent/Caring Adult:

I want my child to achieve; therefore I will encourage him/her by doing the following:

1. Communicate and work with teachers and school staff to support and challenge my child.
2. Make sure my child is at school every day and on time, unless he/she is ill.
3. See that my child has the necessary supplies needed throughout the school year.
4. Provide a quiet place and time to do schoolwork and encourage my child to complete schoolwork.
5. Support and participate in positive interactions with school and their child regarding their social/emotional and academic progress.

Student:

I know my education is important to me. It is important that I work to the best of my ability. I agree to do the following:

1. Be at school every day and on time unless I am sick.
2. Come to school each day prepared with supplies and an attitude to learn.
3. Be responsible for my own behavior (follow the expectations).
4. Respect and cooperate with other students and adults.
5. Return completed school work on time.
6. Read at home.

Combined District and School Parent and Family Engagement Policy 2024-2025

It is the policy of the district to provide full access to the parent and family members of any student of the district to review textbooks, tests, curriculum and instructional materials, records of a student of any such parent, unless otherwise prohibited by law, and to any surveys of students done by the school district. Summary information regarding the district's curriculum, testing, and surveys will be provided at the beginning of each school year. Requests for access to specific instructional materials should be addressed to the teacher or building principal.

Requests by parents and family members to attend and monitor courses, assemblies, counseling sessions and other instructional activities shall also be made to the building principal or teacher. While requests to monitor are usually granted, if the request is denied, reasons for the denial will be provided.

It is the policy of the district to provide as consistent an experience as possible in all classroom instruction, testing, surveys, and other school experiences. It is the policy of the district not to excuse students from classroom instruction, testing, and other school experiences unless an objection is submitted to the building principal or teacher outlining the specific experience, the basis for the objection and a proposed solution for dealing with the objection that would be satisfactory to the parent and family members.

The request for the student to be excused will be reviewed by the building principal and a decision provided to the parents and family members. While verbal objections and decisions are valid, written followup to verbal communications is required from the parent and family members, and the principal. If a student is excused from the requested activity no penalty will be assessed but an agreed upon alternative activity must be performed to the satisfaction of the teacher and principal.

It is the policy of the district to use only testing methods and testing instruments that are not of an experimental nature and to avoid using any testing materials or testing techniques that are not generally recognized by educational professionals to be within sound educational standards and both educationally and academically appropriate. It is the policy of the district to notify parents and family members of any standardized testing that may be scheduled within the school district.

It is the policy of the district to notify parents and family members of any survey which may be scheduled and to conduct student surveys judiciously, with full consideration of the fact that parents and family members may find items of the survey objectionable.

The following activities will also be included in the district's plan for parental and family involvement:

1. The district will involve parents and family members in the development of the Title I plan, the process for school review of the plan and the process for improvement;
2. The district will provide the coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parental and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance;
3. The district will build the schools' and parents' and family members' capacity for strong parental and family involvement;
4. The district will coordinate and integrate parental and family involvement strategies under Title I with other programs such as Head Start, Reading First, etc.;
5. The district will conduct with the involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental and family involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the school served including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents and family

members in Title I activities (with particular attention to parents and families who have low income, Limited English Proficient (LEP), minorities, disabilities and low literacy) and use the findings of the evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental and family involvement and to revise, as necessary, the parental and family involvement policies; and

6. The district will involve parents and family members in Title I activities.

The parent and family members or guardian of a student may have access to that student's records during normal business hours of the district according to Policy 507.01 Student Records Access.

This policy is adopted following a public hearing to receive public comments and suggestions.

Board Policy 1005.03 Approved/Reviewed June 2024

Parent Notification of Teacher Qualifications

Parents may request and receive information regarding the professional qualifications of teacher(s) in the district. Please contact Superintendent Margaret Sandoz for these requests.

Requests can be sent to msandoz@niobraraschools.org or US Mail to P.O. Box 310, Niobrara, NE 68760.

School Information

Attendance Policy/Tardiness/Student Illness

Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance by students is essential for students to obtain the maximum opportunities from the education program. Parents and students alike are encouraged to ensure an absence from school is a necessary absence. Students shall attend school unless excused by the principal of their attendance center.

Student absences that are not school sponsored shall be counted as an absence. Absences including documented illness shall not count as days in attendance for purposes of addressing excessive absenteeism.

Students whose absences are approved shall make up the work missed and receive full credit for the missed school work, within guidelines of the student handbook (re: individual teacher class procedures). It shall be the responsibility of the student to initiate a procedure with the student's teacher to complete the work missed.

Students who wish to participate in school sponsored activities must attend school for a full day the day of the activity unless permission has been given by the principal for the student to be absent.

It shall be the responsibility of the parent to notify the student's attendance center as soon as the parent knows the student will not be attending school on that day. The principal may request evidence or written verification of the student's reason for absence.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to develop administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Tardiness: A student is deemed tardy if they arrive after the bell has rung for class to begin. A student becomes absent from that period if they are more than 15 minutes late.

EXCESSIVE TARDINESS TO FIRST PERIOD CLASSES WILL BE SUPPORTED ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS BY ADMINISTRATION.

Student Make-Up Days: Students (and parents) will be notified of any school procedures ([linked here](#)) regarding attendance expectations at the beginning of each school year. Students may be required to attend school on "Student Make-Up Days" for excessive absences. Students who have not made up time, will not be able to attend extra-curricular events or activities until time is made up.

Excessive Absenteeism: Excessive absenteeism will be addressed on an individual basis by administration (total number of absences includes both excused, unexcused, and medical absences). Students with 20 (or more) absences for the school year may not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular activities or school events (i.e. sports, fieldtrip, college tours, etc) for the remainder of the year.

# of Absences per year	District Action
5 Absences	Parents/guardians may be contacted to discuss the absence policy and determine what supports are needed. A meeting may be scheduled to develop a plan for support.
10 Absences	Parents/guardians may be notified in writing. Students may be placed on academic probation and a meeting with students and parents/guardians may be attempted to discuss concerns and collaborate about strategies to support healthy attendance habits. Students may be suspended from all extracurricular activities, follow academic probation guidelines, and participate in a restorative meeting.
15 Absences	Second notice to parents/guardians may be made, notifying them of next action steps.
20+ Absences	Notification may be made to the County Attorney and students may lose graduation credit for class.

Student Illness: Parents/guardians of students who become ill while at school will be contacted and asked to make arrangements for their child to be picked up. Anyone leaving school because of illness or any other reason must check out at the office. Any student showing signs and symptoms of a contagious or infectious disease are required by law to be sent home immediately (Nebraska DHHS 173 NAC 3). Those symptoms include fever over 100.5 °F, flushed face, headache, aches in muscles or joints, unexplained tiredness, loss of appetite, stomach ache, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions, sore throat, nasal congestion, unexplained skin eruption, sore or inflamed eyes. Students are not allowed to return to school until they are fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications. (Attachment 1 in 173 NAC 3 also includes minimum isolation periods for contagious and infectious disease/conditions which will be followed).

Automobiles and Parking Expectations

Student Parking:

- Students must park in the North parking lot.
- Students are not allowed to go to their vehicles during school hours unless given permission by a school employee.
- Any unnecessary spinning or speeding, or violations of any of the included automobile and parking regulations, may result in disciplinary actions.
- Drivers must have a school permit if they are under 16 years of age. All drivers are to register their names, license, age, etc. with the office.

Arrival/Dismissal:

- Parents picking up students must park north of the elementary building or other areas designated by administration. Please do not drive through the bus loading/unloading zone.
- VEHICLES MAY NOT LEAVE THE AREA THAT IS DESIGNATED FOR BUSES WHILE BUSES ARE LOADING AND DEPARTING FROM THE BUILDING.

Closed Campus

Students are not permitted to leave the campus, once they have arrived, unless granted permission from office personnel or administration. Leaving the campus without permission will be considered truancy. Campus is closed from the first bell to the last bell (specific hours will vary from year to year).

Fire/Tornado Drills and Routes

Disaster drills are held at various times during the school year. Instructions are posted in each room. Students are asked to review/read all instructions and follow the teacher's directives.

Anyone tampering with the fire extinguishers, alarm system, or causing a false alarm may be immediately suspended from school and face appropriate legal actions.

Library/Media Center

Library books may be checked out for a two-week period. A replacement fee will be assessed for any book that is not returned or returned damaged beyond repair. The library will be open to students throughout the day to the greatest extent possible. Students are expected to be respectful of others and speak quietly while working in the library.

Lockers

Lockers are assigned. Students are asked to keep their lockers neat. Lockers are school property and are subject to school inspection and/or search. Random locker searches will be conducted. If students bring a lock, a key or combination must be given to the administration.

The school cannot be responsible for property stolen or lost from lockers. DO NOT LEAVE VALUABLES IN LOCKERS!

Physicals

As part of entrance requirements into Niobrara Public School, each student is required to provide evidence of a physical examination by a physician, a physician assistant, or an advanced practice registered nurse within six months prior to entrance into Kindergarten (K) and the seventh (7th) grade. All students who transfer from out of state, to any grade, are also required to provide evidence of a physical examination. All students in Grades 7-12 must also complete a sports physical prior to the first day of practice in order to participate on an annual basis.

Along with this, all students are to provide evidence of required immunizations set by Nebraska State Law (Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 79-217 through 79-253). Immunization records are kept on file.

Waivers are available for physical examinations and for immunizations in the Health Office. Students with exemptions on file may need to be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease.

Every student may be subject to a School Health Screening by the School Nurse or her designee, annually, to include a physical examination, hearing screening, vision screening, dental screening and weight/height status screening as regulated under Nebraska Title 173 CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE Chapter 7 SCHOOL

HEALTH SCREENING, PHYSICAL EXAMINATION, AND VISUAL EVALUATION. The parent or guardian may present a written statement objecting to such examinations.

School Closures

All school closures due to inclement weather or other causes will be announced on **SchoolMessenger**. The District will provide advanced notification to the greatest extent possible.

Visitors

Students, parents/guardians, and school visitors must check in with the front office during the school day, or activity entrance for activities.

Weekend and Wednesday Night Activities

Activities will be scheduled during the day or after school at a time convenient to the group and its sponsor/coach. Wednesday night practices are to be concluded by 6:00 p.m. There will be no Sunday practices unless there is a contest on Monday and the practice has been pre-approved by the administration. No students are to remain in the school building or on the school grounds after school unless requested or are participating in activities supervised by school personnel. Occasionally, activities may be scheduled by the Nebraska State Activities Association that may be in conflict with this provision.

Academic Supports and Expectations

Academic Eligibility

Academic Eligibility: To participate in athletic or school sponsored events or activities (i.e. sports, field trips, class trips, work-based learning, etc), students must be in good academic standing (see No Pass/No Play List below) and must meet the requirements of the Niobrara Public Schools.

No Pass/No Play List:

- Each student is automatically eligible at the start of each quarter. There will be a two-week grace period (10 school days) at the beginning of each quarter before the No Pass/No Play List goes into effect (third week of the quarter).
- Teachers will submit current grades to Powerschool by 8:00 A.M. each Wednesday of the school week.
- Any student with a 69% or below in any class will be placed on the No Pass/No Play List. The No Pass/No Play List will be updated every week on Wednesday and students will be notified if they are ineligible.
- Teachers may recommend student placement on the No Pass/No Play List due to incomplete/missing work, even if students are above 69% and passing. Parents will be notified by the teacher prior to placement on the No Pass/No Play List for this reason.
- Students remain on the No Pass/No Play List until they have satisfactorily completed the work necessary to be removed from the list and Powerschool reflects that they are passing all classes.
- **If a student is on the No Pass/No Play List, they will not be permitted to attend school activities or athletic events that take place during the school day.**

Extra Support:

Students can arrange to come in early or stay after school with individual teachers (if teachers are available).

Academic Integrity

Policy Statement: Students are expected to abide by the standards of academic integrity established by their teachers and school administration. Standards of academic integrity are established in order for students to learn as much as possible from instruction, for students to be given grades which accurately reflect the student's level of learning and progress, to provide a level playing field for all students, and to develop appropriate values. Cheating and plagiarism violate the standards of academic integrity. Sanctions will be imposed against students who engage in such conduct.

Definitions: The following definitions provide a guide to the standards of academic integrity:

1. **"Cheating"** means intentionally misrepresenting the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. Such misrepresentations may, but need not necessarily, involve the work of others. **Cheating includes, but is not limited to:**
 - a. **Tests:** Includes tests, quizzes and other examinations or academic performances.
 - i. Advance Information: Obtaining, reviewing or sharing copies of tests or information about a test before these are distributed for student use by the instructor. For example, a student engages in cheating if, after having taken a test, the student informs other students in a later section of the questions that appear on the test.
 - ii. Use of Unauthorized Materials: Using notes, textbooks, pre-programmed formulas in calculators, or other unauthorized material, devices or information while taking a test

except as expressly permitted. For example, except for “open book” tests, a student engages in cheating if the student looks at personal notes or the textbook during the test.

- iii. Use of Other Student Answers: Copying or looking at another student’s answers or work, or sharing answers or work with another student, when taking a test, except as expressly permitted. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student looks at another student’s paper during a test. A student also engages in cheating if the student tells another student answers during a test or while exiting the testing room, or knowingly allows another student to look at the student’s answers on the test.
 - iv. Use of Other Students to Take Tests. Having another person take one's place for a test, or taking a test for another student, without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor.
 - v. Misrepresenting Need to Delay Test. Presenting false or incomplete information in order to postpone or avoid the taking of a test. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student misses class on the day of a test, claiming to be sick, when the student’s real reason for missing class was because the student was not prepared for the test.
- b. Papers: Includes papers, essays, lab projects, and other similar academic work.
- i. Use of Another’s Paper: Copying another student’s paper, using a paper from an essay writing service, or allowing another student to copy a paper, without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor.
 - ii. Assistance from Others: Having another person (or means; for example AI technology) assist with the paper to such an extent that the work does not truly reflect the student’s work.
 - iii. Failure to Contribute to Group Projects: Accepting credit for a group project in which the student failed to contribute a fair share of the work.
 - iv. Misrepresenting Need to Delay Paper. Presenting false or incomplete information in order to postpone or avoid turning in a paper when due. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student misses class on the day a paper is due, claiming to be sick, when the student’s real reason for missing class was because the student had not finished the paper.
- c. Alteration of Assigned Grades: Any unauthorized alteration of assigned grades by a student in the teacher’s grade book or the school records is a serious form of cheating.
2. **“Plagiarism”** means to take and present as one's own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one's own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works. **Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:**
- a. Failure to Credit Sources: Copying work (words, sentences, and paragraphs or illustrations or models) directly from the work of another without proper credit. Academic work frequently involves use of outside sources. To avoid plagiarism, the student must either place the work in quotations or give a citation to the outside source.
 - b. Falsely Presenting Work as One’s Own: Presenting work prepared by another in final or draft form as one's own without citing the source, such as the use of purchased research papers or use of another student’s paper.
3. **“Contributing”** to academic integrity violations means to participate in or assist another in cheating or plagiarism. It includes but is not limited to allowing another student to look at your test answers, to copy your papers or lab projects, and to fail to report a known act of cheating or plagiarism to the instructor or administration.

Sanctions: The following sanctions will occur when a student engages in cheating, plagiarism, or contributing to an academic integrity offense:

1. Academic Sanction. The instructor will refuse to accept the student's work in which the academic integrity offense took place, assign a grade of "F" or zero for the work, and require the student to complete a test or project in place of the work within such time and under such conditions as the instructor may determine appropriate. In the event the student completes the replacement test or project at a level meeting minimum performance standards, the instructor will assign a grade which the instructor determines to be appropriate for the work.
2. Report to Parents and Administration. The instructor will notify the Principal of the offense and the instructor or Principal will notify the student's parents or guardian.
3. Student Discipline Sanctions. Academic integrity offenses are a violation of school rules. The Principal may recommend sanctions in addition to those assigned by the instructor, up to and including suspension or expulsion. Such additional sanctions will be given strong consideration where a student has engaged in serious or repeated academic integrity offense or other rule violations, and where the academic sanction is otherwise not a sufficient remedy, such as for offenses involving altering assigned grades or contributing to academic integrity violations.

Distance Learning Student Policy

Two-way interactive television provides a method for districts to provide low incidence courses and advanced programming that normally might not be offered to students in Niobrara Public Schools. Students enrolling in these courses must maintain certain standards of performance and behavior. This policy statement is intended to make both students and parents aware of these standards.

Student taking a two-way interactive course must follow these guidelines:

1. Standards are expected and insubordination of any kind will not be tolerated.
2. Inappropriate language or gestures will not be tolerated.
3. The classroom may be taped.
4. Students must sit within camera view at all times unless instructed otherwise.
5. Students must use equipment in the classroom appropriately.
6. Students must follow all other rules as specified by the room monitor and the distance learning teacher.

Consequences for students not following guidelines:

- First Offense: Verbal warning and possible parental notification.
- Second Offense: Conference between student, parents, teacher, and administration about possible removal from class.
- Third Offense: The student will be removed from the class.

Parents/Guardians and students must acknowledge the receipt and understanding of this policy by signing and returning the form found at the back of this handbook.

Dual Credit and College Credit (High School)

Students that are in good academic standing have the opportunity to take dual credit and/or college credit courses while in high school. Students under the age of 16 may take dual credit courses with prior approval from the school counselor or administration and the college.

- **Dual Credit** - Courses are taken through a college and count both as high school credit and college credit. These courses will appear on the student’s high school transcript.
- **College Credit** - Courses are taken through a college and the student will ONLY receive college credit for the course. These courses will not appear on the student’s high school transcript and are not included in the GPA.

The following are the delivery types for dual credit courses and how they will be graded:

"In House" - These courses will be taught by Niobrara Public Schools teachers/staff. It will be taught in the traditional classroom setting and be graded quarterly like a traditional high school course. Students will receive a quarterly and semester grade for the course. The course grade will be included in the student’s GPA, Class Rank, and Honor Roll.

Distance Learning - These courses are taught through live video streaming, distance learning carts, computers, on campus by an off-site instructor. These courses may be graded traditionally, but only a semester grade will be given for dual credit courses. High school courses offered through distance learning will be assigned a quarter and semester grade. The course grades will be included in the calculation of the student’s GPA, Class Rank, and Honor Roll; therefore, students will be required to submit their dual credit grade to the school counselor prior to the end of semester.

Web-Based/Online - These courses are directly online and do not require the student to meet with the instructor regularly. Grades will be recorded at the end of the semester. The course grade will be included in the calculation of the student’s GPA, Class Rank, and Honor Roll; therefore, students will be required to submit their dual credit grade to the school counselor prior to the end of semester.

The cost of dual/college credit courses may vary. Students are responsible for the cost of tuition, textbooks, and any other materials needed. If there are other resources or scholarships that can be used to pay for the course, the school counselor will work with the student on an individual basis to complete the process.

Grading System

Kindergarten

- 4 - Exceeds (Independently performs above grade-level expectations)
- 3 - Meets (Demonstrates grade-level skills, little or no support needed)
- 2 - Progressing (Skills are developing, some support needed)
- 1 - Beginning (Skills are limited, frequent support needed)

1st-12th Grade

Grades are recorded as a percentage using the following scale:

A	93-100%
B	86-92%
C	78-85%
D	70-77%
F	0-69%

Grade Scale for Special Area Classes

Students need to be assessed when attending special area classes; physical education, art, music, technology, and career exploration. At the end of each quarter, special area teachers will need to complete grades for all elementary school students that attend special area classes. A 4-point rating scale will be used to communicate with parents/guardians to inform them how the students are progressing in the teachers class.

4 - Exceeds grade level expectations

- Has a deep understanding and is able to perform skills easily with little guidance
- Behaviors are appropriate and leadership skills are demonstrated
- Takes responsibility for his/her learning and is actively engaged in the learning process

3 - Meets grade level expectations

- Shows consistent understanding and is able to perform skills
- Behaviors are appropriate
- Actively engaged in the learning process

2 - Making progress toward meeting grade level expectations

- Shows inconsistent understanding of skills
- Behaviors are mostly appropriate and responds appropriately to redirections
- Mostly actively engaged in the learning process

1 - Does not meet grade level expectations

- Having considerable difficulty with skills
- Behaviors are inappropriate and needs to be redirected frequently
- Is not actively engaged in the learning process

Graduation Requirements

Students must successfully complete the courses required by the board and the Nebraska Department of Education in order to graduate. If graduation requirements are not fulfilled, the student will not be permitted to participate in Commencement exercises. The only exception to the graduation requirements is developed by an Individualized Educational Program Team.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to ensure that students complete grades one through twelve and that high school students complete *[200; other]* credits prior to graduation. The following credits will be required:

Language Arts 40 credit hours
 Science 30 credit hours
 Mathematics 30 credit hours
 Social Studies 40 credit hours
 Physical Education 20 credit hours
 Practical Arts 20 credit hours
 Fine Arts 10 credit hours
 Total Required Hours 190 credit hours

Total Elective Hours 60 credit hours

Total Required Hours for Graduation 250 credit hours

Total Course Credits - 250 (State of NE requires 200 – 80% must be core – Rule 10)

Course of Study MUST include at least one semester of the following: Speech, Health, Computer Science and Technology (79-729), Personal Finance (79-729), and the equivalency of a full course of American Government (1 year highschool, 1 semester dual credit).

Students must also meet the requirements for American Civics Law (79-724).

Each student shall complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) prior to graduating unless the required opt-out form is submitted by either: (1) the parent or legal guardian; (2) the Principal, if the Principal determines good cause exists for not requiring the student to complete the FAFSA; or (3) an emancipated student or a student of at least 19 years of age.

Graduation requirements for special education students will be in accordance with the prescribed course of study as described in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Each student's IEP will include a statement of the projected date of graduation at least 18 months in advance of the projected date and the criteria to be used in determining whether graduation will occur. Prior to the special education student's graduation, the IEP team shall determine whether the graduation criteria have been met.

IDEA Considerations

Graduating with a regular high school diploma or reaching the maximum age of eligibility both result in termination of a student's eligibility for Special Education (IDEA) services. The school district must also provide the student with a summary of performance prior to graduation or ending services because of age.

Requirements Related to American Civics (Nebraska Revised Statute 79-724)

The requirements within Nebraska Revised Statute 79-724 took effect on September 1, 2019, and the NDE considers 2019-2020 a transition year for implementation. Even so, opportunities may exist in an alternate learning environment to meet requirements within 79-724.

- If a district intends to administer the civics portion of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service Naturalization Test, students are required to take the test twice - once prior to completing 8th grade and a second time prior to completing 12th grade. It may be possible for seniors to complete the second testing in an alternate learning environment. For example, the University of Nebraska High School is offering "Citizenship 101" for free (non-credit), and it prepares students to take the naturalization test at the completion.
- For districts that intend to have students attend/participate in a meeting of a public body OR complete a project/paper and class presentation as outlined in 79-724, those requirements may also be met in an alternate learning environment.

Early Graduation

A student who wishes to graduate from high school in less time than the ordinary eight (8) semesters, grade 9-12 sequence, may request permission to complete graduation requirements on an alternate schedule. Students may graduate early if circumstances make attending his/her senior year or the second semester of senior year impossible, impractical, or if it is in the best interest of the student.

The student and parents/guardians will consult with high school administration and appropriate personnel to develop a graduation plan. The student's intention to accomplish this shall be stated in writing and the "Request to Graduate Early" application must be completed in its entirety and submitted to the principal by September 1st for an end of semester graduate (December) or February 1st for an end of year graduate (May). The student's parent/guardian must also submit a letter in support of the student's request for early graduation, and such letter is to accompany the student's application.

A student who graduates early must complete all graduation requirements established by the Board of Education. The student who chooses early graduation will be allowed to participate in the spring (May) graduation ceremony of the school year he/she completes graduation requirements. In all other school activities, the early graduate will be treated as a graduated student, therefore he/she will no longer be considered a member of the student body and will forfeit those rights and privileges afforded such students.

"Early Graduation" Activity/Event Inclusions:

All students who meet the eligibility requirements for early graduation will be allowed to participate in the current school year's spring commencement exercises and apply for scholarships for which they are eligible.

"Early Graduation" Activity/Event Exclusions:

Early graduates are not eligible to compete in senior class rankings, to be considered for academic distinction, graduate with honors, speak at commencement, or participate in any other activity or honor considered exclusive to seniors.

Class Rank

Valedictorian and Salutatorian candidates must be enrolled in the Niobrara School District for a minimum of four consecutive semesters during junior and senior year to be eligible for consideration. Valedictorian and Salutatorian are chosen by cumulative GPA to the second decimal place. In the event of a cumulative GPA tie, the highest cumulative GPA percentage is used. If a tie still remains, more than one student may be awarded Valedictorian or Salutatorian. Students graduating with a cumulative 93% or above without rounding up will be recognized as graduating with honors. For example, if a student has a 92.7%, it will not be rounded up to a 93%.

The Graduation Ceremony Protocol will be provided to the seniors and their parents/guardians by the senior class sponsor upon request.

Commencement for Student Receiving Special Education Services

Students with disabilities whose parents/guardians decide to defer to have their child receive a diploma are allowed to participate in commencement ceremonies one time.

Two options are available:

Option A - If the student participates in a commencement ceremony prior to reaching age twenty-one and wishes to continue to receive educational/transitional services provided by Niobrara Public Schools, the student will be awarded a "Certificate of Attendance". The "Certificate of Attendance" will be enclosed in an identical cover as received by all other students. An actual diploma may be awarded at a later date if the student completes all requirements of their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Upon receipt of a diploma, or at age 21, (whichever comes first), public supported educational services will be terminated.

Option B - The student may wait until the completion of educational/transitional services (on or before the student's 21st birthday) before participating in commencement exercises. An actual diploma may be awarded at this time if the student has completed all requirements of their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Students that have not met the requirements of their IEP will receive a "Certificate of Attendance".

High School Course Credit for Elementary or Middle School Students

High School credit may be awarded to students in elementary or middle school if the course content and requirements are equivalent to a course offered in the high school. Students will receive the high school credit and the grade will be included in their high school GPA.

Honor Roll

The Niobrara Public Schools Honor Roll is for students in grades 7-12. Honor Roll consists of three categories.

1. **A+ Superior** - All "A's"
2. **Superior** - Four "A's" and no grade lower than a "B"
3. **Honors** - No grade lower than a "B"

Students who qualify for the honor roll may be rewarded for their academic excellence.

College Visits

Off-Campus: Juniors and seniors will be allowed a total of three (3) days in which they can visit prospective colleges or military installations and not have those days counted towards the attendance rules. The office must be notified prior to the visit. Any visits that exceed the limit will be counted as an absence.

On-Campus: Students will be allowed to visit with military recruiters and college representatives at school.

Schedule Changes

It is the responsibility of the student to make an appointment with the school counselor to discuss any schedule changes. No schedule changes are permitted after the first three days of each semester except in emergencies and granted with administrative approval. Any schedule changes require parent and administrative approval.

Semester Tests

All students in grades 9-12 will take summative and formative assessments in **semester-long courses** to assess their knowledge and mastery of the Nebraska State Standards and the local Niobrara Public Schools curriculum. Semester tests will be worth no more than 10% of grades. It is at the discretion of the classroom teacher to determine how the cumulative assessment will be given (written, project, speech, etc). Semester tests will be given at the end of each semester. Students who are absent on the scheduled test days will have to make up their tests.

Student Code of Conduct

Behavior Expectations

Purpose: To promote student self-discipline through good citizenship and acceptance of individual responsibilities.

Philosophy: Niobrara Public Schools believes that all students can behave appropriately within the school environment and that it is the District's responsibility to teach students appropriate behaviors and to accept responsibility for the choices they make.

The Classroom: The classroom teacher is responsible for the behavior of all students in his/her classroom. Each teacher is responsible for reinforcing positive behavior and reteaching expectations as needed. Classroom expectations will be posted in every classroom.

General School Rules:

The following general school rules apply to all persons who enter Niobrara Public Schools:

1. Demonstrate respect for teachers, students, guests, and other school staff. Treat others as you would like to be treated.
2. Use appropriate language.
3. Be supportive/encouraging of other students.
4. Be respectful of school property, staff property, or the property of any student.
5. Be safe: refrain from fighting or behavior that may injure any other person in the school. (Example—pushing, shoving in halls, running in a building, throwing objects at others, etc.)
6. Caps/hats are only allowed on special occasions when authorized by the Administration.
7. Be respectful of others by talking quietly.
8. Walk while in the school building.
9. Pick up after yourself and others to show pride in your school by keeping the school and grounds well kept.
10. Gestures that are considered offensive are not allowed.
11. No public displays of affection, (i.e. hugging, kissing, hand holding, etc.)
12. Students caught cheating will receive an automatic zero. Students assisting others to cheat will receive an automatic zero. Repetitive acts of cheating may have additional consequences as determined by the administration.
13. Keep backpacks in lockers. Backpacks can be utilized to carry books, supplies, etc. to and from school, but are to remain in lockers from the beginning of the school day to the end of the school day. Backpacks are not allowed in classrooms, restrooms, or cafeteria.

Student Conduct

The board believes inappropriate student conduct causes serious disruption to the learning environment, interferes with the rights of others, and threatens the health and safety of students, employees and the public. The Superintendent and staff will develop and implement age-appropriate student codes of conduct to facilitate the educational process.

Students shall conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with respect and consideration for the rights of others while on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of

the school district. This policy will also apply while on school owned, operated or chartered transportation; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and educational processes of the school district.

Students who violate this policy and the administrative regulations supporting it will be subject to disciplinary measures including, but not limited to, removal from the classroom, detention, suspension, probation and expulsion. The codes of conduct will include measures to prevent or discourage behavior which interferes with the educational program, behavior which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school or the functioning of school activities, behavior which interferes with the maintenance of a learning environment, behavior that is violent or destructive, or behavior which interferes with the rights of other students to pursue their education. Procedures will be available to allow rights of due process for all students.

This disciplinary process is designed to create the expectation that the degree of discipline imposed by the school will be proportionate to the severity of the behavior of the particular student, the previous discipline history of the student and other relevant factors. It will also include parental involvement processes designed to enable parents, guardians, teachers and school administrators to work together to improve and enhance appropriate student behavior and academic performance. All student codes of conduct shall be submitted to the board for approval or review.

The code of conduct will be included in the student handbook, and a parent/guardian will sign and promptly return an acknowledgement of receipt of the handbook which specifically mentions the student code of conduct.

Board Policy 504.03

In-School Suspension (ISS):

When a student is assigned in-school suspension, they will be required to report to the office upon entering the school building in the morning. The student will be allowed to have breakfast, but the breakfast will be brought to them and eaten in the office cubicle. When serving ISS, the following expectations must be followed:

- Cell phone: Cell phones will be placed in a secure area or left in the student’s locker
- Backpack: Backpacks will be kept in the student’s locker (unless other arrangements approved by administration)
- Music: No earpods or devices that provide music will be allowed
- Chromebook: A Chromebook with limited access will be provided in order for students to complete their classwork
- Restroom: Students will use the restroom in the nurse’s office
- Lunch: Lunch in the office cubicle and “seconds” are not allowed
- Food/Drink: Water is allowed, but all other food and drinks are not permitted
- Work: Students are expected to complete their classwork or read a book if they do not have work to complete (sleeping is not allowed and may result in further consequences)

If a student is unable to follow the expectations of ISS, additional consequences will be determined by administration.

Standards of Conduct: Prohibited Behaviors/Articles at School

The following acts are among those defined as criminal offenses under the laws of the State of Nebraska or school offenses that violate Niobrara Public School District Policies.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES OR ILLEGAL DRUGS---The use, sale, or possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs.

ARSON---The intentional setting of fire.

ASSAULT---Physical threats or violence to persons.

BOMB THREAT---Threatening damage to persons or property from exploding bombs, whether real or imagined.

BURGLARY---Illegally entering with the intent to steal school or personal property.

DATA---Breach of data, vpn, etc.

DANGEROUS WEAPONS---Illegal possession or use of firearms or dangerous weapons that may cause bodily harm to an individual.

DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT---Conduct, which materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, is prohibited.

EXPLOSIVES---Illegal possession or use of explosive substances that may cause injury or damage.

EXTORTION, BLACKMAIL OR COERCION---Obtaining money or property by violence or forcing someone to do something against his will by force or threat of force.

FAILURE TO COOPERATE WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL---Students must obey reasonable instructions from school personnel.

FALSE FIRE ALARMS---Setting off false alarms.

INAPPROPRIATE DRESS AND APPEARANCE---Dress and appearance must not present health or safety problems or cause disruption.

LARCENY---Stealing of school or personal property.

NON-ATTENDANCE---Daily attendance of all who are enrolled in the Niobrara Public School is required in accordance with State Law and District Policy.

MALICIOUS MISCHIEF---Willful damage or destruction of school or personal property.

SMOKING OR POSSESSION OF TOBACCO---Smoking or possession of tobacco by students is not permitted on school property or at school sponsored activities (including vape products).

TRESPASS---Being present in an unauthorized place or refusing to leave when ordered to do so.

FORGERY---Fraudulent imitation of a signature or document.

UNLAWFUL INTERFERENCE WITH SCHOOL AUTHORITIES---Interfering with administrators and teachers by force or violence or threat of force.

Dress and Grooming

Students are to be clean and well groomed and wear clothes in good repair and appropriate for the time, place and occasion. Clothing or other apparel promoting products illegal for use by minors and clothing displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct are not allowed. While the primary responsibility for appearance lies with the students and their parents, appearance disruptive to the education program will not be tolerated. When, in the judgment of a principal, a student's appearance or mode of dress disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety, the student may be required to make modifications.

Clothing not deemed acceptable for school or activities

- Any form of see through clothing
- Hats and hoods
- Any form of clothing that exposes bare midriff or chest
- Clothing depicting alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, inappropriate language, or inappropriate pictures
- Other questionable articles will be dealt with on an individual basis

- Dress for school dances such as homecoming and prom may be modified from this section and will be at the discretion of the administration

Should a student be inappropriately dressed, they will be issued appropriate clothes to wear for the remainder of the day, or they will be asked to call home so suitable clothing can be brought to them by a parent/guardian. Students or administration will contact parents if dress code is a continuous concern. Dress code issues will be handled by administration on an individual basis for any clothing that is distracting or inappropriate.

Activity Dress:

Students are expected to follow the dress and grooming policy associated with an event or activity in which they are to participate/attend. The activity sponsor has the right to suspend any student from an activity if they do not abide by the established guidelines for that activity. Students will be given a chance to explain their situation before the sponsor/coach makes a decision on suspension.

Transportation Expectations

Niobrara School District provides pupil transportation in accordance with applicable board policy. All passengers will be monitored by onboard cameras with audio at all times.

Transportation is a direct extension of the school and all behavior expectations apply during transport. Some expectations to remember while riding the bus are:

1. The driver is in charge of the passengers on the transportation.
2. Passengers must be on time. Transportation cannot wait beyond its regular schedule for those who are tardy.
3. Passengers should never stand in the roadway while waiting for the bus.
4. Passengers may not, at any time, extend arms and hands out of transportation windows.
5. Passengers must not try to get on or off the bus or move about within the bus while it is in motion.
6. Passengers must observe instructions from the driver at all times.
7. Any damage to transportation, by a student, must be paid for by the student who is responsible for the damage.
8. The driver will not discharge riders at places other than the regular bus stop near the home, or at school, unless they are provided proper authorization from the parent, the Superintendent, or the Principal of the school.
9. Transportation is the responsibility of parents or guardians when students are detained for academic or disciplinary reasons.
10. Drivers and sponsors will determine which food/beverages may be brought onto the bus by passengers, if applicable.
11. Seat belts/harnesses must be worn by all drivers/passengers as assigned.
12. Students who ride school transportation are not allowed to leave campus once they arrive.

After due warning has been given to the student and to parents/guardians, the principal may withhold from the student the privilege of riding the school bus/school transportation. In such cases, the parents of the children involved will be responsible for seeing that their children get to and from school safely.

The student may also face detention, suspension or expulsion, in accordance with established policies, for flagrant violation of school transportation conduct regulations or conduct detrimental to the safe operation of the bus.

Should you have any questions in regard to transportation services please contact the school office.

Extra-Curricular Activities and Programs

Activity Guidelines

The sponsors/coaches to interested students and their parents may provide guidelines for student participation in activities. These guidelines will be continually updated by the sponsors/coaches and submitted to the activities director/administration. Students must be academically eligible to participate in activities (please see the Academic Eligibility section of the handbook).

Activity Participation and Consent

The Niobrara School District encourages all students to be involved in as many activities as their schedule permits. The Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) approves the following activities. These activities may be offered by the school district.

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------|
| Basketball | Cross-Country | Football |
| Track | Speech | Golf |
| Music | Volleyball | Wrestling |
| Play Production | | |

It is important that students and parents understand the existence of potential dangers associated with the participation in these activities. Participation in any activity may involve injury of some type. The severity of such injury can range from minor cuts, bruises, sprains, and muscle strains to more serious injuries to the body’s bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, or muscles, to catastrophic injuries to the head, neck, and spinal cord. On rare occasions, injuries can be so severe as to result in total disability, paralysis, or death. Supervision will be provided by the school district only at the location of the event. Supervision will not be provided on the playground areas or other areas that are outside the event area. Even with the best coaching, sponsoring, or supervising, the use of the best protective equipment, and strict observance of rules, injuries are still a possibility. In order for students to participate in these activities, the Niobrara School District requires that parents/guardians give permission for the student to be involved.

Activity Sales and Fundraisers

All activity sales and fundraisers must be cleared with administration and in accordance with the Wellness Policy. Activity sales and fundraisers may be printed in the school newsletter and/or local newspaper, if the dates are identified prior to publication.

Concussion Awareness Policy

Training

The Superintendent or designee shall make available training approved by the chief medical officer of the State on how to recognize the symptoms of a concussion or brain injury and how to seek proper medical treatment for a concussion or brain injury to all coaches of school athletic teams.

Education

The Superintendent or designee shall require that concussion and brain injury information be provided on an annual basis to students and the students' parents or guardians prior to such students initiating practice or competition. The information provided to students and the students' parents or guardians shall include, but need not be limited to:

- a. the signs and symptoms of a concussion;
- b. the risks posed by sustaining a concussion; and
- c. the actions a student should take in response to sustaining a concussion, including the notification of his or her coaches.

Response to Concussions

1. **Removal:** A student who participates on a school athletic team shall be removed from a practice or game when he or she is reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury in such practice or game after observation by a coach or a licensed healthcare professional who is professionally affiliated with or contracted by the school.
2. **Return-to-Play:** A student who has been removed from a practice or game as a result of being reasonably suspected of having sustained a concussion or brain injury shall not be permitted to participate in any school supervised team athletic activities involving physical exertion, including, but not limited to, practices or games, until the student: (i) has been evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional, (ii) has received written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities from the licensed healthcare professional, and (iii) has submitted the written and signed clearance to resume participation in athletic activities to the school accompanied by written permission to resume participation from the student's parent or guardian.

The coach or administration may require that the student's return to full activities be on a stepwise progression back to full participation, or otherwise establish conditions for return to participation that are more restrictive than those defined by the licensed health care professional if the coach or an administrator reasonably deems such to be appropriate.

The signature of an individual who represents that he or she is a licensed healthcare professional on a written clearance to resume participation that is provided to the school shall be deemed to be conclusive and reliable evidence that the individual who signed the clearance is a licensed healthcare professional. The school is not required to determine or verify the individual's qualifications.

3. **Parent Notification:** If a student is reasonably suspected after observation of having sustained a concussion or brain injury and is removed from an athletic activity per the preceding paragraph, the parent or guardian of the student shall be notified by the Superintendent or designee of the date and approximate time of the injury suffered by the student, the signs and symptoms of a concussion or brain injury that were observed, and any actions taken to treat the student.
4. **Return to Learn:** The Superintendent or designee shall develop a return to learn protocol for students who have sustained a concussion. The return to learn protocol shall recognize that students who have sustained a concussion and returned to school may need informal or formal accommodations, modifications of curriculum, and monitoring by medical or academic staff until the student is fully recovered. The school administration of Niobrara Public Schools adopts the NDE Guidance entitled "Bridging the Gap from Concussion to the Classroom," (2nd Edition) and its return to learn protocol, with the recognition that each student who has sustained a concussion will require an individualized response.

Any student, parent or guardian who suspects that the student sustained a concussion must immediately inform the student's coach or building administrator. If a student is suspected of having a concussion, the student may not be permitted to participate or practice in any school sponsored activity.

The District encourages full cooperation and support from both students and parents in each student's return to learn protocol.

Responsibility of Coaches

Coaches shall comply with this policy and apply their safety and injury prevention training. A coach who fails to do so is subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to termination of employment.

Students and Parents

It is recognized that coaches cannot be aware of every incident in which a student has symptoms of a possible concussion or brain injury. As such, students and their parents have a responsibility to honestly report symptoms of a possible concussion or brain injury to the student's coaches on a timely basis.

Legal Reference: Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 71-9102 to 71-9106

Date of Adoption: [June 9, 2014]

Parents and students must acknowledge the receipt and understanding of this policy by signing and returning the form found at the back of this handbook.

Extra-Curricular Activities & Programs Policies/Eligibility

The Niobrara Public Schools activity programs are an important part of the total school program. Students who participate in extracurricular activities reflect the image of the school. Therefore, student actions, both on and off the playing field, stage, court, etc. must adhere to the **Student Code of Conduct** and the following policies. With close cooperation between the coaches, sponsors, students, and the parents, the training policies can be successful and effective. The activity training policies and rules below are for the benefit of the student. **The parents/guardians and the school must share the responsibility of making sure that the expectations are followed.**

Activities covered by these rules include but are not limited to: volleyball, football, basketball, track, golf, cross-country, drama, speech, band, chorus, National Honor Society, academic contests, speaking opportunities, elected positions representing the school, class trips, and certain field trips.

This policy is intended as a school year policy and is in force from the first day of school or when the Fall season NSAA-sponsored activities begin, whichever starts first, until the end of the school year or the end of the Spring season NSAA-sponsored activities. This policy applies to both high school and middle school students who participate in an activity or program.

School Attendance on Days of Activities:

Students must be in school for all class periods on the day of the activity in order to participate in the activity. The administration has the right to waive or modify this for unique circumstances. Students are also expected to be in attendance the day after school activities.

Absences from Scheduled Practices or Contests:

Student absences from practices, games, or performances will be managed by the sponsor/coach for the activity.

Alcohol, Tobacco, & Drug Use:

There shall be no use or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or illegal drugs. Tobacco means any tobacco product including but not limited to the following: cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, vaping products (such as e-cigarettes), alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. **All disciplinary action due to alcohol, tobacco, and drug use will be managed by administration.**

Activities Participation Rules and Consequences

1. No consumption of tobacco products.
2. No consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances.
3. Attendance at a gathering where alcoholic beverages or controlled substances are consumed by or possessed by minors is not allowed.
4. Substantiated reports (to be considered substantiated, the person making the report must be willing to confront the accused) from adults, coaches, sponsors, administrators, teachers, policemen, public record, or admission by the accused will result in:
 - First Offense: 3-week suspension from all extra-curricular activities.
 - Second Offense: 6-week suspension from all extra-curricular activities.
 - Third Offense: suspension from all extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the year.
5. A student may self-report a first offense violation of the tobacco and alcohol policy and receive a reduction from three to two weeks ineligibility with a minimum of one activity to be missed.
6. Students who abuse items 1, 2, or 3 above may be suspended from school by administration.
7. Students must adhere to the school-wide behavior expectations and rules.
 - Other conduct or behavior concerns may lead to suspension of activity participation privileges as determined by administration and school staff.

Consequence Notes/Clarification:

- All penalties must be consecutive contests/activities.
- Contests/activities are defined by dates in which activities are scheduled. For example, if a student is to sit out three dates and there are four volleyball matches scheduled on a Saturday, this counts as only one date. The student would still have two more dates in which they would be unable to participate. An example might involve a student who is to participate in both a speech contest and a basketball game on the same day. This again would count as one date.
- Students must understand that the violation of the policies of the coaches or sponsors toward training rules and the rules of conduct may result in being dismissed from the activity programs.
- A representative faculty committee will determine appropriate disciplinary sanctions for all issues not specifically addressed in the handbooks.
- A representative faculty committee will review all cases of misconduct by a student concerning the above rules. Should a student and/or his/her parents have a question concerning this policy, they may request a conference to discuss the matter.
 - Upon the knowledge of the school of any student being in conflict with the before-mentioned rules, a conference will be scheduled within three (3) days between the student, the principal, and the activities director. All penalties administered to the student by the school as the result of this conference will be forwarded immediately to the parents.
 - Should there remain a question, the parents may then request within three (3) calendar days, a conference to discuss the matter further. If these parents are still not satisfied, they may

request a hearing from the Superintendent.

NSAA Academic Eligibility:

Under NSAA regulations, each student must pass 20 hours the preceding semester in order to be eligible for activities. If this is not met, the student will be required to sit out one semester. If a student does not pass 20 hours for the spring semester, then they are ineligible for the next fall semester. Additionally, students must meet the academic eligibility guidelines as outlined in the Academic Eligibility section of the handbook.

National Honor Society

The National Association of Secondary Principals approves local Chapters of the National Honor Society. The purpose of the organization is to give encouragement and recognition to students who are outstanding scholars and, in the opinion of the faculty committee, excel in the areas of character, leadership, and service.

A copy of selection guidelines, voting, dismissal, grievance procedures, induction ceremony procedures, and student qualification criteria can be received by contacting the administration or National Honor Society sponsor.

Policies, Notifications, & Regulations

Harassment By Students

Harassment of students, staff or visitors by other students will not be tolerated in the school district. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, school district property, or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or school operated transportation; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, marital status, disability, sex, veteran status, age, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or other prohibited status. Harassment by board members, administrators, employees, parents, vendors, and others doing business with the school district is prohibited. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to the investigation procedure which may result in discipline, up to and including, suspension and expulsion.

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of an individual's participation in school programs or activities;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student; or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, offensive or hostile learning or work environment.

Sexual harassment as set out above, may include, but is not limited to the following:

- verbal or written harassment or abuse, or unwelcome communication implying sexual motives or intentions;
- pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications;
- unwelcome touching;
- unwelcome and offensive public sexual display of affection;
- suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, etc.

Harassment on the basis of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, marital status, disability, sex, veteran status, age, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or

other prohibited status means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble individuals when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of an individual's participation in school programs or activities;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student; or

- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or
- creating an intimidating, offensive or hostile learning or work environment.

Harassment as set forth above may include, but is not limited to the following:

- verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse;
- repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, etc.;
- demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at an individual.

The district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment. The building principal will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment.

Upon receiving a complaint, the investigator shall confer with the complainant to obtain an understanding and a statement of the facts. It shall be the responsibility of the investigator to promptly and reasonably investigate claims of harassment and to pass the findings on to the superintendent who shall complete such further investigation as deemed necessary and take such final action as appropriate. It is the intention of the district to complete its investigation within ten (10) working days after receiving a complaint unless extenuating circumstances such as unavailability of a witness or needing additional time because of the complexity of the investigation or the need to involve outside experts. The extended timeframe for investigation due to extenuating circumstances shall not exceed ten (10) days without the consent of the complainant, unless the alleged victim agrees to a longer time limit. Information regarding an investigation of harassment shall be confidential to the extent possible, and those individuals who are involved in the investigation shall not discuss information regarding the complaint outside the investigation process.

Retaliation against an individual because the individual has filed a harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding is also prohibited. A student who is found to have retaliated against an individual in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including, suspension and expulsion.

It shall also be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the investigator and principals, to develop administrative rules regarding this policy. These rules will be printed and distributed to students and parents in the student handbook. The superintendent shall also be responsible for organizing training programs for students and employees. The training shall include how to recognize harassment and what to do in case an individual is harassed. The employee training will be documented in personnel files to ensure a record of training for each employee.

Board Policy 504.18

Notice of Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment

Procedure for Complaints of Sexual Harassment

103.01

A. Complaint Procedure - Generally

All employees are responsible for helping to prevent sexual harassment. Employees, or students, who believe they have been subjected to, or believe they have witnessed sexual harassment should follow these procedures:

1. Directly inform the person engaging in the discrimination or harassment that such conduct is offensive and must stop.
2. For employee reporters, contact your principal or supervisor or the principal or supervisor of the offending person, the Title IX Coordinator, the Executive Director of Human Resources, if you do not wish to communicate directly with the person whose conduct is offensive or if direct communication with the offending person has been ineffective.
3. Report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator, the Executive Director of Human Resources, if the offending conduct continues or has not been resolved to your satisfaction after you have reported the matter to a principal or supervisor.
4. For student reporters, contact any teacher, counselor, or administrator.
5. Report to the Title IX Coordinator if you are the adult to whom the student has made a report so that the matter can be properly resolved. The Title IX Coordinator may file a formal complaint and begin the following complaint procedure.

Allegations of sexual harassment or discrimination shall be investigated and if substantiated, corrective or disciplinary action taken, up to and including dismissal from employment if the offender is an employee, or suspension and/or expulsion, if the offender is a student. Retaliatory action will not be taken against an employee for reporting discrimination or harassment.

B. Response to a Formal Complaint:

1. Filing Formal Complaint: An employee or student can allege sexual harassment by filing a formal complaint in writing with the Title IX Coordinator in person or by mail, or by electronic mail using the following contact information:

TITLE IX COORDINATOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Sarah Higgins
247 N. Hwy 12, Niobrara, NE 68760
402-857-3322
shiggins@niobraraschools.org

The formal complaint must be signed by the complainant or by the Title IX Coordinator. **The following procedures apply only in the event that a formal complaint is filed. All other allegations of sexual harassment shall be resolved using the general complaint procedure. Any timelines set forth in the following procedures may be extended by the Title IX Coordinator with notice to the parties.**

2. Immediate Actions Upon Receipt of Formal Complaint: Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall provide the following to all known parties of (A): The complaint procedure as outlined in this regulation; and (B): Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment including (i) the identities of the parties involved, if known, (ii) the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and (iii) the date and location of the alleged incident.

The parties to the formal complaint may select an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be an attorney.

3. Investigation of Formal Complaint: Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator shall notify the Investigator. The Investigator will promptly investigate all complaints of discrimination, even if an outside entity or law enforcement agency is investigating a complaint involving the same facts and allegations. The Investigator will not wait for the conclusion or outcome of a criminal investigation or proceeding to begin an investigation required by this complaint procedure. If the allegation(s) involve possible criminal conduct, the District will notify the complainant of his or her right to file a criminal complaint, and District employees will not dissuade the complainant from filing a criminal complaint either during or after the District's investigation.

The Investigator will aim to complete its investigation within a reasonable time frame as determined by the Title IX Coordinator. The factors to determine a reasonable time frame include, but are not limited to the allegations of the formal complaint, the number of witnesses that may need to be interviewed, and whether the police are also conducting an investigation into the allegations. The time frame originally set by the Title IX Coordinator may be extended by the Title IX Coordinator, upon notice to the parties, as he or she deems necessary to complete the investigation. Periodic status updates will be given to the parties, when appropriate.

(A) *Neutrality*: The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or any person designated by the District to facilitate this complaint procedure, shall not have any conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. The District shall ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates this complaint procedure shall receive training on the definition of sexual harassment in accordance with this regulation, the scope of the District's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and complaint process including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable, and how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the fact at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias. The District shall ensure that the individuals involved in the complaint procedure receive training on issues of relevance of questions and evidence and on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.

(B) *Burden of Production*: It shall be the Investigator's burden to gather evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility. To reach a determination, the investigation will include, but is not limited to:

- a. Providing the parties with the opportunity to present witnesses and provide evidence.
- b. An evaluation of all relevant information and documentation relating to the alleged discriminatory conduct.
- c. For allegations involving harassment, some of the factors the District will consider include: 1) the nature of the conduct and whether the conduct was unwelcome, 2) the surrounding circumstances, expectations, and relationships, 3) the degree to which the conduct affected one or more students' education, 4) the type, frequency, and duration of the conduct, 5) the identity of and relationship between the alleged harasser and the suspect or suspects of the harassment, 6) the number of individuals involved, 7) the age (and sex, if applicable) of the alleged harasser and the alleged victim(s) of the harassment, 8) the location of the incidents and the context in which they occurred, 9) the totality of the circumstances, and 10) other relevant evidence.
- d. A review of the evidence using a "preponderance of the evidence" standard (based on the evidence, is it more likely than not that discrimination, harassment, or retaliation occurred?)

(C) *Rights of the Parties*: The respondent is entitled to a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the complaint process.

The Investigator must provide an equal opportunity for the parties to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.

The Investigator shall not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.

The Investigator shall provide the parties with the same opportunities to have others present during any complaint proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice if the Investigator deems appropriate. However, the Investigator may establish restrictions regarding the extent to which the advisor may participate in the proceedings, if the restrictions apply equally to both parties.

Up until the conclusion of the investigation, the parties shall have an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the formal complaint. This includes the evidence upon which the Investigator does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence obtained from any source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to conclusion of the investigation.

The District retains the right to place a non-student employee respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of the investigation. The District also retains the right to remove a respondent from the District's educational program prior to the conclusion of the investigation. In the event of a removal, the respondent shall have the opportunity to challenge the decision for removal.

(D) *Conclusion of Investigation:* Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator shall send each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence that is subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy. The parties shall then have ten (10) days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider.

Once the investigator has considered the written statements of the parties, if any, and any questions of the parties, if any, the investigator shall create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence. The investigator shall then submit the written investigation report to the decision-maker. The parties shall each receive a copy of the final investigative report at the same time as the decision-maker.

4. Decision of Responsibility: The decision-maker, shall review the investigative report. Prior to coming to a determination regarding responsibility, the decision maker shall provide 10 days for each party to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

Once the decision maker has considered the written questions of the parties, if any, the decision maker shall issue a written determination regarding responsibility by a preponderance of the evidence within a reasonable time frame as determined by the Title IX Coordinator. The decision-maker shall consider all relevant evidence, including inculpatory and exculpatory evidence, and will not consider the credibility of the evidence to be based on a person's status, such as complainant, respondent, or witness. The decision-maker shall provide the written determination to both parties simultaneously. The written determination must include:

- a. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- b. A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, and methods used to gather evidence;
- c. Findings of fact supporting the determination;

- d. Conclusions regarding the application of each recipient's code of conduct to the facts;
- e. A statement of, and rationale for, the results as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions the recipient imposes on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the recipient's education program or activity will be provided by the recipient to the complainant; and
- f. The recipient's procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. Sec. 11232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99, permits the District to disclose relevant information to a student who was discriminated against or harassed.

5. Supportive Measures and Disciplinary Actions:

Throughout the investigation, either party may be entitled to supportive measures. Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the recipient's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the District's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment.

Supportive measures may include, but are not limited to, counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work or housing locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures. The District shall maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the District to provide the supportive measures.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Decision-Maker may institute disciplinary measures to the respondent if the Decision-Maker determines that the respondent engaged in sexual abuse or harassment. Disciplinary measures may include, but are not limited to, in school suspension, out of school suspension, expulsion, and in the case of an employee disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment. **This regulation does not limit or prohibit the District from instituting disciplinary measures if in the course of the investigation it determines that the complainant or respondent violated the student code of conduct.**

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures.

C. Appeals

If either party is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation and the decision of the decision-maker, they may appeal on the following bases:

- a. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- b. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
- c. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker had a conflict of interest or bias for or against the complainant or respondent generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

The request for an appeal shall be in writing and submitted on the appropriate document. The appeal document shall be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools.

Upon notice of an appeal by either party, the Superintendent of Schools shall notify the other party in writing when the appeal is filed and of the appeal procedures, which apply equally to both parties.

The Superintendent of Schools shall give both parties a reasonable, and equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of or challenging the outcome.

The Superintendent of Schools shall review the investigative report, decision-maker's determination, and written statements of the parties and then issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result. The Superintendent of Schools shall provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.

D. Informal Resolution

If a formal complaint is filed, the District may offer the complainant and respondent the opportunity to participate in an informal resolution process. The informal resolution process may take place at any time prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility. The informal resolution process shall only take place upon:

- a. Written notice to both parties disclosing: the allegations, the requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations, provided, however, that at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the resolution process and resume the complaint process with respect to the formal complaint, and any consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared;
- b. The parties' voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process; and
- c. That the allegations of the formal complaint do not involve any allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.

E. Record Keeping

The District will maintain relevant documentation obtained during the investigation and documentation supportive of the findings and any subsequent determinations, including the investigative report, witness statements, interview summaries, and any transcripts or audio recordings, pertaining to the investigative and appeal proceedings for a period of seven years.

FORMS BELOW

SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM NOTICE OF FORMAL COMPLAINT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM

The Niobrara Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity that it operates. The District is required by Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681) and 34 CFR Part 106 not to discriminate in any such manner. This requirement not to discriminate also applies to admission and employment. Any inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights, or both.

Refer to Board Policy 103.01 for the particulars of the formal complaint process. You may attach additional materials to this form if needed.

The Title IX Coordinator may be contacted if you have questions about filling out this complaint form:

Sarah Higgins
TITLE IX COORDINATOR
247 N. Hwy 12, Niobrara, NE 68760
402-857-3322
shiggins@niobraraschools.org

Name: _____ Date: _____

Note: You may attach additional documentation to your complaint if needed.

Description of the allegation:

Name of Respondent:

Names of any witnesses to the matter being complained about:

Identify and attach any document supporting the complaint:

Relief requested (what I want done in response to this complaint):

Please Note: By filing a formal complaint under Board Policy 103.01 you are agreeing to the following terms:
• Your name and contact information shall be shared with the respondent to the formal complaint.

- Specifics of your allegations shall be shared with the respondent to the formal complaint.
- Any evidence obtained during the scope of the investigation into the formal complaint shall be shared with you and the respondent to the formal complaint equally.
- The respondent is presumed not responsible for the allegations alleged in the formal complaint.
- You will actively participate in the complaint process as requested by the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, Decision-Maker, and Appeals Coordinator.
- You understand that the complaint process as outlined in Board Policy 103.01 has federally mandated timelines and requires this complaint process to take a minimum of 20 days, in addition to the time required for the investigation, decision-making, and appeal process.
- You understand that you and the respondent to the formal complaint have the right to appeal any decision of responsibility made by the Decision-Maker.
- You understand that any decision made by the Appeals Coordinator is final.

_____ : By checking or initialing this box, I do give consent to the formal complaint process and I do agree to the terms outlined above.

_____ : By checking or initialing this box, I do not give consent to the formal complaint process and I do not agree to my identity being shared with the respondent to this complaint except as necessary to resolve my complaint. By checking this box, I am opting for my allegations to be treated under Subsection A of Board Policy 103.01 and for my allegations to be treated as an informal complaint. I understand that under Subsection A of Board Policy 103.1 the District will nonetheless investigate and take prompt and effective action to remediate the concerns I have raised, if appropriate, such as supportive measures.

The undersigned states: The facts in this complaint are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I give permission for an investigation to be made into this complaint. I understand that the District will take steps to prevent me from being retaliated against for filing this complaint, that I am to notify the District if any such retaliation occurs, and that the District will take prompt and strong responsive action if retaliation occurs.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Received by: _____

Date: _____

Title IX Coordinator: _____

Date Received: _____

NOTICE OF FORMAL COMPLAINT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Niobrara Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity that it operates. The District is required by Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681) and 34 CFR Part 106 not to discriminate in any such manner. This requirement not to discriminate also applies to admission and employment. Any inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights, or both.

You are hereby notified that a formal complaint of sexual harassment has been filed against you pursuant to Board Policy 103.01.

As required under federal law, the Niobrara Public School District shall engage in the formal complaint process as outlined in Board Policy 103.01.

Below are the allegations made in the formal complaint (or, the complaint is attached):

Complainant: _____

Date of alleged incident: _____

Location of alleged incident: _____

Alleged details of incident:

You have the following rights throughout this formal complaint process:

- You are presumed not responsible for any of the allegations alleged above until a formal investigation leads the decision-maker to a conclusion that the preponderance of the evidence establishes you have committed the above alleged conduct.
- You have the right to select an advisor of your choice to guide you through the formal complaint process, who may or may not be an attorney.
- You have the right to inspect and review evidence in this formal complaint process as outlined in Board Policy 103.01.

Please note that knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the complaint process is strictly prohibited by Board Policy 103.01.

Title IX Coordinator:

Sarah Higgins, 247 N. Hwy 12, Niobrara, NE 68760
shiggins@niobraraschools.org
402-857-3322

Date: _____

Dating Violence Prevention Policy

The board prohibits behavior that has a negative impact on student health, welfare, safety, and the school's learning environment. Incidents of dating violence will not be tolerated on school grounds, in district vehicles, or at school sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events.

Dating violence is defined as a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner. Dating partner means any person, regardless of gender, involved in an intimate relationship with another person primarily characterized by the expectation of affectionate involvement whether casual, serious or long-term.

The district will provide appropriate training to staff and incorporate within its educational program age-appropriate dating violence education that shall include, but not be limited to, defining dating violence, recognizing dating violence warning signs, and identifying characteristics of healthy dating relationships.

Board Policy 504.21

Definitions

Dating Violence: A pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner. (Pursuant to section 79-1,140)

Dating Partner: Any person, regardless of gender, involved in an intimate relationship with another person primarily characterized by the expectation of affectionate involvement whether casual, serious, or long-term. (Pursuant to Section 79-1,140)

Dating: Any romantic relationship between an unmarried couple regardless of duration, commitment level, or physical intimacy. Dating includes hooking up, going out, and being "friends with benefits."

Physical Abuse: Being pushed, shoved, held down, bitten, kicked, slapped, punched, choked, hair pulled. Being thrown against the wall or on the ground, being stabbed or shot, tied up, having something thrown at you, being kept from food, water, sleep etc.

Sexual Abuse: Having your sexual past insulted, being called bad sexual names, having bad things said about your body, being forced to do something sexual you don't want to do, being forced to have sex without birth control or safer sex, forced into prostitution or pornography, etc.

Sexual Assault: Behaviors that are attempted or perpetrated against a victim's will or when a victim cannot consent because of age, disability or the influence of alcohol or drugs. Sexual assault may involve actual or threatened physical force, use of weapons, coercion, intimidation, or pressure and may include:

- Intentional touching of someone in ways that are unwanted
- Voyeurism
- Undesired exposure to pornography or exhibitionism
- Public display of images that were taken in private context, or when the victim was unaware

Rape: Nonconsensual oral, anal, or vaginal penetration of the victim by body parts or objects using force, threats of bodily harm. This includes taking advantage of a victim who is incapacitated or otherwise incapable

of giving consent. Incapacitation may include mental or cognitive disability, self-induced or forced intoxication, status as a minor, or any other condition defined by law that voids an individual's ability to give consent.

Controlling Behavior: Dating partner expects you to spend all your time with him/her, tells you how to dress, calls, texts or pages you a lot to keep track of you, treats you like a servant, etc.

Threats: Dating partner threatens to spread rumors, leave you, commit suicide, and hurt your friends/family, beat you up or kill you. Threatens you with weapons to keep you in line, destroys your property, makes threatening phone calls to you, etc.

Emotional Abuse: Being yelled at, called names, and made to feel worthless or crazy. Being told you're stupid, embarrassing you in front of others and being made to feel bad about yourself etc.

Isolating Behavior: Not being allowed to go out with friends or see family. Not being allowed to be able to talk to others of the opposite sex, disapproving of all your friends, etc.

Economic Abuse: Having your money taken away from you to use for him/her, being prevented from getting or keeping a job, going to school or making you ask for money, etc.

Blaming & Denying Behavior: The perpetrator makes light of the abuse, saying that you cause it or you like it, saying he/she loves you after hurting you. Being told it's your entire fault and you deserve it, etc.

Stalking: Being willfully, maliciously and repeatedly followed by the other person with the intent to place your person in reasonable fear of bodily injury.

Due Process

This portion is prepared to give students & parents information about the rules and regulations of Niobrara Public School & the rights and responsibilities of students, as outlined in the policies of the Board of Education, and as provided by Nebraska Law.

Schools exist to provide education to all students at public expense. We expect the students of Niobrara Public School to observe the rules and regulations, which are made for the protection of all the students.

The following regulations will prevail for the purpose of ensuring student's rights and expression of opinion, while at the same time protecting administrative responsibility and duty and the rights of other students and individuals.

1. Due process, as defined in the statutes of the State of Nebraska, will be followed in all situations that may involve emergency exclusion, short or long term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment. Such due process shall include written notice to the student, parents and/or guardian of the reasons for the exclusion, and notification of the right to request a hearing, as provided by statute.
2. The following process will be used to resolve conflict situations that involve staff and patrons or students and which do not involve long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment:
 - a. The building principal will orally communicate to the student any major decision that directly affects a student.
 - b. The student will be given the opportunity to react to the decision of the administrator.
 - c. In the event of a decision to suspend the student for a period of not more than five days, the Principal shall, within 24 hours, or such additional time as is reasonably necessary, send a written

statement to the student, the student's parents or guardian, describing the student's conduct, misconduct, or violations of the rule or standard and the reasons for the action taken. Such written communications shall also include a request to confer with the parents before, or at the time, the student returns to school.

3. In the event the decision is to exclude for more than five days, the following procedure will be followed.
 - a. A written charge and summary of evidence supporting the charge shall be filed with the Superintendent of Schools on the date of the decision to exclude.
 - b. Within two days, a written notice must be sent by registered mail to the student, the student's parents or guardian, informing them of their rights.
 - c. This notice shall include the following:
 1. Rule violated and summary of evidence.
 2. Penalty, which the Principal has recommended.
 3. Notice of student's right to a hearing.
 4. Hearing procedures provided by the act and appeal procedures.
 5. A statement concerning the right to examine all records of the case.
 6. A statement concerning the right to know the identity of witnesses who will appear and the substance of their testimony.
 7. The written notice letter shall include a form to the student's parents to request a hearing.

Smoking - Drinking - Drugs Policy

The board prohibits the distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use, or being under the influence of beer, wine, alcohol, tobacco, other controlled substances, or "look alike" substances that appear to be tobacco (or nicotine products, vapor products, and e-cigarettes), beer, wine, alcohol or controlled substances by students while on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated transportation; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district.

The board believes such illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials generally cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors.

Violation of this policy by students will result in disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. Use, purchase or being in possession of cigarettes, tobacco or tobacco products for those under the age of twenty-one, may be reported to the local law enforcement authorities. Possession, use or being under the influence of beer, wine, alcohol and/or of a controlled substance may also be reported to the local law enforcement authorities.

Students who violate the terms of this policy may be required to satisfactorily complete a substance abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved by the school board. If such student fails to satisfactorily complete such a program, the student may be subject to discipline including suspension or expulsion.

The board believes the substance abuse prevention program shall include:

- Age-appropriate, developmentally-based drug and alcohol curriculum for students in grades kindergarten through twelve, which address the legal, social, and health consequences of tobacco, drug and alcohol use

and which provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use tobacco, drugs or alcohol;

- A statement to students that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful;
- Standards of conduct for students that clearly prohibit, at a minimum, the unlawful possession, use, being under the influence of or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students on school premises or as part of any of its activities;
- A clear statement that disciplinary sanctions, up to and including suspension or expulsion and referral for prosecution, will be imposed on students who violate the policy and a description of those sanctions;
- A statement that students may be required to successfully complete an appropriate rehabilitation program;
- Information about drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation and re-entry programs available to students;
- A requirement that parents and students be given a copy of the standards of conduct and the statement of disciplinary sanctions required; and
- Notification to parents and students that compliance with the standards of conduct is mandatory.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to implement this policy.

Board Policy 504.15

Parents and students must acknowledge the receipt and understanding of this policy by signing and returning the form found at the back of this handbook.

Weapons Policy

The board believes weapons and other dangerous objects and lookalikes in school district facilities including concealed weapons cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

This shall not apply to the issuance of firearms to or possession by members of the armed forces of the United States, active or reserve, National Guard of this state, or Reserve Officer's Officers Training Corps, peace officers, authorized law enforcement officers, or authorized retired law enforcement officers when on duty or training.

Weapons and other dangerous objects and lookalikes shall be taken from students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district.

The term "dangerous object" shall include noxious or flammable material, fireworks, devices intended to administer an electric shock (tasers, electric batons, prods, or stun guns) chemical weapons (i.e. mace, pepper spray), martial arts weapons or other instruments including those which eject a projectile or substance of any

kind, or any replica or facsimile of any of the above, whether functional or nonfunctional, whether designed for use as a weapon or for some other use.

Parents of students found to possess weapons or dangerous objects or lookalikes on school property shall be notified of the incident. Confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects including concealed weapons shall be reported to the law enforcement officials, and students will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

Students bringing firearms as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921 to school or knowingly possessing firearms including concealed firearms at school may be expelled for a period of not less than one year. Students bringing to school or possessing dangerous weapons, including firearms, will be referred to law enforcement authorities. The superintendent shall have the authority to recommend this expulsion requirement be modified for students on a case by case basis. For purposes of this portion of this policy, the term "firearm" includes, but is not limited to, any weapon which is designed to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, a muffler or silencer for such a weapon, or any explosive, incendiary or poison gas.

Weapons or dangerous objects under the control of law enforcement officials shall be exempt from this policy. This policy does not prohibit firearms contained in a private vehicle operated by a nonstudent adult or prohibited person that are locked inside the glove box, trunk, or other compartment of the vehicle, a storage box securely attached to the vehicle, or if the vehicle is a motorcycle, other than an autocyte, a hardened compartment securely attached to the motorcycle while the vehicle is in or on such parking area. Firearms also may be possessed by a person for the purpose of using them, with the approval of the school, in a historical reenactment, in a hunter education program, or as part of an honor guard. The principal may allow authorized persons to display weapons or other dangerous objects or lookalikes for educational purposes and must be kept in a designated location during the school day. Such a display shall also be exempt from this policy. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to implement this policy.

Board Policy 504.11

Parents and students must acknowledge the receipt and understanding of this policy by signing and returning the form found at the back of this handbook.

Health and Wellness Policy

NIOBRARA PUBLIC SCHOOLS WELLNESS AND NUTRITION

Board Policy

The Niobrara Public School District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Niobrara Public School District that:

- Students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals and other interested community members will be engaged in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, our district will participate in available federal school nutrition programs.
- The district will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education, school nutrition programs and related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. School Wellness Team

Niobrara Public School will create, strengthen, or work within an existing wellness team to develop, implement, monitor, review, and as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The team will also serve as resources for implementing these policies. (The wellness team consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.) The School Wellness Team will meet at least annually.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus School Meals

Meals served through the National School Food Program will meet, at a minimum, nutritional requirements established by local, state, and federal regulations. Reimbursable meals shall not be more restrictive than the federal and state regulations. Meals will be appealing and attractive to children and be served in a clean and pleasant setting with adequate supervision.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals

Niobrara Public School will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

Meal Times & Scheduling

Niobrara Public School:

- Will provide students with adequate time to eat (10 minutes of sitting time at breakfast and 20 minutes of sitting time at Lunch)
- Will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (for elementary only)
- Secondary School will operate a "closed" campus
- Will provide students with access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before meals and snacks
- Free water will be available at meal times for all students
- Will provide self-serve fruit and vegetable bar at meals
- Will provide multiple menu choices and offer vs serve as recommended per the USDA guidelines

A la Carte Items

- Are offered in compliance with USDA regulations prohibiting the sale of "foods of minimal nutritional value" where school meals are served and eaten during the meal period

Our school ensures all foods and beverages provided, but not sold, to students during the school day meet or exceed the [Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards](#).

The sale of Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (as defined by the USDA regulations) is not allowed on school property in areas accessible to students in the elementary, middle, and secondary schools until after the end of the school day.

Vending Machines/Beverages

Vending Machines in all building and all faculty staff areas at school and district sites are to include but are not limited to:

- i. **Water**
- ii. **100% fruit juice (if desired)**
- iii. **Non-carbonated drinks with less than 150 calories per container (such as Powerade, Gatorade, etc.)**

Fundraising Activities

Fundraising Activities involving the sale of food or beverages will not take place during the school day if they are foods of minimal nutritional value. Foods that are on the [Smart Snack in School Nutrition Standards](#) can be sold with Admin approval 30 minutes before and after meal times. Niobrara Public School will encourage fundraising activities that are not food based or foods of minimal nutritional value.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water and/or milk beverages as the primary beverage. Snacks will not be served 30 min before meals and 30 min after the end of the last lunch period.

Rewards

Niobrara Public School will only use foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold as rewards for academic performance or good behavior. Niobrara Public School will not withhold food or beverage (including food served through school meals) as a punishment.

Celebrations

Niobrara Public School will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day. Any celebration that includes food and beverages will not be allowed or provided until at least one hour after the end of the last lunch period of the day. The district will provide a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties. ([Smart Snacks in School Nutrition Standards](#))

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion

Niobrara Public School aims to teach, encourage and support healthy eating by students. Niobrara Public School will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each grade level to all students, including those with disabilities, special health care needs and in alternative education settings;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;
- Cafeteria/Food Service Based Education Programs will be encouraged;
- Topics encouraged for elementary classrooms are the following: proper hand washing, adequate drinking water, food groups (My Plate), trying new foods, serving sizes, energy input vs energy output, Nutrition Facts Label reading, choosing healthy foods, Oral Health, Body Image, Origins of common foods, Basic Food Preparation, and Basic Food Safety;
- Topics encouraged for middle and high school classrooms include the following: proper hand washing, adequate drinking water, basic nutrient requirements, dietary guidelines and personal eating plans, meal time and families, eating patterns in various cultures, balanced and unbalanced

meals, healthy body image, energy input vs energy output, fad diets and healthy ways to lose/gain weight, food preparation and food safety;

- Administration will inform teachers and staff of opportunities to attend trainings on nutrition and the importance of role modeling healthful habits for our students;

Family & Community

Family members and community members are encouraged to become actively involved in programs that provide nutrition education. Parents will be invited and always welcome to join students for school meals. If a lunch is sent to school, parents are encouraged to pack healthy lunches and snacks. Niobrara Public School will communicate with family and community about school wellness via school website, newsletters, or other take-home materials.

Staff Wellness

Niobrara Public School highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The School Wellness Team will develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. Currently Niobrara Public School participates in the EHA (Educator Health Alliance) as a staff wellness program. Niobrara Public School staff members are encouraged to serve as healthy role models for our students.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs and in alternative education settings have the opportunity to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity on a regularly scheduled basis each school week during the school year.

Daily Physical Education (P.E.) K-12

- All students in grades K-12 will be provided the opportunity to receive daily physical education as the class schedule allows.
- Recommended minutes for Elementary PE per week are 150 min/week and MS/HS is 225 min/week. While we know that we are not meeting the full PE recommended requirements at this time for elementary, we will continue to try to adjust schedules and include more physical activity time, such as an extra recess, to compensate for inability to schedule all students for the recommended PE minutes per week.
- Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity
- Students will be provided an environment that encourages safe and enjoyable physical activity for all students, including those who are not athletically gifted. Students will have the opportunity to participate in lifetime physical activities (e.g. walking, Pilates, golf, weight lifting, etc.)
- The physical education curriculum will be sequential and consistent with the Nebraska Department of Education Physical Education Essential Learnings K-12.

Daily Recess

- Elementary students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors;
- Moderate to vigorous physical activity will be encouraged verbally and through the provision of adequate space and age-appropriate equipment.

Physical Activity and Punishment

Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g. running laps, pushups, etc.) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g. recess, physical education) as punishment. (This guideline does not apply to extracurricular sports teams).

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e. at least 30 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Niobrara Public School will encourage:

- We provide physical education in all grades, and prohibits waivers, exemptions, and substitutions for physical education class time or credit (except for accommodations made for students with medical, cultural, or religious considerations).
- Classroom health education that will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spend on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons;
- When circumstances make it necessary for student to remain indoors and inactive for two or more hours, the students will be given periodic breaks during which they will be encouraged to stand and be moderately active (e.g. mad minutes);
- School Administration will inform teachers and staff about opportunities to attend training on physical activity/physical education and the importance of modeling healthful habits for students;
- Teachers will be able to access physical education/physical activity/nutrition resources via the Alliance for a Healthier Generation website, the Nebraska Department of Education PE Health website and the Niobrara Public Schools Health & Wellness Curriculum.

Safe Routes to School

Niobrara Public School will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The district will also explore the availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

School spaces and facilities will be made available to students, staff, and community members before, during and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations at the administration's discretion. These spaces and facilities will be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs, also at the discretion of the administration. School Policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

Family & Community

Information will be provided to help families incorporate physical activity into the lives of all household members. Families and community members will be encouraged to institute programs that support physical activity. The district will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day, and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such support will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through the school website, newsletters, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring

The Superintendent and School Wellness Coordinator (or designee) will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies and will report on the school's compliance to the School Board as necessary.

School Food Service Staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent. In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative review findings and any resulting changes. If the district has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The School Wellness Coordinator will develop a summary report every three years on district wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. That report will be provided to the School Board and also distributed to all school wellness committee members, parent/teacher organization, school principals, and school health services in the district.

Policy Review

To help with the initial development of the district's wellness policies, a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments was conducted in the 2013-2014 school year as part of the Healthy Schools Workshops and USDA School Nutrition Workshop. As part of that review, the school district reviewed nutrition and physical activity policies, provisions of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. Annually, the district will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation from the continued assessment through the Alliance for a Healthier Generation website and Triennial Assessment required by the Nebraska Department of Education. All findings, changes and action plans will then be shared with students, staff, School Board, parent & community members.

Indian Policies and Procedures

Indian Policies and Procedures Niobrara Public School District 2024-2025 School Year

It is the intent of the Niobrara School District that all Indian children of school age have equal access to all programs, services and activities offered within the school district. To this end, the Niobrara Public School District will consult with local tribal officials and parents of Indian children in the planning and development of Indian Policies and Procedures (IPPs), general education programs, and activities. These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually and revisions will be made within 90 days of the determination that requirements are not being adequately met.

The Niobrara Public School District attests that it has established Indian Policies and Procedures (IPPs) as required in section 7004 of the Impact Aid law for any Indian children claimed who reside on eligible Indian lands. The IPPs have been adequately disseminated to the tribes and parents of children residing on eligible Indian lands. A copy of the current policies and procedures will be attached to the FY 2022 Impact Aid application.

The Niobrara Public School attests that it will provide a copy of written responses to comments, concerns, and recommendations received from tribal leaders and parents of Indian children through the Indian policies and procedures consultation process. Responses will be disseminated to tribal leaders and parents of Indian children via school board minutes annually prior to school board policy approval.

Policy 1:

The Niobrara School District will disseminate information and seek timely input regarding the following programs on its educational program (including, but not limited to): Title VII and Impact Aid programs.

The completed Indian Policies and Procedures will be made available to parents of Indian children, Tribal officials, and the Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee). A summary of changes proposed will be prepared and disseminated at least two weeks in advance of public hearing to afford all interested

parties the opportunity to review the documents with sufficient time to provide thoughtful input at the public meetings. These hearings will be publicly advertised by one of the following: the local newspaper, school newsletter, notification system and/or via social media to allow all interested parties to attend.

Parents of Indian children, tribal officials, the Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee) and any other interested persons can review assessment data to help develop or modify educational programs and services allowing for the participation of Indian students on an equal basis in the district.

Policy 2:

The Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee) of the Niobrara Public School District will meet bi-annually for addressing written comments and concerns of the parents of Indian children regarding the District's educational program and activities. The meetings are planned bi-annually and are open to the public allowing tribal officials and parents of Indian children the opportunity to submit written comments and recommendations for consideration.

At each of the monthly school board meetings, a section of time is set aside for communications from the public. This is a time to offer written comments and suggestions regarding programming for Indian students. In addition, a public hearing is scheduled (October) which is specifically devoted to addressing questions regarding federal programs. Based upon suggestions, preferred methods of communications as well as ways to maximize participation from tribal officials as well as parents of Indian children will be seriously considered. At least one tribal official (Secretary) will be contacted by phone or email to request the tribe's preference for communication.

The policy will be included in student handbooks with a student and parent/guardian signature line regarding opportunities to provide input into the District.

Policy 3:

The Niobrara Public School District shall annually analyze participation rates of Indian children compared to other children in Mathematics, English Language Arts, and Science educational programs and school sponsored activities. Bar charts or line charts will be utilized to show the rates of participation of Indian children compared to all other children. (Example: The number of Indian children enrolled in college credit course work).

The Niobrara Public School in conjunction with the Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee) will review annually written comments gathered from families and students. Comments will be utilized to develop appropriate support for various programs.

Within two weeks prior to the public hearing in October the school will work with the Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee) to review data prior to the public hearing. During the public hearings in October the school district will present information relating to Indian children's participation in the LEA's education program and activities. If it is determined that there are gaps in Indian participation in the educational program or activities, the Niobrara Public School Board in consultation with the Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee) will modify its educational program in such a way as to improve Indian participation.

Policy 4:

During the meeting of the Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee), the Indian Policies and Procedures may be reviewed and revised if necessary, at the bi-annual meetings. Any updates will be

published in the local newspaper within one month of the adoption by the Niobrara Public School Board or the local school newsletter that is disseminated monthly. If necessary, the Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee) may suggest revisions at other times of the year as appropriate. Any updates will be published in the local newspaper, school newsletter and notification services and/or social media accordingly.

Policy 5:

The Niobrara Public School District will at least annually respond in writing to comments and recommendations made by the Niobrara Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee), parents of Indian children and tribal officials. The responses to all parties will be in the school board minutes published in the local newspaper, school newsletter, notification services, and/or via social media quarterly following Indian Education Committee (Parent Advisory Committee) meetings.

Policy 6:

The Niobrara Public School District will annually provide a copy of the current Indian Policies and Procedures by email to the Santee Sioux and Ponca Tribe of Nebraska by email for distribution to parents/guardians of students.

Board Approval: October 2023

Equal Opportunity Employer

The Niobrara School District shall provide equal opportunity to employees and applicants for employment in accordance with applicable equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination laws, directives and regulations of federal, state and local governing bodies. Opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment includes hiring, placement, promotion, transfer or demotion, recruitment, advertising or solicitation for employment, treatment during employment, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and layoff or termination. Employees will support and comply with the district's established equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination policies. Employees shall be given notice of this policy annually. The board shall appoint an employee to serve as non-discrimination compliance coordinator.

Individuals who file an application with the school district will be given consideration for employment if they meet or exceed the qualifications set by the board, administration, and Nebraska Department of Education for the position for which they apply. In employing individuals, the district will not discriminate in any aspect of employment with regard to race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, disability, age, marital status, genetic background, veteran status, pregnancy, or childbirth or related medical condition.

Advertisements and notices for vacancies within the district shall contain the following statement: "The Niobrara School District is an equal opportunity employer (EOE)." The statement shall also appear on application forms.

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, shall be directed to:

Name and/or Title: Superintendent

Address: P.O. Box 310, Niobrara NE 68760

Telephone No.: 402-857-3322

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination,

may also be directed in writing to the Director of the Kansas Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, Suite 320, Kansas City, MO 64106, (816) 268-0550, the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission, State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, 5th floor, P.O. Box 94394, Lincoln, NE 68509-4934, (402) 471-2024 or (800) 642-6112 or by email to OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov.

This inquiry or complaint to the federal office may be done instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

Further information and procedures for filing a complaint are available at the website of the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission, <http://www.neoc.ne.gov/comp/comp.htm>.

Board Policy 402.01

Notification: Video Surveillance (Transportation)

The school district will annually provide the following notice to students and parents:

The Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras on school district vehicles. The video cameras will be used to monitor student behavior to maintain order on the school vehicles to promote and maintain a safe environment. Students and parents are hereby notified that the content of the videotapes may be used in a student disciplinary proceeding. The content of the videotapes are confidential student records and will be retained with other student records. Videotapes will only be retained if necessary for use in a student disciplinary proceeding or other matter as determined necessary by the administration. Parents may request to view videotapes of their child if the videotapes are used in a disciplinary proceeding involving their child.

Searches, Seizures and Arrests

School district property is held in public trust by the board. School district authorities may, without a search warrant, search students or protected student areas based on a reasonable and definable suspicion that a school district policy, rule, regulation or law has been violated.

The search shall be in a manner reasonable in scope to maintain order and discipline in the schools, promote the educational environment, and protect the safety and welfare of students, employees and visitors to the school district facilities. The furnishing of a locker, desk or other facility or space owned by the school and provided as a courtesy to a student, even if the student provides the lock for it, shall not create a protected student area and shall not give rise to an expectation of privacy with respect to the locker, desk, or other facility.

School authorities may seize any illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials discovered in the search. Items of contraband may include, but are not limited to, nonprescription controlled substances, marijuana, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, apparatus used for controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, weapons, explosives, poisons, stolen property and dangerous objects as defined in Policy 504.11. Such items are not to be possessed by a student without specific permission of the building principal while they are on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated transportation; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district.

Possession of such items will be grounds for disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion and may be reported to local law enforcement officials. The board believes that illegal, unauthorized or contraband materials may cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, or visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

The superintendent or building principal shall only release minor students into the custody of a law enforcement officer upon presentation of a court order or warrant for the student's arrest, or under conditions for temporary custody of a juvenile without a warrant as provided by state statutes.

The principal or designee will attempt to notify the parent/guardian or responsible relative prior to the student's release and the place to which the student is reportedly to be taken, except in cases of child abuse.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the administrative team, to implement this policy.

Board Policy 504.16

Student Directory Information, Authorization for Release, and Student Records (FERPA)

Student Directory/Authorization for Release

Student directory information shall be defined in the annual notice. It may include the student's name, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, honors and awards received, photograph and other likeness, and other similar information.

Prior to developing a student directory or to giving general information to the public, parents will be given notice annually of the intent to develop a directory or to give out general information and can submit a written request for the exclusion of their child's information from the directory or in the general information about the students.

The district is required to supply class lists including name, address and phone number to college and military recruiters upon their request. Military recruiters will also be provided the same access to a student in a high school grade as is provided to postsecondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of such students.

A parent or guardian of a student in a high school grade may submit a written request to the district that the name, address and phone number for that student shall not be released without prior written consent of the parent or guardian. Upon receiving this request, a district shall not release that information without the prior written consent of the parent or guardian. Within thirty days prior to or following the beginning of each school year and, for a new student who enrolls after the beginning of a school year, within thirty days following such enrollment, the district shall notify the parents and guardians of each student in the highschool of the option to opt out of directory information release.

When a student reaches eighteen years of age, the permission given to the parents or guardians to opt out of the information release shall only be given to the student. Within thirty days prior to or following the beginning of each school year and, for a new student who enrolls after the beginning of a school year, within thirty days following such enrollment, the district shall notify each student who is at least eighteen years of age or who will reach eighteen years of age during the school year of the option to opt out of the information release and

that any such request made previously by a parent or guardian for the student expires upon the student reaching eighteen years of age.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to provide notice and to determine the method of notice that will inform parents. Nothing in this policy shall limit the applicability of federal FERPA laws.

AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASING STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Niobrara Public School District has adopted a policy designed to assure parents and students the full implementation, protection and enjoyment of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. A copy of the school district's policy is available for review in the office of the principal of all of our schools.

This law requires the school district to designate as "directory information" any personally identifiable information taken from a student's educational records prior to making such information available to the public.

Even though student addresses and telephone numbers are not considered directory information, military recruiters and post-secondary educational institutions may legally access this information without prior parental consent. Parents not wanting military recruiters and post-secondary institutions to access the information must ask the school district to withhold the information.

The school district has designated the following information as directory information: student's name; date and place of birth; email address, grade level, enrollment status, major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; dates of attendance; degrees and awards received; and the most recent previous educational institution attended by the student; photograph and other likeness and other similar information. You have the right to refuse the designation of any or all of the categories of personally identifiable information as directory information with respect to your student provided that you notify the school district in writing during the current school year. If you desire to make such a refusal, please contact the Superintendent.

If you have no objection to the use of student information, you do not need to take any action.

Student Records Access

The board recognizes the importance of maintaining student records and preserving their confidentiality. Student records shall be maintained so as to separate academic and disciplinary matters. Student records may be maintained in the central administration office or administrative office of the student's attendance center. This policy does not apply to student directory information.

The following records shall be maintained as permanent records of the student:

- The student's social security number;
- The record of dates of attendance;
- Highest grade level completed;
- A transcript of classes taken with grades and credits received;
- The records of vaccinations and health examinations which are given to the class or student body as a whole;

- The record of participation in extracurricular school activities and sports;
- The signatures of people who are required to sign for access to student records and the statement of purpose for such access;
- The students or student's parents' written consent of release of student records.

All other student records shall be removed and destroyed after a student's continuous absence from the school for three years.

Any student, his or her parents/guardians, teachers, counselors or school administrators shall have access to the student's records during the regular business hours of the district. Student information may also be disclosed without written consent of the parent or eligible student (a student who has reached the age of 18) to persons or entities with whom the district has contracted to provide services related to the district's educational program in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In addition, authorized representatives of the State or Federal government, and state educational authorities connected with the enforcement of requirements of certain educational programs as prescribed by law shall have access to student records within the limitations of state statutes. No one else shall have access to the records and the records shall not be divulged to any person without prior consent of the parent or eligible student.

A student's records, including academic material and any disciplinary material relating to any suspension or expulsion, shall be provided at no charge, upon request, to any public or private school to which the student transfers

The superintendent shall establish reasonable fees for providing copies of the student's records to a parent or guardian. No fees shall be charged for the right to inspect and review the records.

Board Policy 507.01

Student Discipline (Suspension & Expulsion)

The authority to suspend for a "short term" and to propose an "extended term" suspension and/or expulsion is delegated to the principal or his or her designee. A short-term suspension shall mean the exclusion of a student from school attendance for a period not to exceed five school days. A long-term suspension means the exclusion of a student from school attendance for a period exceeding five school days but less than twenty school days.

The provisions of this section apply to all pupils enrolled in the Niobrara Public School District. When considering possible courses of action for special education students in regard to alleged violations of school rules, policies, and regulations, procedural due process rights guaranteed under related Federal and State statutes are applicable. The school district is obligated to see that every special education student is provided an appropriate educational program without cost to the parent. Conversely, schools are not required to maintain pupils who are a danger to themselves or others in regular attendance centers.

Suspension

Suspension from classes or school will not be carried out unless the student while subject to school authority:

1. uses violence, force, threat or intimidation in a manner causing substantial interference with school purposes; or
2. causes or attempts to cause substantial damage to school or private property or steals or attempts to steal school or private property of substantial value; or
3. causes or attempts to cause physical injury to another person except in self-defense; or threatens or intimidates any student for the purpose or intent of obtaining something of value from the student; or
4. possesses or transmits any firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous object that is ordinarily considered a weapon; or
5. engages in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance, as defined in section 28-401, a substance represented to be a controlled substance, or alcoholic liquor as defined in section 53-103 or being under the influence of a controlled substance or alcoholic liquor; or
6. commits public indecency as defined in Nebraska statute 28-806 if that student is at least twelve years of age but less than nineteen years of age; or
7. commits or attempts to commit sexual assault against any person if a complaint has been filed by a prosecutor alleging the incident as required in Nebraska statute 79-267.8; or
8. engages in bullying as defined in section 79-2,137; or
9. engages in any other illegal activity which constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes; or
10. repeatedly violates the policies, rules and standards of student conduct established by the district.

A given suspension will be for a period of time not to exceed 5 school days. A student will be informed of the charges against him or her and, if the student denies them, an explanation of the evidence will be given and the student will be given an opportunity to refute the charges. No time delay is necessary between the time a pupil is notified of the charges and the time of the hearing before the principal.

The following guidelines ensure that students are afforded due process during a proposed short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion or mandatory reassignment from school.

1. The principal or the principal's designee will make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. A suspension/expulsion will be made upon a determination that the suspension/expulsion is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.
2. Prior to commencement of the suspension/expulsion, the student will be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student. The student will be advised of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the authorities have, and be afforded an opportunity to explain the student's version of the facts.
3. Within 24 hours or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension/expulsion recommendation, the Principal or administrator will send a written statement to the student and the student's parent or guardian describing the student's conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or standard and the reasons for the action taken.
4. An opportunity will be given to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, to have a conference with the Principal or administrator ordering the suspension/expulsion before or at the time the student returns to school. The Principal or administrator shall determine who in addition to the parent or guardian is to attend the conference.
5. A student who is suspended/expelled shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal.

Emergency Exclusion: Any student may be excluded from school in the following circumstances:

1. If the student has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts and poses an imminent threat to the health or safety of the school community; or
2. If the student's conduct presents a clear threat to the physical safety of himself, herself, or others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.

Such an emergency exclusion shall be based upon a clear factual situation warranting it and shall last not longer than is necessary to avoid the dangers described above.

If the emergency exclusion will be for five days or less, the procedures for a short-term suspension shall be followed. If the superintendent or his or her designee determines that such emergency exclusion shall extend beyond five days, a hearing will be held and a final determination made within ten school days after the initial date of exclusion. Such procedure shall substantially comply with the procedures set forth in state statutes 79-266 to 287 for a long-term suspension or expulsion and be modified only to the extent necessary to accomplish the hearing and determination within this shorter time period.

The principal should make a reasonable effort to contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a suspended student by telephone or to communicate to them directly regarding the specific act(s) for which the suspension is ordered and the length of the suspension. If personal contact cannot be made then a notice will be mailed to parents within 24 hours stating the specific act(s) for which the suspension is ordered and the length of the suspension.

All records and documentation regarding suspension will be destroyed within three years of the student's continuous absence from school. No information regarding a suspension will be communicated to any person not directly involved in the disciplinary proceedings.

The right of appeal to the Board of Education in cases involving student suspension described in this policy does not extend to a suspension from a student extracurricular activities program or other disciplinary action affecting participation in an extracurricular activities program.

Expulsion

For the purposes of this policy and as defined in the Student Discipline Act, expulsion shall mean exclusion from attendance in all schools within the district for a period of time as defined in Nebraska statute 79-283.

Students may be expelled for violations of board policy, school rules or the law. It shall be within the discretion of the administrator to discipline a student by using an expulsion for a single offense or for a series of offenses depending on the nature of the offense and the circumstances surrounding the offense.

The following procedural rules, regulations and guidelines govern expulsions:

All cases of expulsion shall be preceded by short-term suspension and its related procedures or by the condition of emergency exclusion which applies only when a student (a) has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts and poses an immediate threat to the health and safety of the school community; or (b) exhibits conduct which presents a clear threat to the physical safety of himself/herself or others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.

When a student is expelled, the student shall be provided with:

1. Notice of the standard of conduct allegedly violated, acts the student is alleged to have committed and a summary of the evidence to be presented against the student;
2. The penalty, if any, which the principal has recommended in the charge and any other penalty to which the student may be subject;
3. A statement that the student has a right to a hearing, upon request, on the specified charges;
4. A description of the hearing procedures, along with procedures for appealing any decision rendered at the hearing;
5. A statement the principal, legal counsel for the school, the student, the student's parent or representative or guardian has the right;
 - to examine the student's academic and disciplinary records and any affidavits to be used at the hearing concerning the alleged misconduct and;
 - to know the identity of the witnesses to appear at the hearing and the substance of their testimony;
6. A form on which the student or the student's parent/guardian may request a hearing.

Violations of Law Relating to Suspensions or Expulsions

1. Student violations or suspected violations of Nebraska law will be reported to law enforcement as soon as possible. Conduct to be reported for law enforcement referral includes conduct that may constitute a felony, conduct which may constitute a threat to the safety or well-being of students or others in school programs and activities, and conduct that the legal system is better equipped to address than school officials. Student violations of school policy that are not apparent violations of law will be addressed by school administrators without reporting them to law enforcement. Administrators may consider the student's maturity, and known behavioral, emotional or mental disorders, if applicable. It will be the responsibility of the referring administrator to contact the student's parent that a referral to legal authorities has been or will be made, if applicable.

On or before August 1 the school board will annually review the reporting guidelines above with the County Attorney. These shall be distributed to all parents and guardians and their students at the beginning of each school year, or at the time of enrollment if during the school year. The guidelines shall also be posted conspicuously in each school during the school year.

2. Except in instances of suspected child abuse, when a principal or designee releases a minor student to a law enforcement officer for the purpose of removing the minor from the school premises, immediate steps shall be taken to notify the parent, guardian, or other relative having control of the minor about the minor's release to the officer and about the place to which the minor is reportedly being taken. In cases of suspected child abuse, the principal or designee will provide the law enforcement officer with the address and telephone number of the minor's parents or guardian.

Supplemental to these procedures, a special education student must be provided with additional procedures. A determination should be made of whether the student is actually guilty of the misconduct. A staffing team should determine whether the student's behavior is caused by the student's disability and whether the conduct is the result of inappropriate placement. Discussions and conclusions of this meeting should be recorded.

If the special education student's conduct is not caused by the disability, the student may be expelled or suspended for a long-term period following written notice to the parent and pursuant to the school district's expulsion hearing procedures. If the misconduct is caused by the disability and a change in placement is recommended, the change must be made pursuant to the placement procedures used by the school district.

Student Fee Policy

The board realizes some activities may require additional expenditures which are properly to be borne by students as a separate charge. Such charges may be waived as specified below depending upon the student's eligibility for the free and reduced-price lunch program. No fees, specialized or nonspecialized attire or equipment shall be required of students outside this policy. This policy does not apply to tuition payments by nonresident students.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

1. Extracurricular activities means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the school district, which do not count toward graduation or advancement between grades, and in which participation is not otherwise required by the school district;
2. Postsecondary education costs means tuition and other fees associated with obtaining credit from a postsecondary educational institution.

The district may charge student fees or require students to provide specialized equipment or attire in the following areas:

1. Participation in extracurricular activities, including extracurricular music courses;
2. Admission fees and transportation charges for spectators attending extracurricular activities;
3. Postsecondary education costs, limited to tuition and fees associated with obtaining credits from the postsecondary institution;
4. Transportation fees for option students not qualifying for free lunches and nonresident students as allowed by state statute;
5. Copies of student files or records as allowed by state statute;
6. Reimbursement to the district for property lost or damaged by the student;
7. Before-and-after-school or prekindergarten services in accordance with state statute;
8. Summer school or night school; and
9. Breakfast and lunch programs.

The district may also require students to furnish musical instruments for participation in optional music courses that are not extracurricular activities. Students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunches shall be provided with a musical instrument of the school's choice.

Waivers shall be provided to students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches for fees, specialized equipment and specialized attire required for participation in extracurricular activities.

The superintendent shall establish a Student Fee Fund and ensure that funds collected as fees for the following purposes are properly recorded and deposited to it:

- Participation in extracurricular activities;
- Postsecondary education costs; and
- Summer school or night school.

The superintendent shall distribute regulations outlining the purposes for which fees in these three areas are collected and shall ensure such fees are spent for those purposes.

The superintendent shall distribute regulations to be published annually in the student handbook authorizing and governing:

1. Any non specialized clothing required for specified courses and activities;
2. Any personal or consumable items a student will be required to furnish for specified activities; and
3. Any specialized equipment or specialized attire which a student will be required to provide for any extracurricular activity, including extracurricular music courses.

The superintendent shall also distribute any regulations authorizing and governing the following areas:

1. All fees to be collected within the nine numbered areas of the third paragraph of this policy;
2. Any other types of specialized equipment or attire to be provided by all students in the nine numbered areas of the third paragraph of this policy;
3. Procedures and forms for students or parent/guardians to apply for waivers under this policy;
4. Deadlines for waivers for all types of fees;
5. Procedures *[to avoid the direct handling of fees; for the handling of fees]* for students receiving postsecondary education credits;
6. Procedures for handling of fees related to summer school or night school; and
7. Attendance requirements and procedures in connection with evening, weekend or summer use of facilities related to all extracurricular activities to avoid conflict with this policy.

The maximum dollar amount of each fee must be specified as part of this policy.

Public concerns or complaints regarding required fees, attire or equipment shall be addressed under Policy 1005.01, Public Complaints.

This policy will be reviewed and re-adopted annually by August 1 at a regular or special meeting of the board. This shall include a review of the amount of money collected under this policy and the use of waivers as provided by this policy. The policy shall be published in the student handbook provided at no cost to each household.

Board Policy 504.19

Technology Usage Policy

Each student is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving Niobrara Public Schools' computers, networks and Internet services, and for his/her computer files, passwords, and accounts. These rules provide general guidance concerning the use of computers and examples of prohibited uses. The rules do not attempt to describe every possible prohibited activity by students. Students, parents, and school staff who have questions about whether a particular activity is prohibited are encouraged to contact the Principal or Technology Coordinator.

"Electronic devices" include, but are not limited to, cell phones, Mp3 players, iPods, personal digital assistants (PDAs), compact disc players, portable game consoles, cameras, digital scanners, laptop computers, Chromebooks, smartwatches, calculators, VR classes, 3D printers, and other electronic or battery powered instruments which transmit voice, text, or data from one person to another.

A. Acceptable Use

Niobrara Public Schools' computers, networks and Internet services are provided for educational purposes and are consistent with its educational mission, curriculum, and instructional goals. All policies, school rules, and expectations concerning student conduct and communications apply when students are using electronic devices. Students are also expected to comply with all specific instructions from teachers and other school staff when using any electronic device.

As required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, (CIPA), students will receive education concerning Internet Safety including but not limited to the following: appropriate and safe online behavior, interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms, and cyber bullying awareness and response. Education may be presented in the following ways: speaker(s), academic standards across all grade levels presented by teachers, handbook review, posted classroom technology expectations. The technology resources are to be used, in general, for educational purposes, meaning activities that are integral, immediate, and proximate to the education of students as defined in the E-rate program regulations.

B. Possession and Use of Electronic Devices

1. Students in grades 9-12 are permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices before school, after school, during passing periods and lunch. Students in grades 7-8 are permitted to possess or use personal electronic devices before and after school. Use in the classroom is at the discretion of the teacher.
2. Administrators have the discretion to prohibit student possession or use of electronic devices on school grounds during these times. In the event the administration determines such restrictions are appropriate, an announcement will be given for the changes in permitted use and/or parents may be contacted for individual student restrictions.
3. Students may use electronic devices during class time when authorized pursuant to an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 Accommodation Plan, or a Health Care Plan, or pursuant to a plan developed with the student's parent when the student has a compelling need to have the device (e.g., a student whose parent is in the hospital could be allowed limited use of the cell phone for family contacts, so the family can give the student updates on the parent's condition).

C. Prohibited Uses

Examples of unacceptable uses of electronic devices that are expressly prohibited by Niobrara Public Schools include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Accessing Inappropriate Materials - Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, forwarding, downloading, scanning, or displaying defamatory, abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing, bullying, and/or illegal materials.
2. Illegal Activities - Using school computers, networks and Internet services for any illegal activity or in violation of any policy or school rules. Niobrara Public Schools assumes no responsibility for illegal activities of students while using school computers or devices.
3. Violating Copyrights – Copying, downloading, or sharing any type of copyrighted materials (including music or films) without the owner’s permission. Niobrara Public Schools assumes no responsibility for copyright violations by students.
4. Copying Software - Copying or downloading software without the express authorization of the principal, technology coordinator, or other authorized personnel. Unauthorized copying of software is illegal and may subject the copier to substantial civil and criminal penalties. Niobrara Public Schools assumes no responsibility for illegal software copying by students.
5. Non-School-Related Uses - Using Niobrara Public Schools computers, networks and Internet services for non-school-related purposes such as private financial gain; commercial, advertising or solicitation purposes; or any other personal use not connected with the educational program or assignments. This includes but is not limited to non educational gameplay, social networking, personal emailing, sexting.
6. Misuse of Passwords/Unauthorized Access - Sharing passwords, using other users’ passwords, and accessing or using other users’ accounts.
7. Malicious Use/Vandalism - Malicious use, disruption or harm to Niobrara Public Schools computers, networks and Internet services, including but not limited to hacking activities and creation/uploading of computer viruses.
8. Changes to the device including both internal and external. Examples include, but are not limited to the following: changing software, changing hardware, scratching/engraving, writing, stickers, etc).
9. Structural Security - The security of the Niobrara Public Schools’ computers, networks and Internet services is a high priority. Any user who attempts to breach system security, causes a breach of system security or fails to report a system security problem shall be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action in addition to having his/her computer privileges limited, suspended or revoked.
10. Data Security - A student is not allowed to reveal his/her full name, address, telephone number, social security number or other personal information on the Internet. Students should never agree to meet people they have contacted through the Internet without parental permission. Students should inform their teacher if they access information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate or make them uncomfortable in any way.
11. Wireless Headphones - A student is not allowed to use earbuds or other wireless headphone devices at any time during the school day. Wired headphones can be utilized to connect to Chromebooks for educational purposes.

D. Consequences for Violation of Technology Use Policy Use and Rules

Compliance with policies and rules concerning technology use is mandatory. Students who violate these policies and rules may have their technology school and personal privileges limited, suspended, or revoked. Such violations may also result in disciplinary action, referral to law enforcement, and/or legal action. The administration shall have the final authority to decide whether a student’s privileges will be limited, suspended, or revoked based upon the circumstances of the particular case, the student’s prior disciplinary record, and any other pertinent factors.

E. Compensation for Losses, Costs, and/or Damages

The student and his/her parents are financially responsible for any losses, costs, or damages incurred by the student for violations of policies and school rules while the student is using Niobrara Public Schools technology on or off campus, including the cost of investigating such violations. Niobrara Public

Schools assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or costs incurred by a student while using school computers.

Other Programs & Parent/Student Supports

Free or Reduced Cost Meals Eligibility and Meal Charges

The district shall comply with all state and federal laws applying to providing free and reduced meals under the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and other related federal grant programs.

Free or Reduced Meals Eligibility

Families of students enrolled in the district who wish to qualify for free or reduced price meals may submit an application on or after July 1 for the current school year. If the financial situation of a household changes during the school year, they may submit a new application to become eligible. Applications are available at the Central Administrative Office of the school building.

Meal Charges

The written meal charge policy and guidelines shall be in place before the beginning of each school year and parents shall be advised of the available payment systems and meal prices. The district will encourage pre-payment of meal balances but the district must include a method for adding funds during the school day such as cash payments at the school office. A qualifying student with money to purchase a reduced price meal must be provided the meal; the district may not use that money for previously unpaid charges if the student intended to buy a meal that day.

All balances remaining in accounts shall carry over to the next month. Balances of households qualifying for free or reduced meals with funds remaining in the account at the end of the school year shall receive a refund. The district shall attempt to contact the household of all students transferring out or graduating from the district to return any unused funds remaining in the student's account. The district may set varying meal charge guidelines for students of different grade levels including charges relating to alternate meals, ala carte items and limits on charges that a parent may set for a student's daily lunch expenditures.

The district must set written guidelines regarding the collection of delinquent meal charges such as the amount of delinquent meal charges which initiate an established collection process, providing notice to households of those students and carrying out appropriate follow-up. Unpaid meal charges are classified as "delinquent debt" and remain on the food service accounting documents until they are collected or written off as uncollectible.

The district will not use a debt collection agency to directly or indirectly collect, or attempt to collect, debts due or assessed to be owed on a school lunch or breakfast account of any student nor will it assess or collect any interest, fees, or other monetary penalties for outstanding debts on a school lunch or breakfast account of any student.

Guidelines must also cover how the district will handle situations where children eligible for reduced price meals do not have money in their accounts to cover the cost of their meal at the time of service. Households must be notified of all payment methods used by the district, including any fees. At least one payment method must be free of charge. The district cannot solely require the use of an online payment system; another option must be available.

The information provided by families on the free and reduced price application will be used only for determining eligibility for meal or milk benefits and verification of eligibility. Only staff members and organizations carrying out the activities of the School Lunch Act shall have access to this information.

The district should use methods of lunch payment systems such as pre-payment to avoid openly identifying children who qualify for free or reduced meals. Meal cards, tickets, tokens or other methods of payment must not be coded or colored to identify such status.

Policy Communication

This policy will be provided in writing to all households at the start of each school year and to households that transfer to the district during the school year.

This policy will also be provided annually to all district staff responsible for enforcing the policy including food service professionals. Staff members such as counselors, school nurses, homeless liaisons, and others assisting students in need should also be informed of the policy.

The district will maintain documentation of the annual distribution of this policy.

Board Policy 802.05

Guidance and Counseling

Niobrara Public Schools offers school counseling services. Services include academic counseling, social emotional support, personal counseling, crisis intervention, referrals and coordination with agencies and professionals outside the school setting, school testing program, career exploration, and postgraduate planning. A copy of the Comprehensive School Counseling Handbook can be requested from the school counselor.

Homeless Children and Youth

The homeless children and youth policy (503.09) can be found in the Superintendent’s office. The purpose of this policy is to handle disputes and coordinate services.

Married Students

Married students residing in the district are considered to be of legal age and shall have the same educational opportunities as unmarried students.

The district encourages married students and students with children to complete requirements for graduation and to participate in school activities. The district prohibits any discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status or the condition of being a parent and provides relief for those who are aggrieved under its non-discrimination policies.

Board Policy 503.08

Student and Parent/Guardian Complaint Process

Student complaints and grievances regarding board policy or administrative regulations and other matters should be addressed to the student's specific teacher, activity sponsor or other certified employee, other than the administration, for resolution of the complaint. It is the goal of the board to resolve student complaints at the lowest organizational level.

Complaints involving student suspension, expulsion or mandatory reassignment will follow provisions of the Student Discipline Act. All other student complaints are to follow the chain of command as outlined in district policies. Rules for student conduct and appeal procedures will also be published in the student handbook.

If the complaint cannot be resolved by a certified employee, the student may discuss the matter with the principal within 5 days of the employee's decision. If the matter cannot be resolved by the principal, the student may discuss it with the superintendent within 5 days after speaking with the principal.

If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved by the superintendent, the student may appeal to the board in writing. However, the board will only directly consider appeals dealing with policies, procedures and programs. Any appeals involving employee or disciplinary issues will be passed on to the board's legal counsel to determine whether district policies and procedures were followed by the administrator in attempting to resolve the conflict.

Board Policy 504.01

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Niobrara Public Schools recognizes that pregnant and parenting students have the right and responsibility to attend school. This attendance right and responsibility applies to students regardless of their marital or parental status. Further, the district will educate pregnant and parenting students and will provide reasonable accommodations to support and encourage all pregnant and parenting students to obtain their high school diploma. No student will be excluded from, denied the benefit of, or discriminated against under any educational program or activity because of pregnancy or parenting responsibilities.

Pregnant and Parenting Students Attendance and Leave of Absences

Pregnant and parenting students will be permitted to attend to their own health care, their child's medical care, or other pregnancy- or parenting- related appointments with the benefit of having any such absences or tardiness excused. A student will be permitted to take a leave of absence for pregnancy, childbirth, and any other pre- and post-natal related medical needs, along with recovery therefrom for the duration that is deemed medically necessary by the student's licensed health care provider. At the conclusion of the leave of absence, a student will be immediately enrolled in the district at the same grade and status as when the leave began. Pregnant and parenting students shall be allowed to participate in all activities including extracurricular activities throughout the student's pregnancy and thereafter unless the district deems such participation poses a substantial risk of injury to the student or to others. A pregnant and parenting student may be asked to obtain certification from the student's licensed healthcare provider regarding the student's safe participation in an extracurricular activity when such certification is required of students for other conditions which require the attention of a licensed healthcare provider.

Any absences accumulated due to pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, or care for an ill child, should not count towards any district policies in effect under compulsory attendance requirements. Pregnant and parenting students with excused absences or tardiness shall be treated like all other students with excused absences or tardiness for any other medical reasons.

Pregnant and parenting students will be provided with assignments, classwork and any additional support needed to ensure that the student can keep up with class requirements when absent for pregnancy or parenting-related absences.

Pregnant and Parenting Students Alternative Means to Complete Coursework

The district will provide at least one alternate method, in addition to traditional classroom instruction, to keep pregnant and parenting students in school. Such accommodation(s) may include accessing coursework online, home-based independent study, or at-home tutoring. Alternative methods of instruction or other alternative programs for pregnant and parenting students are voluntary for the student who may elect whether to engage in an alternative method of instruction or the traditional methods of instruction available to their peers. Pregnant and parenting students shall be allowed to attend their regular classrooms and complete regular coursework.

Pregnant and Parenting Students Lactation

The district will provide reasonable time and space to accommodate lactating students to express breast milk or breastfeed during the school day. Such accommodations will be in a location, other than a bathroom or closet, that is private, clean, has an electrical outlet, a chair and is reasonably accessible. Students shall also be provided a food safe refrigerator to store breast milk safely.

Pregnant and Parenting Students Child Care

If in-school child care is not provided, a list of qualified licensed child care providers will be provided upon request to pregnant or parenting students. Such a list will be updated annually and include providers that participate in the quality rating and improvement system and meet all of the quality rating criteria for at least a step three rating pursuant to the Step Up to Quality Child Care Act (if available). Nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit or limit any referral for a student or a student's child to an early head start program or any other available community resources.

Pregnant and Parenting Students Privacy and Confidentiality

Pregnant and parenting students have the right to have their health and personal information kept confidential in accordance with law. School staff will make every effort to keep personal information and health records confidential and in compliance with Nebraska and federal law.

Information about students' pregnancies and related conditions will not appear in their cumulative records and will not be used when they are being considered for educational or job opportunities, awards or scholarships.

Pregnant and Parenting Students Other Accommodations

Pregnant and parenting students may request additional reasonable accommodations to ensure continued participation and enrollment in school. Accommodation requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Such accommodations may include but are not limited to: additional frequency allowed for bathroom breaks, additional time allowed in between class periods, a larger desk or additional work space, and adjustments to requirements for physical education as needed. Students seeking additional reasonable accommodation should make such requests to the building principal.

Pregnant and Parenting Students Bullying and Harassment

Pregnant and parenting students have the same rights as other students to be free from discrimination, bullying, and harassment. Such school policies are incorporated herein and apply to all students.

Pregnant and Parenting Students Policy Dissemination

Board Policy 503.07

Student Name: _____

Forms (Signature Required)

Forms

(Signatures Required)

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

NIORRARA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Handbook Review Verification

This form is used to verify that students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) have read the student handbook governing the policies and procedures of Niobrara Public School District 54-0501.

"I/We have read and understand the following Policies and Procedures found in the Niobrara Public School District's Student Handbook:"

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title 1 Parent-Student Learning Compact • Combined District/School Parent & Family Engagement • Distance Learning Student Policy • Concussion Awareness Policy • Extra-Curricular Activities & Programs Policy/Eligibility • Harassment by Students • Free or Reduced Meal Eligibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dating Violence Policy • Smoking-Drinking-Drug Policy • Weapons Policy • Indian Policies and Procedures • Technology Usage Policy • Title IX
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"By signing this form I/we acknowledge receipt and understanding of the information contained within the Niobrara Public School District's Student Handbook. I/We understand that if there is any confusion about any information found within the handbook, we are encouraged to contact the administration for clarification."

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE

PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) SIGNATURE(S)

Photo Release Permission Slip (FERPA)

As the parent/guardian for _____, I hereby consent to the use of photographs/videotape taken during the course of the school year for publicity, promotional and/or educational purposes (including publications, presentation or broadcast via newspaper, internet or other media sources including live streaming).

- Yes, I give consent for Niobrara School District to photograph or videotape my child.
- No, I do not give consent for Niobrara School District to photograph or videotape my child.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Chromebook Insurance (9-12 Only)

Chromebook Insurance is available to your student at the cost of **\$35** for the 2024-2025 school year. This policy provides protection against damage or repair at \$0 deductible (one time purchase for protection). The purchase of Chromebook insurance also allows your student (9th- 12th grade) to take his/her Chromebook to/from school. If you opt out of this insurance, your students will be able to utilize his/her Chromebook only at school and will be responsible for checking in/out the Chromebook each day. Any loss, damage, or repair is the financial responsibility of the parent/guardian.

- Yes, I would like to purchase Chromebook Insurance for my student.
- No, I decline the option to purchase Chromebook Insurance for my student.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

NIOBRARA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Medication Administration

Over The Counter Medications:

Students often come to the office to request medicines such as pain relievers, cough drops, etc. We are not able to administer medication unless we have specific instruction and permission to do so. Please fill out your choice of care for your student. **A separate form will need to be completed for each student/child.**

Please Select One:

- Please **do not** administer any medication to my student, _____.
- I give permission for my student, _____, to receive the following over the counter medications to be administered by unlicensed staff members:

Medication	Parent Initials
Tylenol	_____
Ibuprofen	_____
Cough Drops	_____
Benadryl/Allergy	_____
Tums	_____
First Aid Creams	_____
Other: _____	_____

Self-Carry Medications:

There are times when physicians and parents/guardians want students to carry their own medications (i.e. asthma inhaler, Epi-Pen, etc). If your student requires self-carry medications, the school needs a copy of the prescription or bottle/box label and parental authorization. Parents/guardians are responsible for any misuse of the medication.

Self-Carry Medication: _____

Reason: _____

Parent/Guardian Initials: _____

Short-Term Medications:

If your child is placed on prescription medications such as antibiotics, allergy medication, or cold medications, the medication must be kept in the office, not the student’s locker or book bag. **Please send a note explaining the dosage and frequency. All medications need to be sent in the original prescription bottle or over the counter bottle with instructions.**

I request/authorize the school to give the above named medication to my student in accordance with his/her health care provider. I understand that unlicensed staff, under the direction, training, and supervision of a licensed nurse may administer medications to my student and I accept ultimate responsibility for monitoring the effects of medications.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____