

# DC WEST School District



# Student Handbook 2025-2026

		Page
Section 1	Intent of Handbook	7
Section 2	School Calendar	7

### **Article 1 - Mission and Goals**

Section 1	Mutual Respect	7
Section 2	Complaint Procedures	7

### **Article 2 - School Day**

Section 1	Closed Campus	8
Section 2	Supervision Responsibility Before/After School	8

### **Article 3 - Use of Building and Grounds**

Section 1	Visitors	9
Section 2	Smoke-Free Environment	10
Section 3	Care of School Property	10
Section 4	Lockers	10
Section 5	Searches of Lockers and Other Types of Searches	10
Section 6	Video Surveillance	11
Section 7	Recording of Others	11
Section 8	Use of Personal Electronic Devices and Cell Phones	11
Section 9	Student Valuables	13
Section 10	Bulletins and Announcements	13
Section 11	Copyright and Fair Use	13
Section 12	Behavioral Points of Contact	13

### **Article 4 – Attendance**

Section 1	Attendance	13
Section 2	Attendance and Absences	13
Section 3	Make-up Work	14
Section 4	Attendance is Required to Participate in Activities	14
Section 5	Truancy	15

### **Article 5 - Scholastic Achievement**

Section 1	Grading System	16
Section 2	Promotion and Retention	16
Section 3	Schedule Changes	17
Section 4	Report Cards and Progress Reports	17
Section 5	Parent-Teacher Conferences	17

## Article 6 - Support Services

		Page
Section 1	Special Education Services	17
Section 2	Students with Disabilities: Section 504	18
Section 3	Health Services	19
Section 4	Transportation Services	22
Section 5	School Resource Officer (SRO)	24

## Article 7 - Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

Section 1	Drug-Free Schools	24
Section 2	Education and Prevention	24
Section 3	Standards of Student Conduct Pertaining to Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco	25

## Article 8 - Student Code of Conduct

Section 1	Purpose	26
Section 2	Multi-Tiered System of Support for Behavior (MTSS B)	26
Section 3	Social Emotional Learning	27
Section 4	Expectations for All	27
Section 5	Behavior Violations and Response Levels	28
Section 6	Forms of Discipline	34

## Article 9 – Student Fees Policy

		Page
Section 1	Student Activity Fees	44

## Article 10 - State and Federal Programs

		Page
Section 1	Notice of Nondiscrimination	45
Section 2	Designation of Coordinators	45
Section 3	Multicultural	45
Section 4	Notice to Parents of Rights Afforded by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	46
Section 5	Notification of Rights Under FERPA	46
Section 6	Military Recruiters	48
Section 7	Combined District and School Title I Parent and Family Involvement	48
Section 8	Student Privacy Protection Policy	49
Section 9	Homeless Students	52

## Article 11 - School Specific Information

Section 1	Elementary Specific Information	53
	Falcon Way Expectations	53
	Drop Off/ Pick Up Procedures	58
	Field Trips	58

	Fire Drills, Tornado Drills, Weather	58
	Lost and Found	59
	Sporting Events	59
	Change of Address	59
	Substitute Teachers	59
	Lunch Time/ Procedures	59
	Use of Personal Electronic Devices and Cell Phones	60
	Searches on Ipads	61
Section 2	Middle School Specific Information	62
	Staff	62
	Bell Schedule	63
	Backpacks	64
	Use of Personal Electronic Devices and Cell Phones	64
	Change of Address	65
	Field Trips	65
	Fire Drills	65
	Food and Drink	65
	Insurance	65
	Lost and Found	66
	Property Checked Out to Students	66
	Student Parking	66
	Substitute Teachers	66
	Detentions	66
	Library and Media Center Rules	66
	Counseling	67
	Falcon Rewards	67
	Homework	67
	Honor Roll and Merit Roll	67
	Advisory	67
	Student Awards and Honors	68
	Student Records	68
	Testing and Assessment	68
	Passes	68
Section 3	High School Specific Information	69
	Staff	69
	General Information	70
	Announcements	70
	Counseling	70
	Dances and Parties	70
	Disaster Drills	70
	Field Trips	71
	Food and Drink	71
	Hot Lunch Program	71
	Hazing	72
	Initiations	72

	Insurance	72
	Internet Contract	72
	Library and Media Center Rules	72
	Lost and Found	72
	New Organizations	73
	Office Use	73
	Pep Rallies	73
	Planned Absences	73
	Posters	73
	Skip Days	73
	Student Activity Fee/Pass	73
	Students Attending Post-Season Tournaments	73
	Students Attending Athletic Contests During School Time	73
	Student Parking/ Campus Safety	74
	Substitute Teachers	74
	Telephone Use	74
	Use of Personal Electronic Devices and Cell Phones	74
	Vape Detectors	75
	Scholastic Information	75
	Falcon Achievement Center	75
	Assemblies, Convocations, Guest Speakers	76
	Class Rank	76
	College/Career Representatives	76
	Credit Recovery	77
	Dual Enrollment	77
	Early Graduation	77
	Graduation Requirements	78
	Falcon's Nest	79
	Falcon Reward System	80
	Help From Teachers	80
	Homework	80
	Honor Roll, Academic Letters and Academic Excellence Recognition	80
	Keystone and Academic Support	80
	National Honor Society	81
	Scholarship and Financial Aid	82
	Student Aides	82
	Testing and Assessment	82
Section 4	High School Activities Specific Information	83
	Student 24-Hour Activity Code of Conduct	83
	Extracurricular Activity Code of Conduct	84
	Academic Eligibility	84
	Behavior/ Tobacco/ Alcohol & Drug Violations	84
	Classroom Work	86
	Dances and Parties	86
	Dressing Rooms	86

	Due Process	86
	Eligibility Rules of the Nebraska School Activities Association	87
	End of the Season/ Year Awards	88
	Equipment	88
	Field Trips, Athletics and Activities	89
	Inappropriate Behavior	89
	Injury	89
	Lettering Requirements	89
	NSAA Eligibility Rules	89
	Option Enrolled/ Transfer Students	90
	Parental Permission and Student Participation	90
	Physical Examinations	90
	Pep Rallies	90
	Playing Time	90
	Practice Attendance	90
	Safety	91
	School Attendance/ Activity Participation	91
	Students Attending Athletic Contests During School Time	91
	Students in Simultaneous Activities	91
	Sunday Practices	92
	Suspensions	92
	Travel Release Form	93
	Warning for Participants and Parents	93
Section 5	Handbook Acknowledgment of Receipt	94

# **DC West Community Schools Student-Parent Handbook**

## **2025-2026 School Year**

### **Foreword**

#### **Section 1                    Intent of Handbook**

This handbook is intended to be used by students, parents, and staff as a guide to the rules, regulations, and general information about DC West Community Schools. Each student is responsible for becoming familiar with the handbook and knowing the information contained in it. Parents are encouraged to use this handbook as a resource and to assist their child in following the rules contained in this handbook.

Although the information found in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all encompassing so as to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise during any school day, or school year. This handbook does not create a “contract.” The administration reserves the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time to implement the educational program and to assure the well-being of all students and the educational program. The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon all applicable school district policies, and state and federal statutes and regulations.

The Policies of the Board of Education may cover areas not addressed in this Handbook. Every parent or guardian and student should familiarize themselves with Board Policies online at:

<https://www.dcwest.org/>.

#### **Section 2                    School Calendar**

[2025-2026 District Calendar](#)

### **Article 1 – Mission and Goals**

#### **Section 1                    Mutual Respect**

The DC West Community Schools expects every staff member and student to be treated with respect and dignity. A show of disrespect toward a staff member or insubordination on the part of students will not be tolerated.

#### **Section 2                    Complaint Procedures**

The proper procedure for a parent or student to make complaints or raise concerns is to begin with the school employee who is most immediately or directly involved in the matter, as illustrated in the complaint procedure set forth below. There are other procedures identified in the Handbook to address specific complaints or concerns, such as discrimination or harassment, bullying, disciplinary actions. Those procedures should be used where applicable.

##### **1. Complaint procedure**

- a. Step 1. Schedule a conference with the staff person most immediately or directly involved in the matter.
- b. Step 2. Address the concern with the Principal if the matter is not resolved at Step 1.

- c. Step 3. Address the concern with the Superintendent if the matter is not resolved at Step 2.
- d. Step 4. Address the concern to the Board of Education if the matter is not resolved at Step 3.

## 2. Conditions Applicable to All Levels of Complaint Procedure

All information to be considered at each step should be placed in writing in order to be most effective. Action or decisions will be expedited as quickly as possible, typically within ten (10) calendar days, depending on the nature of the complaint and the need for prompt resolution.

## **Article 2 – School Day**

School begins at 8:00 AM and dismisses at 3:24 PM for all K-12 students on Mondays through Thursdays. On Fridays, the school day begins at 8:00 AM and dismisses at 2:04 PM.

**Building-specific schedules can be found in each building's section of the handbook.**

The Superintendent may close public schools in case of severe weather or an emergency. The school will notify parents and guardians, as well as the local media, when the schools will be closed.

**Parental Decisions.** Parents may decide to keep their children at home during inclement weather because of personal circumstances. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will generally be considered an excused absence.

**Pickup During Inclement Weather.** Parents should not come to school during severe weather, such as during a tornado warning since students will be moved into safe areas of the building and will not ordinarily be released during inclement weather or dangerous circumstances.

### **Section 1      Closed Campus**

DC West Campus operates under a closed-campus policy. Students are not allowed to leave the building during the school day without permission from the student's parents/guardian and the administration. All students leaving the building for any reason (which includes going to a car to get something) must receive permission from an administrator. Students leaving without permission will be considered truant and dealt with accordingly. Students will not be excused to leave for lunch. Students must always have a pass in their possession when they are not in the area they are assigned.

### **Section 2      Supervision Responsibility Before/After School**

#### **Arrival at School/Dismissal From School**

Students are expected to arrive at school no more than 30 minutes prior to the first class or school program in which they are participating. Prior to that time, the school is not responsible for supervision of the students. Students will ordinarily be admitted to the school building 30 minutes prior to the first class if they are eating breakfast. Students will not be permitted to enter earlier unless the Principal determines it to be necessary due to inclement weather or other factors. Students are to enter through their assigned entrance and proceed to designated areas.

Students will be dismissed at the end of the last period of the school day unless there are other circumstances (early dismissal, detention etc.). Upon dismissal, students must leave the school grounds and proceed home or to a previously designated location unless participating in a school-sponsored activity. The school is not responsible for supervision of students once the students are to have left school grounds.

Certain days on the calendar are “shortened days,” meaning that the school day starts or ends other than on the normal schedule. Parents are strongly encouraged to be aware of those days, so their children are not left in an unsupervised situation or without a means to get home upon dismissal.

## **Article 3 – Use of Building and Grounds**

### **Section 1      Visitors at School**

Parents or guardians are encouraged to visit school during school hours. All visitors are asked to please report to the school office prior to going to their child’s classroom. We feel it is important for the safety and well-being of all persons that the office personnel know who is in the building at all times. Students will not be allowed to bring friends to school to visit during regular school hours, unless the visiting student is considering transferring to our school. The following procedures are designed to help parents feel comfortable about visiting school. These procedures are also designed to help teachers create a learning environment free from undue disturbances and are designed to create a safe place for all students. The procedures are not intended to interfere with parental desires to be involved in the education of their child/children.

1. All visitors arriving at school are asked to report and sign in at the office.
2. All visitors must wear a visitor badge which is available in the office.
3. Parents who need to pick up children during the school day are asked to come to the office. The office will contact the teacher and request the student's release.
4. Parents are asked to contact the office if they need to have someone else pick up their child/children. This is especially true if school personnel are unfamiliar with the visitor. Visitors should report to the office and students will be sent to the office to meet the visitor.
5. Parents are encouraged to visit the school and classrooms. Parents interested in visiting school are asked to contact the teacher or the principal to arrange the visit. By communicating with teachers, parents can explain what they hope to observe and the teacher can then schedule the optimum times for the visit.
6. Parents who would like to talk with a teacher before or after school are asked to contact the teacher to schedule a mutually agreeable time. "Unannounced" visits before or after school may interrupt a teacher's plan to work with students or other staff members.
7. If teachers are contacted by someone who is unfamiliar to them, they are expected to refer that person to the office area.
8. Teachers may not authorize any contact between students and visitors that they do not know.
9. A teacher who has concerns about an unfamiliar visitor is to immediately contact an administrator.
10. Visitors will not be allowed to record or videotape any classroom activities without the consent of the building administrator and teacher.
11. If a parent, guardian, relative, or another visiting student would like to eat lunch with a

current student, they may do so under the following conditions:

- a. They must report and sign into the office.
- b. They must wear a visitor badge which is available in the office.
- c. They must wait in the office for the student to meet them and escort them to lunch.
- d. They must eat at the designated table/area that will be assigned for visitors eating lunch with students.
- e. They must under no circumstances talk with other students in a negative or confrontational manner.
- f. They must sign back out in the office when leaving after lunch.

## **Section 2      Smoke-Free Environment**

All of our school buildings and grounds are smoke and tobacco-free. No smoking or tobacco is allowed on school grounds or at any school activity.

## **Section 3      Care of School Property**

1. Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, equipment, supplies, and furniture supplied by the school.
2. Students who damage property, break windows, or cause other harm to school property or equipment will be required to pay the cost to repair or replace the item.
3. School-issued items that are stolen or damaged from unlocked lockers are the responsibility of the student to whom they were issued.

## **Section 4      Lockers**

Students will be assigned a locker upon request. Students must use their own lockers and are not to share lockers with other students, except as assigned by school officials. Students are expected to keep all books, etc., in their assigned locker. Students are also responsible for the cleanliness inside their locker and the door of their locker. Students may be assessed a fine for damage to lockers.

Students may not display images, information or messages that may cause a substantial disruption to the operations of the school. If a staff member sees or learns of an image or message that may cause a disruption, the staff member may ask the student to remove the image or message from the locker. If the student refuses, then the administration will meet with the student and parents to discuss the situation. The principal shall have the final say on whether a student needs to remove the image or message from the locker.

## **Section 5      Searches of Lockers and Other Types of Searches**

Student lockers, desks, computers, and other such property are owned by the school. The school exercises exclusive control over school property. Students should not expect privacy regarding usage of or items placed in or on school property, including student vehicles parked on school property, because school property is subject to search at any time by school officials. Periodic, random searches of lockers, desks, computers, and other such property may be conducted at the discretion of the administration.

The following rules apply to searches of students and of a student's personal property and to the seizure of items in a student's possession or control:

1. School officials may conduct a search if there is a reasonable basis to believe that the search will uncover evidence of a crime or a school rule violation. The search is to be

conducted in a reasonable manner under the circumstances.

2. Random searches of student lockers, desks, and other similar school property provided for use by students may be conducted at the discretion of the administration.
3. Drug or alcohol tests may be conducted on students based on reasonable suspicion.
4. Drug or alcohol tests may be conducted on a random basis for students participating in extracurricular activities.
5. Searches of the District's computer system may be conducted at the discretion of the administration at any time.

## **Section 6      Video Surveillance**

The Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras on School District property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the administration. As a result, notice is hereby given that video surveillance may occur on District property. In the event a video surveillance recording captures a student or other building user violating school policies or rules or local, state, or federal laws, the video surveillance recording may be used in appropriate disciplinary proceedings against the student or other building user and may also be provided to law enforcement agencies.

## **Section 7      Recording of Others**

To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of student information, no person is authorized to record or transmit any sound or image of any person (including themselves) without the prior consent or authorization of either (1) the person or persons being recorded or whose image or sound is being transmitted, (2) by authorized staff for purposes of child welfare (for example, to record images of injuries to students caused or believed to be caused by another person), or (3) the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee. This prohibition applies to all persons, including students, parents, and community members, regardless of the content or context of the image or sound; however, this provision shall not apply to District-sponsored athletic or activity events where the focus of the recording or transmission is on the student performances or activity. Nothing in this provision shall prohibit the recording of an Individualized Education Program meeting if the recording is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the IEP or the IEP process or to implement other parental rights guaranteed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

## **Section 8      Use of Personal Electronic Devices and Cell Phones [Board Policy 6113](#)**

The DC West Community Schools is committed to safeguarding instructional time to ensure every student thrives academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally. The Personal Electronic Device procedures aim to minimize distractions and enhance academic focus, which is grounded in robust research. Protecting instructional time by reducing digital interruptions is a proven strategy to enhance academic focus, support higher achievement, foster an optimal learning environment, and support the mental health and well-being of our students. Personal electronic devices include cell phones, smart watches, earbuds, etc.

### **Elementary School**

- Restrict personal electronic devices during school hours.
  - Students must power off devices and store them in a backpack or locker until dismissal.

- This approach minimizes distractions and ensures that young children focus on learning and social development without the influence of technology.
- Exceptions may be granted for educational purposes outlined in a student's IEP or 504 Plan, or for medical needs as documented in the Individualized Health Plan.

## **Middle School**

- Restrict personal electronic devices during school hours. They may be used before and after school.
  - Students must power off devices and store them in a backpack or locker until dismissal. For students who do not carry a backpack or have a locker, the device will be given to the student's Advisory teacher.
  - Middle school students are particularly vulnerable to distractions, cyberbullying, and social comparison via smartphones.
  - Prohibiting access during class and free periods fosters better academic performance and social engagement.
  - Exceptions may be granted for educational purposes outlined in a student's IEP or 504 Plan, or for medical needs as documented in the Individualized Health Plan.

## **High School**

- Personal electronic devices may be used during passing periods, lunch break, before school, and after school.
  - Personal electronic devices are strictly prohibited in locker rooms and restrooms.
  - Personal electronic devices are prohibited during class to improve focus and reduce distractions, as studies show significant academic performance benefits when devices are restricted.
  - Exceptions may be granted for educational purposes outlined in a student's IEP or 504 Plan, or for medical needs as documented in the Individualized Health Plan.

### Consequences for Non-Compliance

#### **1. First Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- c. The student retrieves the device from an administrator at the end of the school day.

#### **2. Second Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. The administrator contacts the parent.
- c. The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- d. The student loses privileges for the next school day. The device is checked in with an administrator in the morning, or not brought to school.

#### **3. Third Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. Administrator contacts the parent.
- c. Administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber..
- d. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator.
- e. The student loses privileges for five school days. The device is checked into the

office in the morning or not brought to school.

#### **4. Fourth Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. The administrator contacts the parent.
- c. The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- d. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator.
- e. The student loses privileges for the remainder of the semester. The device is checked into the office in the morning or not brought to school.

### **Section 9      Student Valuables**

Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property. Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or items of value to school. The school does not guarantee or represent that the student's property will not be subject to loss, theft, or damage.

### **Section 10    Bulletins and Announcements**

Bulletin boards and display cases are available for school-related and approved materials to be posted and displayed. Posters to be used in the halls or materials for distribution need to be approved by the Principal's office. The person or organization responsible for distributing the posters is responsible for seeing that all posters are removed within 48 hours after the event or when directed by the Principal.

### **Section 11    Copyright**

It is the school's policy to follow the federal copyright law. Students are reminded that, when using school equipment and when completing course work, they also must follow the federal copyright laws. The federal copyright law governs the reproduction of works of authorship. Copyrighted works are protected regardless of the medium in which they are created or reproduced; thus, copyright extends to digital works and works transformed into a digital format. Copyrighted works are not limited to those that bear a copyright notice.

### **Section 12    Behavioral Health Points of Contact**

The District maintains a registry of local mental health and counseling resources, including those resource services that can be accessed by families and individuals outside of school. To gain more information about these resources, parents and/or students should contact their building principal. This information, as well as the District's behavioral points of contact, are also listed on the District's website.

## **Article 4 – Attendance**

### **Section 1              Attendance**

Regular and punctual student attendance is required. The administration is responsible for developing further attendance rules and regulations and staff are responsible for assisting in the enforcement of the rules and regulations. Students and parents are responsible for developing behaviors which will result in regular and punctual student attendance.

### **Section 2              Attendance and Absences [Board Policy 5008](#)**

Excused and Unexcused Absences. An absence from school will be reported as: (a) an excused absence or (b) an unexcused absence.

1. Excused Absences. Absences should be cleared through the Principal's office in advance,

whenever possible. An absence or tardy, even with parental approval, may not be considered excused by the school. All absences, except for illness and/or death in the family, require advance approval. An absence for any of the following reasons will be typically excused, provided the required procedures have been followed:

- a. Attendance at a funeral for a member of the immediate family (parents, siblings, and grandparents).
- b. Illness which causes a student to be absent from school.
- c. Doctor or dental appointment which requires students to be absent from school.
- d. Court appearances that are required by a court order.
- e. School sponsored activities which require students to be absent from school.
- f. Other absences which have received prior approval from the Principal.

The Principal has the discretion to deny approval for a student's absence, depending on circumstances, such as the student's absence record, the student's academic status, the tests or other projects which may be missed, and other relevant reasons.

2. **Unexcused Absences:** An absence which is not excused is unexcused. If a student's absence is unexcused the student may be required to make up work and the time missed.

**Tardy to School.** Students will be considered tardy to school if they are not seated in their assigned class or ready and attentive in their assigned area when the bell for their first-class rings.

**Tardy to Class.** Students have a sufficient time period between classes to make it to their next assigned class on time. Students will be considered tardy to class if they are not in their assigned classroom when the tardy bell rings unless they have a pass from a staff member. Specific tardy guidelines once students are in the classroom doorway are at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

**Leaving School or Class.** Students who leave school for any reason during the school day must check out of the office before leaving. Students leaving school must be cleared in advance by the student's parent or legal guardian. Upon returning to school that same day, students must check in at the office.

Students who leave school without permission and without signing out in the proper manner, or who leave their assigned classroom without teacher permission, may be considered truant.

### **Section 3      Make-up Work**

Written make-up work may be assigned for each day missed regardless of the type of absence. If make-up work is not completed, students will receive no credit for the work required. The time each student is allowed for make-up work will be determined by the teacher. The student has the responsibility to contact teachers, initially, regarding make-up assignments.

### **Section 4      Attendance is Required to Participate in Activities**

Full-time students must attend school all day on the day of any scheduled school activity in order to participate in the activity. Part-time eligible students must attend their classes on the day of the school activity in order to participate in the activity. A "school activity" includes athletic

contests, practices, and dances. Failure to attend may result in a student being withheld from participation in the activity. The Principal retains the right to grant participation should exceptional circumstances prevail.

## **Section 5      Truancy**

A student who engages in unexcused absences may be considered truant under state law. Truancy is a violation of school rules. The consequence of truancies may include disciplinary action up to expulsion and referral to the county attorney for compulsory attendance violations.

**Reporting and Responding to Truant Behavior.** Any administrator, teacher, or member of the board of education who knows of any failure on the part of any child aged six (6) to eighteen (18) to attend school regularly without lawful reason, shall within three (3) days report such violation to the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall immediately cause an investigation into any such report to be made. The Superintendent or designee shall also investigate any case when, based on the Superintendent's personal knowledge or based on a report or complaint from any resident of the district, the Superintendent or designee believes that any child is unlawfully absent from school. The school shall render all services in its power to compel such child to attend some public, private, denominational, or parochial school, which the person having control of the child shall designate, in an attempt to remediate the child's truant behavior.

**Excessive Absenteeism.** Students who accumulate five (5) unexcused absences in a quarter shall be deemed to have "excessive absences." Such absences shall be determined on a per day basis for elementary students and on a per class basis for secondary students. When a student has excessive absences, the following procedures shall be implemented:

1. One or more meetings shall be held between a school attendance officer, school social worker, or other person designated by the school administration and the parent/guardian and the student to report and attempt to solve the truancy problem. If the parent/guardian refuses to participate in such a meeting, the principal shall place in the student's attendance records documentation of such refusal.
2. Educational counseling to determine whether curriculum changes, including but not limited to, enrolling the child in an alternative education program that meets the specific educational and behavioral needs of the child.
3. Educational evaluation, which may include a psychological evaluation, to assist in determining the specific condition, if any, contributing to the truancy problem, supplemented by specific efforts by the school to help remedy any condition diagnosed.
4. Investigation of the truancy problem by the school social worker, or if such school does not have a school social worker, another person designated by the administration to identify conditions which may be contributing to the truancy problem. If services for the child and his or her family are determined to be needed, the person performing the investigation shall meet with the parent/guardian and the child to discuss any referral to appropriate community agencies for economic services, family or individual counseling, or other services required to remedy the conditions that are contributing to the truancy problem.

**Reporting Habitual Truancy.** Students who accumulate twenty (20) unexcused absences or the hourly equivalent per year shall be deemed to be habitually truant. If the student continues to be or becomes habitually truant, the principal shall serve a written notice to the person violating the Nebraska truancy laws (i.e., the person who has legal or active charge or control of the student)

warning him or her to comply with the provisions of that law. If within one (1) week after the time the notice is given such a person is still violating the school attendance laws or policies, the Principal shall file a report with the county attorney of the county in which such person resides.

## Article 5 – Scholastic Achievement

### Section 1 Grading System

The grading system of Douglas County West Community Schools shall be as follows:

- a. Achievement marks shall be given on a numerical basis for all grades 4-12 with the mark of 59 or lower considered a failure.
- b. The grading scale is as follows:

A	=	90-100
B+	=	87-89
B	=	80-86
C+	=	77-79
C	=	70-76
D+	=	67-69
D	=	60-66
F	=	0-59
I	=	Incomplete may be given to students that have not completed work by the end of the semester. Course work not made up will result in a failing grade.
P or NP	=	Pass or No Pass grades will be issued under special circumstances as approved by the administration.

- c. Grading guidelines for kindergarten through third grades shall be used to report academic progress, where applicable. The following continuum will be used:
  - ES = Exceeding Standard: *Student can apply the skill/concept independently.*
  - MS = Meeting Standard: *Student can apply the skill/concept with minimal support.*
  - AS = Approaching Standard: *Student can apply the skill/concept at times, but continues to need some support.*
  - NY = Not Yet Meeting Standard: *Student needs consistent support to apply the skill/concept.*
  - NE = Not Evaluated: *Skill/Concept not evaluated at this time.*
- d. For all other grading reports received for transfer students, the principal or designee shall convert the grades to an approximately equal grade on our system.
- e. All grade reports will contain a percentage and letter grade for each subject, as well as the following: absences, tardiness, comments (if teacher desires).

### Section 2 Promotion and Retention ([Policy 5201](#))

Students will be placed at the grade level and in the courses best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally as determined by the school's professional staff. Students will typically

progress annually from grade to grade. A student may be retained at a grade level or be required to repeat a course or program when such is determined in the judgment of the professional staff to be appropriate for the educational interests of the student and the educational program.

### **Section 3      Schedule Changes**

Each student has a class schedule that has been developed through the cooperation of the advisor, parents, and student. Schedule changes may be made within the designated add/drop period of one week the first semester and two days the second semester, with involvement from the advisor, counselor, parent, and teacher. Students changing their schedule after the designated time will receive a failing grade for classes dropped.

### **Section 4      Report Cards and Progress Reports**

Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter. In addition to quarterly report cards, parents may log in and view their student's grades from the school's student information system.

Teachers are always available to assist the students and students should feel free to ask their teachers for help at any time.

### **Section 5      Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences will be held near the end of the 1st and 3rd quarters. Students are welcome and encouraged to attend. There will also be an Open House at the beginning of each year. Refer to the school calendar for the schedule. Conferences with teachers, at any other time, are possible by calling the school office and making arrangements with the teachers.

## **Article 6 - Support Services**

### **Section 1      Special Education Services**

#### What Does Special Education Mean?

Special education means specially designed instruction and related services adapted as appropriate to the needs of an eligible student with a disability. Special education is provided at no cost to the parent to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability.

#### Students Who May Benefit

A student identified as having autism, emotional disturbance, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, hearing impairments, intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, specific learning disabilities, speech-language impairments, traumatic brain injury or visual impairments, who because of these impairments need special education and related services.

#### How are Students With Disabilities Identified?

Referrals are made by staff or parents to the Falcon Individualized Problem Solving Team (FIPS), which serves as the district's student assistance team. If the FIPS team feels that all viable alternatives have been explored, a referral for multidisciplinary evaluation is completed. An evaluation is conducted to assist in the determination of whether a student has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services the student needs. The evaluation is conducted only with written consent of a parent or guardian. A multidisciplinary evaluation team (MDT) will then meet to determine whether the student is eligible for special education.

### Independent Evaluation

If a parent disagrees with an evaluation completed by the school district, the parent has a right to request an independent educational evaluation at public expense. Parents should direct inquiries to school officials to determine if the school district will arrange for further evaluation at the school's expense. If school district officials feel the original evaluation was appropriate and the parents disagree, a due process hearing may be initiated. If it is determined that the original evaluation was appropriate, parents still have the right to an independent educational evaluation at their own expense.

### Reevaluation

Students identified for special education will be reevaluated at least every three (3) years by the student's IEP team. The IEP team will review existing evaluation data on the student and will identify what additional data, if any, is needed. The school district will obtain parental consent prior to conducting any reevaluation of a student with a disability.

### Individual Education Program (IEP)

Upon a student being identified as having a disability, a conference will be held with parents. At the conference, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed specifying programs and services which will be provided by the schools. Parent consent will be obtained prior to a student being placed for the first time in a program providing special education and related services or early intervention services to infants and toddlers. Once in place, the IEP is reviewed on an annual basis, or more frequently as needed. Parents will be given a copy of the IEP.

### Special Education Placement

The student's placement in a special education program is dependent on the student's educational needs as outlined in the Individual Education Program (IEP). To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment will occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Determination of a student's educational placement will be made by the IEP team.

Written notice shall be given to parents at a reasonable time before the school district: 1. Proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, verification or educational placement of a child or the provision of a free appropriate public education; or 2. Refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the child.

### More Information

Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the District's special education policy, the Parental Rights in Special Education brochure, or a copy of the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51 (special education regulations and complaint procedures) or Rule 55 (special education appeal procedures) may contact the Superintendent. A notice of parental rights, Rules 51 and 55 and more information about special education are also available at the Nebraska Department of Education's website.

## **Section 2      Students with Disabilities: Section 504**

Accommodations and related services are made available to students with disabilities under

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under Section 504, parents have the following rights:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from, public education programs without discrimination because of your child's disability.
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law.
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education. This includes the right to be educated with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school district make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities.
5. Have your child receive services and be educated in facilities which are comparable to those provided to students without disabilities.
6. Have your child receive an individualized evaluation and receive special education and related services if your child is found eligible under Section 504.
7. Have evaluation, eligibility, educational and placement decisions made based on a variety of information sources and by persons who know your child and who are knowledgeable about the evaluation data and placement options.
8. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if your child were placed in a program operated by the school district.
9. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities offered by the school district.
10. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, and placement. Obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost on the same terms as records are provided to students without a disability unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records.
11. Receive a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records.
12. Request amendment of your child's educational records if there is reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request, it shall notify you within a reasonable time, and advise you of the right to a hearing.
13. File a local grievance in accordance with school policy.
14. Request an impartial hearing related to decisions regarding your child's identification, eligibility, and educational program or placement with opportunity for participation by the person's parents or guardian and representation by counsel, and a review procedure. This is provided in the local grievance procedure.

### **Section 3      Health Services**

#### **Student Illnesses: [Board Policy 5409](#)**

School health personnel will notify parents when a student needs to be sent home from school due to illness. Conditions requiring a student be sent home may include: Temperature greater than 100°F., vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rashes, live head lice, or on determination by the school nurse that the child's condition prevents meaningful participation in the educational program, presents a health risk to the child or others, or that medical consultation is warranted unless the condition resolves.

Students may not return to school until they are fever/symptom free for twenty-four (24) hours without the use of pain reducing medication, and/or bring a doctor's note granting permission to return.

### Accidents at School

Any accident that occurs at school is to be reported immediately by the student to the teacher in charge. If medical help is needed, the office will notify parents and the appropriate agency. Emergency numbers must be provided by the parent/guardian at the beginning of each school year. When accidents occur in the classroom or are observed by a teacher, an accident report is completed by the teacher and is on file in the office.

### Guidelines for Administering Medication

Whenever possible, students should be provided medications outside of school hours. When a physician prescribes medication for a student to take during school hours, it is the duty of the parent or guardian to make necessary arrangements with office personnel.

Parents who come to school to administer medication to a student must ask that the student be called to the office.

1. No students are allowed to administer their own medication without the prior approval of the administration.
2. The following procedure is to be used if the school is to give medication:
  - a. The parent must submit a permission form (to take medication) and the medication to the office.
  - b. The nurse or designee will administer the medication at the scheduled time.
  - c. Medications must be provided to the school by the parent/guardian in the pharmacy-labeled or manufacturer-labeled bottle. Repackaged medications will not be accepted.
3. For each different prescription duration, a new medication form must be filled out with new instructions for that medication. If a new prescription duration is prescribed for the same medication, the form must be re-dated and signed.
4. It is illegal for a student to consume or dispense medication that is prescribed for someone else.

If a student has asthma or diabetes and is capable of self-managing his or her health condition, the student may coordinate with the health office to develop a self-management plan.

The school nurse may limit medications as the nurse deems appropriate. School

### Health Screening Board Policy 5408

Children in Preschool and Kindergarten through third grade, as well as children in sixth and ninth grades are screened for vision, hearing, dental defects, height, and weight. The screening program also incorporates scoliosis and blood pressure at the sixth and ninth grades. Students with identified health concerns may also be screened. Parents who do not wish their child to participate in the school screening program must communicate in writing to the school health office at the start of the school year.

### Physical and Visual Examination

Evidence of a physical examination and a visual evaluation is required within six (6) months

prior to entrance into kindergarten and, in the case of transfer from out of state, to any other grade. A physical examination is also required prior to entrance into the seventh grade. The physical examination is to be completed by a physician, a physician's assistant, or an advanced practice registered nurse; the visual evaluation is to be completed by any of the forgoing or an optometrist. A parent or guardian who objects to the physical examination and/or visual evaluation may submit a written statement of refusal for his or her child. Waiver forms are available in the school health office. Additional physical examination requirements exist for students participating in athletic participation.

### **Immunizations**

Students must show proof of immunization. A student who does not comply with the immunization requirements will not be permitted to continue in school. Students with medical conditions or sincerely held religious beliefs which do not allow immunizations must complete an affidavit.

Unimmunized students may nonetheless be excluded from school in the event of a disease outbreak.

The following are the current immunization requirements for students:

#### **Students 2–5 years of age:**

- 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine
- 4 doses DTP, or DT vaccine
- 3 doses of Polio vaccine
- 1 dose of MMR or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age
- 3 doses of Hib vaccine or 1 dose of Hib given at or after 15 months of age - 1 dose of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age, or written documentation from parent(s)/guardian(s) or health care provider of the month and year of varicella disease

#### **All students from Kindergarten through 12th grade:**

- 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine or 2 doses of adolescent vaccine if student is 11–15 years of age
- 3 doses DTP, DT or Td vaccine, one given on or after the fourth birthday - 3 doses of Polio vaccine
- 2 doses of MMR or MMRV vaccine, given on or after 12 months of age and separated by at least 1 month
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age, or written documentation from parent(s)/guardian(s) or health care provider of the month and year of varicella disease. (If the child has had varicella disease, they do not need the vaccination)

#### **Additionally for 7th grade students:**

- 1 dose of Tdap (must contain Pertussis Booster) given on or after 7 years of age.

### **Birth Certificate Requirements**

State law requires that a certified copy of a student's birth certificate be provided within 30 days of enrollment of a student in school for the first time.

If a birth certificate is unavailable, other reliable proof of a student's identity may be used. These documents could include naturalization or immigration documents showing date of birth or official hospital birth records, a passport, or a translation of a birth certificate from another country. The documents must be accompanied by an affidavit explaining the inability to produce a copy of the birth certificate.

#### Guidelines for Head Lice

The following guidelines are in place to better control a nuisance condition, reduce absenteeism due to head lice, and involve parents as partners with the school in control efforts:

1. Children will be sent home from school for live head lice. In the event a child has two (2) cases of live lice in a semester, the child will be sent home until free of both live lice and nits (eggs).
2. Health office staff will provide written treatment information and instructions, including how to check and identify head lice.
3. A child who is sent home from school for head lice should miss no more than two (2) school days.
4. A child who has been sent from school due to head lice must come to the health office for inspection before returning to class.
5. A child who returns to class with nits (eggs) will be checked again in 7-10 days.
6. Families are encouraged to report head lice to the school health office.
7. Classroom-wide or school-wide head checks will be conducted as needed in order to control the condition at school.

#### Nurse and Medical Help

The DC West Community Schools employs a nurse who will service the Elementary, Middle, and High School buildings. Due to the multi-building responsibility, the nurse may be available on a limited basis. However, each building also has a Health Paraprofessional in their respective office who may be consulted for any illness or medical situation.

### **Section 4      Transportation Services**

Transportation to and from school is provided to students in accordance with law and Board policy. Students may also be provided transportation on field trips and when participating in school activities. DC West Schools contracts bus service for students. The following guidelines are established to maintain appropriate behavior and safety.

1. The schedule of bus stops will be established and made available to each family who has students utilizing bus service. This schedule may be adjusted as situations change.
2. Every effort will be made to maintain a schedule so as to get students to school on time and to return them home promptly. The bus will not leave the stops prior to the scheduled time, nor will it wait at any stop for late riders.
3. Buses shall not exceed the listed seating capacity. Non-bus students may ride the bus when space is available by providing a written request from parents to an administrator.

Students are expected to follow the following rules while riding school buses:

#### **Behavior on School Buses**

General Conduct Rules Apply: While riding a school bus, a student must follow the same student conduct rules which apply when the student is on school property or attending school activities, functions, or events. There are also special conduct rules for riding school buses. These rules also apply to riding other school vehicles.

Special Conduct Rules for Riding School Buses. Rules for

#### Getting On and Off the Bus

1. Be on time to be picked up. As a general rule, get to your bus stop five (5) minutes before your scheduled pick-up time. If you miss the bus, immediately return to your home, and tell your parents so they can take you to school.
2. While waiting for the bus, stay at least five (5) feet away from the street, road, or highway. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before approaching the bus. You may exit the bus only at your approved destination (your school or your approved bus stop). Exit the bus as directed by the driver. Do not run.
3. If you must cross the street after exiting the bus, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal to you before crossing the street.

#### Rules on the Bus

1. Be respectful of the bus driver. Immediately follow all directions of the driver and any paraeducator or adult on the bus.
2. No Standing on the bus
3. No jumping from seat to seat
4. Sit in your seat facing forward. Use seat belts in vehicles in which they are available. Keep the aisles clear.
5. Open and close windows only upon receiving permission from the driver.
6. Talk quietly and use appropriate language.
7. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
8. Keep your arms, legs, and belongings to yourself.
9. No fighting, harassment, bullying, intimidation, or horseplay.
10. Do not throw any object.
11. No eating or drinking
12. No use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or flammables.
13. Do not bring any weapon (real or imitation) or dangerous objects on the school bus.
14. Do not damage the school bus.
15. Actions on the bus are an extension and subject to the student code of conduct

#### Getting the Driver's Assistance:

If you need assistance from the driver, wait until the bus is at a full stop. If you are close enough, tell the driver what you need. If you are too far away for the driver to hear you, ask a student in front of you to get the driver's attention. If necessary, walk up to the driver, while the bus is at a full stop. If you need immediate assistance in an emergency, take all action needed to safely get the help of the driver.

#### Consequences for Rule Violations:

Consequences for school bus misconduct may include restriction or suspension of bus privileges and other disciplinary measures, up to and including expulsion from school.

The following procedures will be observed if a student breaks a bus rule. Each case will be handled individually. Due process procedure will be observed. Serious offenses may be subject to more severe consequences.

- First Offense: Warning and parent notification
- Second Offense: Up to 5 day suspension from the bus
- Third Offense: Up to 10 day suspension from the bus
- Fourth Offense: Suspension from the bus for up to the remainder of year

## **Section 5      School Resource Officer (SRO)**

SROs or police officers shall not be responsible for normal school discipline issues. SROs and police officers are primarily responsible for responding to criminal law matters where it is mandated by law that such offenses be referred to the criminal justice system. Absent an immediate threat of serious bodily injury and/or criminal law matters, school discipline issues should be addressed by school staff.

SROs or police officers who witness school rule/policy violations shall locate school personnel to respond to the situation. The SRO shall not act as a school disciplinarian. SROs should act as any school adult in redirecting minor misbehavior, and may choose to de-escalate a situation using conflict resolution techniques and leverage existing positive relationships with those involved. Incidents must be referred to school personnel to determine the appropriate response in relation to the School Code of Conduct.

## **Article 7 – Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco**

### **Section 1      Drug-Free Schools**

The District is a safe and drug-free schools zone. Any use, possession, distribution, manufacture, sale, consumption, or ingestion of illicit drugs or tobacco products on school grounds, at a school activity, or in a school vehicle is strictly prohibited.

### **Section 2      Education and Prevention**

The District promotes comprehensive, age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs. The curriculum includes the teaching of both proper and incorrect use of drugs and alcohol for all students in all grades.

Drug and Alcohol Education and Prevention Program of the District Pursuant to the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Laws and Regulations. All students will be provided with an age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention program. The program educates on the adverse effects of the use of illicit drugs and alcohol, with the primary objective being the prevention of illicit drug and alcohol use by students.

**Drug and Alcohol Counseling, Rehabilitation and Re-entry Programs.** Information concerning available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs is available to all of the students upon request of the Counselor.

**Safe and Drug-Free Schools—Parental Notice.** Pursuant to the provisions of federal law, if, upon receipt of information regarding the content of safe and drug free school programs and activities other than classroom instruction, a parent objects to the participation of their child in such programs and activities, then the parent may notify the District of such objection in writing. Upon receipt of such notice, the student will be withdrawn from the program or activity to which parental objection has been made.

**Section 3 Standards of Student Conduct Pertaining to Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco** The District prohibits the possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs (including electronic nicotine delivery systems) and alcohol on school premises, in school vehicles, or as a part of any of the school's activities on or off school premises. The conduct prohibited includes, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of any controlled substance, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, any hallucinogen, any stimulant, or any depressant.
2. Possession of any prescription drug in an unlawful fashion.
3. Possession, use, distribution or being under the influence of alcohol.
4. Possession, use, distribution, or being under the influence of any abusable glue or aerosol paint or any other chemical substance for inhalation, including but not limited to lighter fluid, whiteout, and reproduction fluid, when such activity constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes.
5. Possession, use, or distribution of any look-alike drug or look-alike controlled substance when such activity constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes.
6. Possession, use or distribution of any tobacco product.

### **Disciplinary Sanctions**

Violation of any of the above prohibited conduct will result in student discipline, up to and including expulsion and referral to appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution. In particular, students should be aware that:

1. Violation of these standards may result in suspension or expulsion.
2. Prohibited substances will be confiscated and unlawful substances will be turned over to law enforcement authorities.
3. The student may be referred for counseling or treatment.
4. Parents or legal guardians will be notified.
5. Law enforcement will be notified.
6. If it appears there is imminent danger to the student, other students, school personnel, or students involved, emergency medical services will be contacted.

## Article 8 – Student Code of Conduct

### Section 1 Purpose

DC West Community Schools believes that a positive learning and teaching environment is created through mutual respect for all and that physical and emotional safety is essential for learning. The Student Code of Conduct is designed to support these beliefs by developing, through reasonable and consistent practices, appropriate student behavior. The behaviors and disciplinary actions identified in the Code of Conduct are designed to promote learning experiences for students. Compliance with the Student Code of Conduct is expected of all students. Administrators will consider student age and grade-level, along with other factors, when assigning disciplinary actions.

### Section 2 Multi-Tiered System of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B)

The DC West Community Schools are committed to creating a learning environment where every individual is valued, respected, and supported. The district's Code of Conduct was created within the context of the district's Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Behavior (MTSS-B), which emphasizes the shared responsibility of individuals for their actions and their ability to learn, grow, and thrive. It provides a framework for encouraging positive behavior, addressing challenges in a caring and constructive way, and ensuring safe and supportive school and classroom environments.

DC West MTSS- is a 3-Tier Model that provides comprehensive, quality instruction to all students from preschool through high school. The model is designed to provide evidence-based instruction, targeted supports, and intensive interventions that lead to successful academic and behavioral achievement.

#### Tier 1: Universal Instruction and Supports:

- School-Wide Expectations that clarify expected student behaviors for the school.
- Direct teaching of the Falcon Way expected behaviors
- Elementary and Middle School Responsive Classroom model
- Elementary and Middle Second Step Social-Emotional Curriculum Implementation
- High rates of positive adult attention and feedback for appropriate, expected behaviors.
- Schoolwide values that clarify expected student behaviors: Falcon Way
- Restorative Practices

#### Tier 2: Targeted Intervention and Supports

- Counselor - evidence-based small groups
- Skybound Mentoring
- Zones of Regulation
- Data Collection and Progress Monitoring
- Check-In/Check-Out

#### Tier 3: Intensive Instruction and Intervention

- Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plans
- Behavior Skills-Focused Classroom
- Licensed Mental Health Therapist
- Behavior Plan Data Collection and Progress Monitoring

### **Section 3 Social Emotional Learning**

In addition to MTSS-B, the DC West Community Schools supports Social Emotional Learning through curriculum strategies, and resources. Social Emotional Learning is the process through which students acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to manage their emotions, achieve goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions. Our goal at DC West Community Schools is to focus on five competencies:

- Self Awareness
- Self Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision Making

MTSS-B and Social Emotional Learning work together to support student success in academics, behavior, attendance, and overall well-being.

### **Section 4 Expectations for All**

**The Student Is Expected to:**

1. Behave according to The Falcon Way.
2. Respectful and Responsible, Inclusive, Safe, and Engaged
3. Follow expectations, guidelines, rules and regulations established by the School and District.
4. Attend school daily on time; and
5. Adhere to a high personal standard of academic effort and achievement. The

**Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Are Expected to:**

1. Set an example of respecting the worth of other persons.
2. Review school expectations, guidelines, rules and regulations with student and family members;
3. Collaborate with school staff;
4. Seek help from school and community agencies when necessary to support a student's achievement:
5. Inform school staff of concerns relating to student needs; and
6. Make sure the student attends school daily on time. The

**Teacher Is Expected to:**

1. Treat each child with dignity and respect.
2. Teach and positively reinforce the expectations outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
3. Review the school expectations, procedures, and routines with students;
4. Establish and maintain an atmosphere of high achievement and appropriate behavior in the learning environment.
5. Communicate with students and parent(s)/guardian(s) regularly about student behavior and academic progress; and
6. Report frequent student misbehavior promptly to the school office, and report immediately any misbehavior that will or may result in expulsion or suspension.

**The Principal Is Expected to:**

1. Establish building-wide values and expectations, procedures, and routines with input from school staff and in alignment with district policies and procedures.
2. Communicate building expectations, procedures, and routines as well as the Student

- Code of Conduct to parent(s)/guardian(s), staff, and students.
- 3. Consistently enforce building-wide expectations and the Student Code of Conduct; and
- 4. Collaborate with parent(s)/guardian(s) and teachers regarding student behavior problems. The

**Board of Education and District Administration** are Expected to:

- 1. Establish school district policy relative to student behavior and discipline.
- 2. Train and support school administrators in appropriate application of the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Section 5 Behavior Violations & Response Levels**

The Student Code of Conduct is organized around levels of interventions and responses to behavior violations. Violations are organized alphabetically and include behaviors ranging from those that can be managed in the classroom to more serious incidents that may require an administrative response. Applying a leveled intervention and response to behavior violations supports a teaching and learning approach to managing behavior in our schools. School administration considers the least restrictive resolutions to managing behavior violations.

When determining a resolution for a behavior violation of the Student Code of Conduct, school administration will consider:

- the age and experience of the student;
- the developmental level of the student;
- the student's intent;
- the severity of the circumstances;
- the impact of disruption to the school environment (including behavior after the initial incident);
- the repeated nature of the situation (if applicable); and
- other mitigating factors.

Interventions that may be applied to address behavior labeled in leveled categories in Level 1-4. Interventions listed are guidelines and school administration may apply a more or less severe resolution depending on the situation.

**Level 1** interventions aim to teach alternative behavior so students can learn and demonstrate safe, respectful, and responsible behavior. Staff members are encouraged to try a variety of teaching and classroom management strategies, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) conference or contact made
- Expectations established and taught (The Falcon Way: RISE & SOAR)
- Positive rapport/relationship
- Re-teaching, prompting, and feedback
- Effective classroom supervision
- Verbal correction
- Collaborative problem solving
- Written reflection or apology
- Classroom Interventions
- Calm Corner
- Positive referral
- Teacher or student conference

- Detention
- Classroom contribution/service
- Skills Teaching/Social Emotional Learning
- Responsive Classroom model (e.g., Morning Meeting, Calm Corner)
- School-wide incentive programs (e.g., FalCoins and FalCash)
- Keystone & Advisory SEL Support

**Level 2** interventions often involve the family, support staff from both school-based and community settings, and/or the administrator. These interventions aim to enhance the student's skills, positive view of schooling, and positive experiences at school, thereby reducing the likelihood of misbehavior continuing or escalating.

In-school suspension may be applied due to the severity or chronic nature of an individual's behavior. In cases of multiple infractions, an assistance plan may be developed.

Level 2 interventions may include, but are not limited to:

- Parent/guardian collaboration (a parent/guardian meeting is a recommended element of response to chronic misbehavior)
- School or Community Counselor support (e.g., small group/ individual)
- Behavior card
- Change in schedule or class
- Consultation with School Psychologist
- Mentoring
- In-School Suspension
- Referral to a school-based mental health therapist
- After-school program (e.g., Falcons Nest)
- Service to School/Service to Community
- Conflict resolution
- Loss of school privileges
- Bus suspension
- Revision of Individual Educational Plan (IEP)/504 Plan
- Referral to a community agency
- Late School
- Additional restorative practices that teach desired behaviors and repair the relationship
- Check in/ Check out

**Level 3** violations may result in the short-term removal of a student from the school environment due to the severity of the behavior. The duration of the short-term suspension, if issued, is to be as limited as possible while adequately addressing the behavior. In cases of repeated need for short-term suspension, an assistance plan (such as a Behavior Intervention Plan or a Functional Individual Problem-Solving Plan) should be developed. Interventions for Level 3 Violations may include, but are not limited to:

- Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) collaboration meeting
- Plan of assistance (Behavior Intervention Plan, Falcon Individual Problem Solving Plan)
- Consult with a school psychologist
- Restitution
- Communication with law enforcement (as needed)

- Behavior Skills-Focused Classroom (Elementary Only) (\*IEP Team decision only)
- Falcon Achievement Center
- Short-term suspension

**Level 4** violations have the potential to impact the safety of the school environment significantly. These violations may result in the removal of a student from the school environment due to the severity of the behavior. Such violations may involve reassigning a student to an alternative program. These interventions focus on maintaining the safety of the school community and correcting self-destructive and dangerous behavior.

A long-term suspension may be applied when it is feasible to reintegrate the student back into the school environment. Reassignment may be used when chronic misbehaviors are present and school staff have documented efforts to intervene and support the development of acceptable behavior.

Expulsion may be applied when a student's presence at school is deemed too dangerous or disruptive for staff to maintain a safe and positive climate. Upon returning to a traditional school setting after expulsion, the school staff will establish a plan of support (e.g., an early intervention or safety plan) to ensure the student's ongoing success at school.

Violence against school staff is an egregious act that not only jeopardizes the safety and well-being of individuals but also undermines the foundations of our ongoing efforts to maintain a safe and secure environment conducive to teaching and learning. Because intentional and knowing violence against a staff member is highly disruptive to the learning environment, it may result in consequences, including expulsion in grades where these consequences are available, even in cases of first offense. As in every disciplinary situation, student age, developmental level, the severity of the circumstances, and other mitigating factors will be considered.

Interventions for Level 4 Violations may include, but are not limited to:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) notification
- Long-Term Suspension
- Assignment to an Alternative to Suspension Program
- Expulsion
- For students in grades K-5, expulsion will not be a consequence for violating the Student Code of Conduct, except in cases of knowingly and intentionally possessing a firearm.
- Referral to the IEP team (students with disabilities) for manifestation determination
- Alternative educational placement
- Communication with law enforcement (as needed)

### Behavior Violations and Response Levels

Conduct Violations	Response Levels			
	1	2	3	4
<b>Absence or Tardiness, Excessive</b> In accordance with Student Attendance Policy 5008, school staff will intervene when a pattern of attendance emerges that is concerning or seems counter to the student's continued school success	x	x		
<b>Alcohol and Drugs, Possession or Under the Influence</b> Drugs, alcoholic beverages, controlled or imitation controlled substances, or other mood-altering chemicals *See page 23 of handbook	x	x	x	x

<b>Arson</b> Intentionally setting or attempting to set a fire on or in school property		x	x	x
<b>Assault</b> No Injury- Attempting to cause injury to another person, including staff; by knowingly and intentionally using force that places another person in reasonable apprehension of imminent personal injury		x	x	x
<b>Assault with Injury (Intentional)</b> Assault of another person, including staff, when the student has knowingly and intentionally used force to cause personal injury			x	x
<b>Bullying</b> Any intentional ongoing pattern of written or verbal expression, electronic abuse, physical acts, or gestures intended to cause distress/harm upon one or more students and includes an imbalance of power *Board Policy 5415		x	x	x
<b>Bus Misconduct</b> Activity on the bus which is unsafe; refusal to follow directions of the driver or aide *See page 21 of handbook	x	x		
<b>Careless Driving</b> Driving on school grounds carelessly or without due caution so as to endanger a person or property		x		
<b>Cheating or Plagiarizing</b> Academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, copying the work of others on school assignments or tests, and using the ideas of writings of another person *See page 39 of the handbook	x	x		
<b>Classroom Disruption/ Other Behavior Disruptive to the School Environment</b>	x	x		
<b>Damage to School, Staff or Student Property</b> Willfully or recklessly causing or attempting to cause damage		x	x	
<b>Disrespectful to Adults/ Others</b> Using words or actions that are impolite or indicate a lack of respect or courtesy	x	x		
<b>Distribution</b> Selling, Distributing, Intent to Distribute, or Attempting to Distribute Alcoholic Beverages, or a Controlled/ Imitation Controlled Substance *Law Enforcement will be Contacted			x	x
<b>Dress Code/Inappropriate Clothing</b> Words or images that promote alcohol, drug use, weapons, insult or demean others, or disrupt the school environment are not acceptable at school *Board Policy 5101 *See page 38 of the handbook	x			
<b>Excessive Tardies/ Hall Sweep</b> Arriving late to class excessively, as determined by individual school procedures or is caught in the hallway by school staff after the tardy bell has rung	x	x		
<b>Exposure to Bodily Fluid</b> Intentionally creating or attempting to create an exposure to bodily fluids, including but not limited to, spitting, throwing, wiping, or otherwise dispersing bodily fluids on or to		x	x	x
another person for any reason				

<b>Failure to Serve Detention</b> Student does not serve an assigned detention, whether it is scheduled during the school day or after school hours	x	x		
<b>False Alarm/ Bomb Threat</b> Causing a substantial disruption to the school environment and/or placing students at risk by making a false report or activating an alarm			x	x
<b>False Allegations Against Staff</b> Any knowingly or recklessly false allegation against a staff member, written, spoken or otherwise communicated which is harmful to the reputation of the staff member, or which may impede the ability of the staff member to perform assigned duties		x	x	x
<b>Fighting, Less Serious</b> Mutual physical combat that does not result in injury or a substantial disruption to the school environment, other than the disruption of the fight itself		x	x	
<b>Fighting, Serious</b> Mutual physical combat that results in injury, creates a substantial disruption involving large numbers of students, and/or results in the potential for continued fighting		x	x	x
<b>Firearm</b> Knowing and intentional possession, use or transmission of a firearm as defined in 18 U.S. Code 921 *Board Policy 5101 *Law Enforcement Will Be Contacted				x
<b>Harassment</b> Any physical, verbal, graphic, electronic, or written material or behavior, which may be related, but not limited to a person's disability, gender, race, color, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, or marital status which has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment		x	x	x
<b>Inappropriate Language</b> Using inappropriate words or topics of conversation in school	x			
<b>Inappropriate Public Display of Affection Kissing, touching, fondling or other displays of affection that would be reasonably considered to be embarrassing or a distraction to others.</b>	x	x	x	
<b>Insubordination/Non-Compliance with Behavioral Expectations</b> <b>Failure to comply with the instructions of school staff when current behavior prevents success of the student or impacts learning</b>	x	x	x	
<b>Misuse of Computers, Digital Devices, or Network</b> Creation or access of inappropriate material; vandalizing; gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access; using computers, digital devices or networks for harassing or threatening or other non-educational purpose	x	x	x	
<b>Misuse of Pass/ Out of Area</b> Student is out of the assigned area during the school day, uses a hall pass in a way not intended by the issuer	x	x		
<b>Possession of Obscene or Pornographic Literature, Materials,or Electronic Images</b> The possessing, taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise *Board Policy 6800		x	x	

<b>Reckless Behavior</b> Recklessness involves the creation of an unjustifiable risk of harm to others and a conscious (and sometimes deliberate) disregard for or indifference to that risk, resulting in substantial disruption	x	x	x	
<b>Reckless Behavior Resulting in Personal Injury</b> Recklessness involves the creation of an unjustifiable risk of harm to others and a conscious (and sometimes deliberate) disregard for or indifference to that risk resulting in personal injury		x	x	x
<b>Sexual Assault</b> Sexual Assault in the first or second degree as defined in Nebraska Statutes 28-319 thru 28-320.01 *Law Enforcement Will Be Contacted				x
<b>Sexual Misconduct/Public Indecency</b> Behaviors described in Nebraska Statute 28-806 except that this violation shall apply only to students at least 12 years of age. For students under age 12, other violations may apply		x	x	x
<b>Theft Stealing or attempting to steal property</b>	x	x	x	
<b>Threats, Intimidation, or Extortion</b> Use or threat of violence, force, intimidation or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes substantial interference with school purposes. Threats may include behavior, verbal, written and/or physical action		x	x	x
<b>Tobacco and Vapor Devices, Use of</b> To include students found to be in use of tobacco, vapor devices or any product that may be used to distribute tobacco in any form, including the use of vapor products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, or alternative nicotine products while in the school building, on school grounds or at school activities	x	x		
<b>Trespassing</b> To enter or remain on any school district property or property where a school event is being held without authorization and with no legitimate purpose for entry *Law Enforcement May Be Contacted *Board Policy 3250		x	x	x
<b>Truancy</b> Neither the family nor school officials know the student's whereabouts or the student is refusing to attend school or class	x	x		
<b>Unauthorized Entry</b> Allowing or assisting any individual to enter a district building other than through the designated entrances or that breaches any method of established security		x	x	x
<b>Unauthorized Use of Camera, Video Device, Personal Device that Attaches to School/District Network, Cell Phone or Recording Device</b> Student use of cameras/video devices without explicit, prior written authorization of the principal is prohibited	x	x		
<b>Unlawful Activity</b> Engaging in any activity forbidden by state or federal law and not otherwise specifically		x	x	x
included in this Code which creates potential danger in the school environment or interferes with school purposes *Law Enforcement May Be Contacted				

<b>Verbal Conflict</b> Disrupting the school environment by engaging in a loud argument that includes disparaging comments or discussion of potential physical conflict	x	x		
<b>Vulgarity/Profanity</b> Written or oral language that is disgusting and/or repulsive, but does not constitute harassment	x	x		
<b>Weapon (other than firearm)</b> Knowing and intentional possession, handling, transmission, or use of any knife or dangerous weapon *Law Enforcement May Be Contacted			x	x
<b>Willfully or recklessly causing or attempting to cause damage</b>		x	x	

## **Section 6        Forms of School Discipline [Board Policy 5101](#)**

Students who violate the student conduct rules may be subject to the following forms of discipline:  
See the District Student Code of Conduct for additional information

### **Short-Term Suspension:**

Students may be excluded by the Principal or the Principal's designee from school or any school function for a period of up to five (5) school days (short-term suspension) on the following grounds:

1. Conduct that constitutes grounds for expulsion, whether the conduct occurs on or off school grounds; or
2. Other violations of rules and standards of behavior adopted by the Board of Education or the administrative or teaching staff of the school, which occur on or off school grounds, if such conduct interferes with school purposes or there is a nexus between such conduct and school.

The following process will apply to short-term suspensions:

1. The Principal or the Principal's designee will make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. A short-term suspension will be made upon a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.
2. Prior to commencement of the short-term suspension, 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, but not more than 48 hours, following the suspension, 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 short-term suspension

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. The Principal shall document their attempt to make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parent or guardian.

5. A student on a short-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, no pre-kindergarten through second grade student may be short-term suspended from school, unless the student brings a deadly weapon on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or to a school activity. Instead, the Principal or Principal's designee may implement alternative disciplinary measures on a case-by-case basis if a pre-kindergarten through second grade student engages in misconduct that would otherwise result in a short-term suspension. If a pre-kindergarten through second grade student brings a deadly weapon on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or to a school activity, then the student may be suspended or expelled in accordance with these disciplinary procedures.

**Long-Term Suspension:**

A long-term suspension means an exclusion from school and any school functions for a period of more than five (5) school days but less than twenty (20) school days. A student who is on a long-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal. Pursuant to the Nebraska Student Discipline Act, a notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the Principal recommends a long-term suspension. The notice will include a description of the procedures for long-term suspension; the procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.

**Expulsion:**

**Meaning of Expulsion:**

Expulsion means exclusion from attendance in all schools, grounds and activities of or within the system for a period not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which it took effect unless the misconduct occurred (a) within ten (10) school days prior to the end of the first semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect through the second semester, or (b) within ten (10) school days prior to the end of the second semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for summer school and the first semester of the following school year, or (c) unless the expulsion is for conduct specified in these rules or in law as permitting or requiring a longer removal, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for the period specified therein. Such action may be modified or terminated by the school district at any time during the expulsion period. A student who has been expelled shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the express permission of the Principal. A notice will be given to the student and the parents/guardian when the Principal recommends an expulsion. The notice will include a description of the procedures for expulsion; the procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.

**Suspension Pending Hearing:**

When a notice of intent to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment is filed with the superintendent, the student may be suspended by the principal until the date the long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment takes effect if the

principal determines that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of (a) interference with an educational function or school purpose or (b) a personal injury to the student himself or herself, other students, school employees, or school volunteers. If the student is suspended pending the outcome of the hearing, the student may complete classwork and homework, including, but not limited to, examinations missed during the period of suspension. During this period, the student will not be required to attend the alternative programs for expelled students in order to complete classwork or homework.

Summer Review.

Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first semester of the following school year will be automatically scheduled for review before the beginning of the school year in accordance with law.

Alternative Education:

Students who are expelled may be offered an alternative education program that will enable the student to continue academic work for credit toward graduation. A student will not be required to attend the alternative education program to complete classwork and homework. In the event an alternative education program is not provided, a conference will be held with the parent, student, the Principal, or another school representative assigned by the Principal, and a representative of a community organization that assists young people or that is involved with juvenile justice to develop a plan for the student in accordance with law.

Suspension of Enforcement of an Expulsion:

Enforcement of an expulsion action may be suspended (i.e., "stayed") if the Superintendent approves the suspension of an expulsion. As a condition of such suspended action, the student and parents will be required to sign a discipline agreement.

Returning from Expulsion.

At the conclusion of an expulsion, the District will reinstate the student and accept non duplicative, grade-appropriate credits earned by the student during the term of expulsion from any Nebraska accredited institution or institution accredited by one (1) of the six (6) regional accrediting bodies in the United States.

Emergency Exclusion:

A 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.

Any emergency exclusion shall be based upon a clear factual situation warranting it and shall last no longer than is necessary to avoid the dangers described above.

If the emergency exclusion will be for five (5) school days or less, the procedures for a short-term suspension shall be followed. If the Superintendent or designee determines that an emergency exclusion shall extend beyond five days, a hearing may, upon a parent or guardian's request, be held and a final determination made within ten (10) school days after the initial date of exclusion. Such appeal procedures shall substantially comply with the procedures set forth in this Handbook for a long-term suspension or expulsion and be modified by the Board of Education only to the extent necessary to accomplish the hearing and determination within this shorter time period.

**Other Forms of Student Discipline:**

Administrative and teaching personnel may also take actions regarding student behavior, other than removal of students from school, which are reasonably necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, counseling of students, parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may also include in-school suspensions. When in-school suspensions, after-school assignments, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures. A failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school.

**Student Conduct Expectations.**

Students are not to engage in conduct which causes, or which creates a reasonable likelihood that it will cause, a substantial disruption in or material interference with any school function, activity or purpose or interfere with the health, safety, well-being or rights of other students, staff, or visitors.

**Grounds for Short-Term Suspension, Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion or Mandatory Reassignment.**

The following conduct has been determined by the Board of Education to have the potential to seriously affect the health, safety or welfare of students, staff, and other persons or to interfere with the educational process otherwise seriously. Such conduct constitutes grounds for long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, and any other lesser forms of discipline. The conduct is subject to the consequence of long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment where it occurs on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the school and being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle being driven for a school purpose by a school employee or an employee's designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event.

1. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
2. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, harassment, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes or making any communication that a reasonable recipient would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another.

3. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, repeated damage or theft involving property, or setting or attempting to set a fire of any magnitude.
4. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person, including any school employee, school volunteer, or student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person shall not constitute a violation of this subdivision.
5. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student or making a threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations.
6. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon or that has the appearance of a weapon or bringing or possessing any explosive device, including fireworks.
7. Engaging in selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of alcohol, tobacco, narcotics, drugs, controlled substance, or an inhalant; being under the influence of any of the above; possession of drug paraphernalia, or the selling, using, possessing, or dispensing of an imitation controlled substance as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, or material represented to be alcohol, narcotics, drugs, a controlled substance or inhalant. Tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), electronic nicotine delivery systems, alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. Use of a controlled substance in the manner prescribed for the student by the student's physician is not a violation. The term "under the influence" has a less strict meaning than it does under criminal law; for school purposes, the term means any level of impairment and includes even the odor of alcohol or illegal substances on the breath or person of a student; also, it includes being impaired by reason of the abuse of any material used as a stimulant.
8. Public indecency or sexual conduct. This includes "deep fakes" or other computer generated images of other students or staff intended to bully, harass, intimidate, or humiliate another student or staff member.
9. Engaging in bullying, which includes any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or a school employee's designee, or at school-sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events.
10. Sexually assaulting or attempting to sexually assault any person. This conduct may result in an expulsion regardless of the time or location of the offense if a complaint alleging such conduct is filed in a court of competent jurisdiction.
11. Engaging in any activity forbidden by law which constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes. This conduct may result in an expulsion regardless of the time or location of the offense if the conduct creates or has the potential to create a substantial interference with school purposes, such as the use of the telephone or internet off-school grounds to threaten.
12. A repeated violation of any rules established by the school district or school officials if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes including (but not limited to) a violation of the District's dress code and electronic communication device rules.

13. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.
14. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, which is profane or abusive to students or staff members. Profane or abusive language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), gender, disability, national origin, or religion.
15. Willfully violating behavioral expectations for riding school buses or vehicles.

In addition to the foregoing, a student who engages in the following conduct shall be expelled for the remainder of the school year in which it took effect if the misconduct occurs during the first semester, and if the expulsion for such conduct takes place during the second semester, the expulsion shall remain in effect for the first semester of the following school year, with the condition that such action may be modified or terminated by the school district during the expulsion period on such terms as the administration may establish:

1. The knowing and intentional use of force in causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, school volunteer, or student, except if caused by accident, self-defense, or on the reasonable belief that the force used was necessary to protect some other person and the extent of force used was reasonably believed to be necessary, or
2. The known and intentional possession, use, or transmission of a dangerous weapon other than a firearm. The term “dangerous weapon” includes any personal safety or security device (such as tasers, mace, and pepper spray). If a student desires to carry or possess a personal safety or security device, the student must obtain prior approval from the building principal before bringing such device to school grounds. If a student obtains prior approval from the building principal, the student must store the device during the school day in the student’s locker, in the main office or in another secure location designated by the building principal. A student shall not carry a personal safety or security device during the school day.

Further, a student will be expelled for one (1) calendar year if the student knowingly and intentionally possesses, uses, or transmits a firearm on school grounds, in a school-owned or utilized vehicle, or during an educational function or event off school grounds, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event. The term “firearm” means a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, as that statute existed on January 1, 1995. The only exception to this rule is if the student obtains prior written permission to bring the firearm on school grounds by the Superintendent for a school-related purpose.

#### Additional Student Conduct Expectations and Grounds for Discipline.

The following additional student conduct expectations are established. Failure to comply with such rules may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including an expulsion.

#### Student Appearance:

Students are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for the school setting. Students should not dress in a manner that is reasonably forecasted to interfere with the learning environment or teaching process in our school. The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of attire that are not appropriate at school:

1. Clothing that shows an inappropriate amount of bare skin or underwear or clothing that is too tight, revealing or baggy, or tops and bottoms that do not overlap or any material that is sheer

or lightweight enough to be seen through, or otherwise of an appropriate size and fit so as to be revealing or drag on the ground.

2. Clothing or jewelry that advertises or promotes beer, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs.
3. Clothing or jewelry that could be used as a weapon (chains, spiked apparel) or that would encourage “horseplay” or that would damage property (e.g. cleats).
4. Headwear including hats, caps, and bandannas.
5. Clothing or jewelry which exhibits nudity, makes sexual references, or carries lewd, indecent, or vulgar double meaning.
6. Clothing or jewelry that is gang related.

A student who is a member of an indigenous tribe of the United States or another country may wear tribal regalia in any location where the student is authorized to be on such school grounds or at any school function, as long as the tribal regalia does not interfere with the educational process and does not endanger another person, as determined by the administration. Further, students will also be permitted to wear attire, including religious attire, natural and protective hairstyles, adornments or other characteristics associated with race, national origin, or religion, as long as the attire does not interfere with the educational process and does not endanger another person, as determined by the administration.

No student shall be disproportionately affected by a dress code or grooming policy enforcement because of the student's gender, race, color, religion, disability, or national origin.

No school staff shall permanently or temporarily alter or cut a student's hair.

The final decision regarding attire and grooming will be made by the Principal or Superintendent. In the event a student is uncertain as to whether a particular item or method of grooming is consistent with the school's guidelines, the student should contact the Principal for approval.

A student dress code violation will be treated as a minor rule violation and may not require the student to miss substantial classroom time, instructional time, or school activities. However, a repeated violation of school rules may subject the student to further discipline, as outlined in this Policy.

### **Academic Integrity.**

Students are expected to abide by the standards of academic integrity established by their teachers and school administration. Standards of academic integrity are established 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:

- “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:
- Tests (includes tests, quizzes and other examinations or academic performances):
  - 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.
  - Use of Unauthorized Materials: Using notes, textbooks, pre-programmed formulae 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.
  - 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 paper.
  - Use of Other Student to Take Test: 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.
  - 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.
- Papers (includes papers, essays, lab projects, and other similar academic work):
  - 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.
  - Re-use of One’s Own Papers: Using a substantial portion of a piece of work previously submitted for another course or program to meet the requirements of the present course or program without notifying the instructor to whom the work is presented.
  - Assistance from Others: Having another person assist with the paper to such an extent that the work does not truly reflect the student’s work. For example, a student engages in cheating if the student has a draft essay reviewed by the student’s parent or sibling, and the essay is substantially re-written by the

student's parent or sibling. Assistance from home is encouraged, but the work must remain the student's.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- “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:
  - 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 the use of outside sources. To avoid plagiarism, the student must either place the work in quotations or give a citation to the outside source.
  - 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.
- “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:
  - 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 standard, the instructor will assign a grade which the instructor determines to be appropriate for the work.
  - 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.
  - 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.

**Inappropriate Public Displays of Affection (IPDA):** Students are not to engage in inappropriate public displays of affection on school property or at school activities. Such conduct includes kissing, touching, fondling or other displays of affection that would be reasonably considered to be embarrassing or a distraction to others. Students will face the following consequences for IPDA:

1. 1st Offense: Student will be directed to stop.
2. 2nd Offense: Student will be directed to stop, and parents will be notified.
3. 3rd Offense: Student may be suspended from school for a minimum of one (1) day, and parents and student will need to meet with the administration to address the ongoing conduct.

If this type of behavior continues, or if the IPDA is lewd or constitutes sexual conduct, the student could face long-term suspension or expulsion.

#### **Law Violations**

Any act of a student which is a basis for expulsion and which the Principal or designee knows or suspects is a violation of the Nebraska Criminal Code will be reported to law enforcement as soon as possible.

#### **Anti-Bullying: [Board Policy 5415](#)**

One of the missions of the District is to provide safe and secure environments for all students and staff. Bullying means any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or designee, or at school-sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events. Students who are the victim of bullying or harassment or who observe such occurring are to promptly report the problem to their teacher or to the Principal so the problem can be addressed. Students who make reports of bullying activity will not be retaliated against for making the report. The district's anti-bullying policy is available for review on the District's website.

#### **Network, E-Mail, Internet, and Other Computer Use Rules:**

1. The network is provided to staff and students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to network services is given to staff and students who have agreed to act in a responsible manner. Access for all staff and students is a privilege and not a right.
2. Individual users of the district network are responsible for their behavior, actions, problems, and communications involving and over the network. Users will comply with district rules and will honor the agreements they have signed. Beyond clarification of such rules, the district is not responsible for restricting, monitoring, editing, or controlling the information, equipment or communications of individuals utilizing the network or the end product or result of such utilization.

3. Network storage areas shall be treated like school lockers for students. Network administrators may review files, information, equipment, messages and communications of staff and students to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the network system responsibly. Users should not expect that files or any information stored or otherwise used or retained on the network, district servers, or in computers, will be private. No reasonable expectation of privacy shall exist in relation to network use.
4. Users should not expect, and the district does not warrant, any information or products obtained from the network, that files or information stored, obtained, or used on the network will be private, and use of the network waives and relinquishes all such privacy rights, interests or claims to confidentiality the user may have under state or federal law.
5. The district will not be liable for, and does not warrant in any way, purchases made by any user over the network. Users shall not make purchases of goods and/or services via the district's network.

#### Rules for Acceptable Use of Computers and the Network:

The following rules for acceptable use of computers and the network, including Internet, shall apply to all students:

1. Students shall not erase, remake, or make unusable anyone else's computer, information, files, or programs.
2. Students shall not let other people use their name, account, log-on password, or files for any reason (except for authorized staff members).
3. Students shall not use or try to discover another user's account or password.
4. Students shall not use the computer for unlawful purposes, such as illegal copying or installation of unauthorized software.
5. Students shall not copy, change, or transfer any software or documentation provided by teachers, or other students without permission from the network administrators.
6. Students shall not write, produce, generate, copy, propagate, or attempt to introduce any computer code, software or information designed to self-replicate, damage, or otherwise hinder the performance of the network or any computer's memory, file system, or software.
7. Students shall not use the computer to annoy or harass others with language, images, or threats. Users shall not access, accept, create, or send any obscene, vulgar, lewd, tasteless, or objectionable messages, information, language, or images.
8. Students shall not damage the network or equipment, damage information belonging to others, misuse network resources, or allow others to misuse network resources.

#### **Article 9 – Student Fees Policy: [Board Policy 5416](#)**

The District's general policy is to provide free instruction in school in accordance with the Nebraska Constitution and state and federal law. This generally means that the District's policy is to provide free instruction for courses which are required by state law or regulation and to provide the staff, facility, equipment, and materials necessary for such instruction, without charge or fee to the students.

Under the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act, the District has set forth in policy its guidelines or policies for specific categories of student fees. This policy is subject to further interpretation or guidance by administrative or Board regulations which may be adopted from time to time. The policy includes specifics of student fees and materials required of students for the current school year. Parents, guardians, and students are encouraged to contact their building administration or their teachers or activity coaches and sponsors for further specifics. The District's entire Student Fees Policy is available on the District's website.

## **Article 10 – State and Federal Programs**

### **Section 1      Notice of Nondiscrimination [Board Policy 5401](#)**

The School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, sexual orientation or gender identity, or other protected status in the admission, access to its facilities or programs or activities, treatment, or employment.

### **Section 2      Designation of Coordinators**

Any person having concerns or needing information about the District's compliance with anti-discrimination laws or policies should contact the District's designated Coordinator for the applicable anti-discrimination law.

Law, Policy, or Program	Issue or Concern	Coordinator
Title VI	Discrimination or harassment based on race (including skin color, hair texture and protective hairstyles), color, or national origin; harassment	Dr. Melissa Poloncic, Superintendent
Title IX	Discrimination or harassment based on sex; gender equity	Dr. Dawn Marten, Director of Learning
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Discrimination, harassment, or reasonable accommodations of persons with disabilities	Nicki Pechous, Director of Special Education
Homeless student laws	Children who are homeless	Dr. Melissa Poloncic, Superintendent
Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities	Safe and drug free schools	Dr. Melissa Poloncic, Superintendent

The Coordinator may be contacted at: DC West Community Schools, 401 S. Pine Street, Valley, NE 68064 (402) 359-2583.

### **Section 3      Multicultural**

The philosophy of the District's multicultural education program is that students will have improved ability to function as productive members of society when provided with: (a) an

understanding of diverse cultures and races, the manner in which the existence of diverse cultures and races have affected the history of our Nation and the world, and of the contributions made by diverse cultures and races (including but not be limited to African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and European Americans) and (b) with the ability and skills to be sensitive toward and to study, work and live successively with persons of diverse cultures and races. The mission shall also include preparing students to eliminate stereotypes and discrimination, or harassment of others based on ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, age, or disability.

#### **Section 4      Notice to Parents of Rights Afforded by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

The following is a description of the rights granted to qualifying students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The intent of the law is to keep you fully informed concerning the decisions about your child and to inform you of your rights if you disagree with any of these decisions. You have the right to:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from, public education programs without discrimination because of his/her disability.
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law.
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child.
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education.
5. Have your child receive services and be educated in facilities which are comparable to those provided to every student.
6. Have evaluation, educational and placement decisions made based on a variety of information sources and by persons who know the student and who are knowledgeable about the evaluation data and placement options.
7. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting (if the setting is a program not operated by the district) at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if the student were placed in a program operated by the district.
8. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities offered by the district.
9. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, and placement.
10. Request mediation or an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement. (You and your child may take part in the hearing. Hearing requests are to be made to the Superintendent.)
11. File a local grievance.

#### **Section 5      Notification of Rights Under FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the District receives a request for access.

- a. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading at the time the record was created.
  - a. Parents or eligible students may ask the School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
  - a. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests or otherwise allowed by law. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.
  - b. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.\Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another School District in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Office of the Chief Privacy Officer  
U.S. Department of Education 400  
Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

#### **Notice Concerning Directory Information**

The District may disclose directory information. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the District to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples may include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Under FERPA, “directory information” is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent.

Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. The types of personally identifiable information that the District has designated as directory information are as follows:

1. Student’s Name, address, telephone number, and the name, address, telephone number, e-mail address and work or other contact information of the student’s parent/guardian or other adult acting in loco parentis or with authority to act as parent or guardian in educational matters for the student;
2. School and dates of attendance;
3. Student’s current grade;
4. Student’s enrollment status (e.g. full-time or part-time);
5. Student’s date of birth and place of birth;
6. Student’s extra-curricular participation;
7. Student’s achievement awards or honors;
8. Student’s weight and height if a member of an athletic team; and
9. Student’s photograph.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District does not designate as directory information personally identifiable information from students’ education records where the District determines that the disclosure to the potential recipient poses a risk to student safety or well-being, including but not limited to circumstances where the potential recipient is a registered sex offender and the personally identifiable information would permit the potential recipient to communicate with or otherwise contact the student or would otherwise not be in a student’s best interests.

A parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to let the District designate information about the student as directory information. Parents or guardians may refuse to allow their student’s information to be designated as “directory information” at any time during the school year, so long as the parent or guardian notifies the Superintendent in writing.

## **Section 6      Military Recruiters**

The District will provide military recruiters with access to routine directory information of each high school student unless the student’s parent or guardian requests in writing that their student’s information not be shared with a military recruiter. Parents and guardians who do not want their student’s information to be shared with a military recruiter must notify the high school principal in writing. If a parent or guardian does not notify the high school principal in writing, the District will provide a military recruiter with the student’s routine directory information.

## **Section 7      Combined District and School Title I Parent and Family Involvement**

The written District parent and family engagement policy has been developed jointly with, updated periodically, and distributed to parents and family members of participating children and the local community in an understandable and uniform format. This policy agreed on by such parents is available for review on the District's website.

## **Section 8      Student Privacy Protection Policy**

### **Right of Parents to Inspect Surveys Funded or Administered by the United States Department of Education or Third Parties:**

Parents shall have the right to inspect, upon the parent's request, a survey created by and administered by either the United States Department of Education or a third party (a group or person other than the District) before the survey is administered or distributed by the school to the parent's child.

### **Protection of Student Privacy in Regard to Surveys of Matters Deemed to be Sensitive:**

The District will require, for any survey of students which contain one or more matters deemed to be sensitive (see section headed "Definition of Surveys of Matters Deemed to be Sensitive"), that suitable arrangements be made to protect student privacy (that is, the name or other identifying information about a particular student). For such surveys, the District will also follow the procedures set forth in the section entitled: "Notification of and Right to Opt-Out of Specific Events."

### **Right of Parents to Inspect Instructional Materials:**

Parents have the right to inspect, upon reasonable request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for their child. Reasonable requests for inspection of instructional materials shall be granted within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.

Parents shall not have the right to access academic tests or academic assessments, as such are not within the meaning of the term "instructional materials" for purposes of this policy. The procedures for making and granting a request to inspect instructional materials are as follows: the parent shall make the request, with reasonable specificity, directly to the building principal. The building principal, within five (5) school days, shall consult with the teacher or other educator responsible for the curriculum materials. In the event the request can be accommodated, the building principal shall make the materials available for inspection or review by the parent, at such reasonable time and place as will not interfere with the educator's intended use of the materials. In the event there is a question as to the nature of the curriculum materials requested or as to whether the materials are required to be provided, the building principal shall notify the parent of such concern and assist the parent with forming a request which can reasonably be accommodated. If the parent does not formulate such a request, and continues to desire certain curriculum materials, the parent shall be asked to make their request to the Superintendent.

### **Rights of Parents to be Notified of and to Opt-Out of Certain Physical Examinations or Screenings.**

The general policy and practice of the District is to not administer physical examinations or screenings of students which require advance notice or parental opt-out rights under the applicable federal laws, for the reason that the physical examinations or screenings to be conducted by the District will usually fit into one of the following exceptions: (1) hearing,

vision, or scoliosis screenings; (2) physical examinations or screenings that are permitted or required by an applicable State law; and (3) surveys administered to students in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. For physical examinations or screenings which do not fit into the applicable exceptions, the District will follow the procedures set forth in the section entitled: "Notification of and Right to Opt-Out of Specific Events."

**Protection of Student Privacy in Regard to Personal Information Collected from Students:** The general policy and practice of the District is to not engage in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information. The District will make reasonable arrangements to protect student privacy to the extent possible in the event of any such collection, disclosure, or use of personal information. "Personal information" for purposes of this policy means individually identifiable information about a student including: a student or parent's first and last name, home address, telephone number, and social security number. The term "personal information," for purposes of this policy, does not include information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions. This exception includes the following examples: (i) college or postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment; (ii) book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products; (iii) curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools; (iv) tests and assessments used by elementary schools and secondary schools to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about student, or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments, and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments; (v) the sale by student of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities; (vi) student recognition programs.

**Parental Access to Instruments used in the Collection of Personal Information:**

While the general practice of the District is to not engage in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information, parents shall have the right to inspect, upon reasonable request, any instrument which may be administered or distributed to a student for such purposes. Reasonable requests for inspection shall be granted within a reasonable period of time after the request is received. The procedures for making and granting such a request are as follows: the parent shall make the request, with reasonable specificity, directly to the building principal and shall identify the specific act and the school staff member or program responsible for the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information from students for the purpose of marketing that information. The building principal, within five (5) school days, shall consult with the school staff member or person responsible for the program which has been reported by the parent to be responsible for the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information from students. In the event such collection, disclosure, or use of personal information is occurring or there is a plan for such to occur, the building principal shall consult with the Superintendent for determination of whether the action shall be allowed to continue. If not, the instrument for the collection of personal information shall not be given to any students. If it is to be allowed, such instrument shall be provided to the requesting parent as soon as such instrument can be reasonably obtained.

**Notification to Parents of Dates of and Right to Opt-Out of Specific Events:**

The District will directly notify the parents of the affected children, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when any of the following activities are scheduled, or are expected to be scheduled:

- The collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information. (Note: the general practice of the District is to not engage in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information).
- Surveys of students involving one or more matters deemed to be sensitive in accordance with the law and this policy; and,
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance; administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student or of other students. (Note: the general practice of the District is to not engage in physical examinations or screenings which require advance notice, for the reason that the physical examinations or screenings to be conducted by the District will usually fit into one of the following exceptions to the advance notice requirement and parental opt-out right: (1) hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings; (2) physical examinations or screenings that are permitted or required by an applicable State law, and (3) surveys administered to students in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

Parents shall be offered an opportunity in advance to opt their child out of participation in any of the above-listed activities.

In the case of a student of an appropriate age (that is, a student who has reached the age of 18, or a legally emancipated student), the notice and opt-out right shall belong to the student.

**Definition of Surveys of Matters Deemed to be Sensitive:**

Any survey containing one or more of the following matters shall be deemed to be “sensitive” for purposes of this policy:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student’s parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker; or
8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

Any survey administered by the District that asks a student to disclose any of the aforementioned topics, including any non-anonymous survey requesting a student provide information relating to

drug, vape, alcohol, or tobacco use, then the District will, at least fifteen days prior to the administration of the survey, notify parents, guardians, and educational decisionmakers that their students will receive the survey. This notice must describe the nature and types of questions included in the survey, the purposes and age-appropriateness of the survey, how information collected by the survey will be used, who will have access to such information, the steps that will be taken to protect student privacy, and whether and how any findings or results of such survey will be disclosed. After receiving such notice, parents, guardians, and educational decisionmakers may request a copy of the survey, review the survey, and/or exempt their student from participating in the survey.

No survey requesting sexual information of a student shall be administered to any student in kindergarten through grade six.

No personally identifiable information of any student survey shall be disclosed unless permitted or required by state and federal law.

## **Section 9      Homeless Students**

The District shall ensure that homeless children and youths shall have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. Any person with knowledge of a homeless student in the District should contact the District's Homeless Coordinator. A copy of the District's Homeless Policy is available on the District's website.

### **Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil  
Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or
- (2) Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **Article 11 - School Specific Information Section 1**

### **Elementary Specific Information**

#### **The Falcon Way Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible**

### **Arrival/Dismissal Expectations**

#### **BE SAFE**

1. Walk on the sidewalks.
2. Keep hands, feet, belongings to yourself.
3. Walk bikes on school property.
4. Watch for cars and buses.
5. Use a crosswalk for crossing the street.
6. Wait for parents before entering the parking lot.

#### **BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Wait quietly in a designated area.
2. Watch out for those around you.
3. Walk around groups of people who are talking.

#### **BE RESPONSIBLE**

1. Arrive on Time:
  - a. Breakfast 7:30
  - b. Walking Club 7:45
  - c. First Bell 7:55
  - d. Late Bell 8:00
2. K-5 Enter only through the front doors.
3. Report to the office if you are late.
4. Go directly to the designated area upon entry.

### **Bathroom Expectations**

#### **BE SAFE**

1. Walk in the bathroom.
2. Wash hands-use soap-rinse dry.
3. Keep water in the sink.
4. Keep feet on the floor- no climbing on walls or doors. No crawling under stalls.

**BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Use quiet voices.
2. Give others their privacy.

**BE RESPONSIBLE**

1. Make sure the toilet/urinal flush completely.
2. Make sure all trash gets into the garbage.

**Bus Expectations****BE SAFE**

1. Stay seated while the bus is moving – do not get up until the bus has come to a complete stop.
2. Face forward.
3. Keep aisles and exits clear.
4. SILENCE at railroad crossings.
5. Keep hands, feet & belongings to self.

**BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Wait to have your name checked off on the bus list before getting on the bus.
2. Listen to the bus driver and follow directions.
3. Let others sit with you – three to a seat if needed – without arguing.
4. Talk quietly with those around you.

**BE RESPONSIBLE**

3. Take care of your belongings – keep things in your backpack – throw trash away.
4. Arrive at your bus on time.
5. Exit the bus and proceed to your designated area.
6. Walk in front of the buses, not in-between the buses.

**Hallway Expectations****BE SAFE**

1. Walk at all times.
2. Walk on the right side of the hallway.
3. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
4. Keep your eyes facing forward.

**BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Voices off.
2. Walk with quiet feet.
3. Respect others' property.

**BE RESPONSIBLE**

1. Stay in order.

2. Listen to the adults and follow their instructions.
3. Keep track of belongings.
4. Make sure to have your hall pass to show where you are going.

## **Indoor Recess Expectations**

### **BE SAFE**

1. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
2. Be respectful of personal space.
3. Follow classroom expectations.

### **BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Play fairly.
2. Include others.
3. Follow the game rules.
4. Be a good sport.
5. Try to avoid going through other students' games.

### **BE RESPONSIBLE**

1. Get permission from an adult if there is a need to leave.
2. Put away all materials when done.
3. Report problems to an adult on duty.

## **Lunchroom Expectations**

### **BE SAFE**

1. Walk in the lunchroom.
2. Keep food to yourself.
3. Sit with your bottom on the bench, facing the table, and feet on the floor.
4. Clean up spills – get help from an adult if needed.

### **BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Use quiet voices.
2. Use good table manners. (please, thank you, chew with your mouth closed)
3. Raise your hand to get an adult's attention and to get up.
4. Voices off in the kitchen area.

### **BE RESPONSIBLE**

1. Remember to get milk, utensils, and condiments before sitting down.
2. Raise your hand for permission to get seconds or go to the bathroom.
3. Clean up your area when you are finished eating.
4. Wait quietly in your seat until you are dismissed.

## **Outdoor Recess Expectations**

1. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
2. Swings – sit on bottoms, back and forth only, no side to side.
3. Slides – go up the stairs down the slides, on bottoms, feet first.

4. Climbing equipment – no climbing on the outside of tubes, no jumping off the spider web.
5. Throw or kick sporting equipment according to the game rules.
6. Keep wood chips, rocks, sand, dirt, snow, and ice on the ground.
7. Stay in the designated area.

### **BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Play fairly.
2. Include others.
3. Follow the game rules.
4. Be a good sport.
5. Wait your turn for the disc swing. (4 at a time K-3<sup>rd</sup>, 2 at a time 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>)

### **BE RESPONSIBLE**

1. Get permission from an adult if there is a need to leave the playground.
2. Put away equipment when done.
3. Report problems to the adult on duty.
4. Boots must be worn to leave the pavement when there is snow.
  - a. Students may use the playground without boots, when the snow is compacted.
  - b. Snow pants and boots must be worn if the students want to sit or lie in the snow.

## **Pod Expectations**

### **BE SAFE**

1. Walk quietly through the pod.
2. Push chairs into tables when entering the classroom.
3. Keep hands and feet to self.

### **BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Respect others' spaces.
2. Use inside voices.
3. Share the materials, games, and touch panels with friends.

### **BE RESPONSIBLE**

1. Stay in order.
2. Listen to and follow the instructions of the adult in charge of the pod.
3. Pick up after yourself, wipe down tables.
4. Put chairs and stools back where you found them.
5. Return to class promptly.

## **Special Events Expectations**

1. Walk quietly to the event.
2. Sit properly on the floor, chairs, or bleachers.
3. Keep hands and feet to yourself.

**BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Pay attention to the speaker/performers.
2. Voices off.
3. Make no noise with hands or feet.
4. Respond/applaud appropriately.

**BE RESPONSIBLE**

1. Sit where you are told
2. Listen to and follow the instructions of the adult in charge
3. Pick up after yourself.

**Walking Club Expectations****BE SAFE**

1. Walk at all times.
2. Walk facing forward.
3. Walk in groups of 2 or 3 students.
4. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
5. Allow others to pass.

**BE RESPECTFUL**

1. Talk quietly.
2. Watch out for others.
3. Listen to the adult on duty and follow their directions.
4. Walk around the outer edges of the gym.

**BE RESPONSIBLE**

1. Only enter the gym when an adult is present.
2. Go straight to the gym after coming into the school.
3. Get permission from an adult if there is a need to leave the gym.
4. After walking club is over , walk quietly to class when dismissed by an adult.

**Expected Classroom Behaviors**

The following is a general but not exhaustive list of expectations for each student:

- Respect the rights of others at all times.
- Come to class prepared to learn.
- Complete assigned work neatly, accurately and on time.
- Pay attention in class and not disturb others.
- Follow all school and classroom rules.
- Work cooperatively with members of the assigned group.
- Come to class with tools needed to learn.
- Do their best at all times.

## **Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures**

Children's safety is everyone's responsibility. Thank you for your patience and for modeling to model the Falcon Way to your young Falcon(s). Procedures have been developed to provide a safe and efficient way to get all of our students to and from school safely each day:

- **Drop Off:** Please drop off your (K-5) Falcon(s) in the large loop on the east side of the building and please drop off your Preschool Falcons in the small loop on the north side.
- **Pick Up:** Please pick up your (1-5) Falcon(s) in the large loop on the east side of the building and please pick up your Preschool and Kindergarten Falcon(s) in the small loop on the north side of the building.
- Please make sure your Falcons are ready to exit and enter your vehicle and do so on the **passenger side**.
- Please do not leave your vehicle when waiting for your Falcon(s) in either loop.
- While in the loop, please pull as far forward as you can as the line moves forward.
- **If you would like to walk your child** to the front door, please park in the parking lot and escort your child to the door. Be sure to model safety by only crossing in the marked crosswalks and always walk with your child in the lot.
- **If you would like to get out and wait for your child after school**, please park in the parking lot and walk to the door.
- **Students walking to/from school from Valley** will need to walk down the sidewalk between the two high school parking lots proceeding around the bus barn to the elementary parking lot. Adults will be on duty in the elementary parking lot after school to escort students to the sidewalk and staff will also be in front of the elementary building in the parent drop off area.
- Please do not park in the drop off loops.

## **Field Trips**

In some classes, part of the planned activities by the teacher may include a field trip away from the building. At all times students are expected to observe regular school rules and to follow the orders of their supervisor. Parents and siblings of students are not allowed to ride school transportation. Parents may choose to leave with their child at the conclusion of the field trip in their vehicle if the proper forms have been signed before leaving on the field trip. The school does not assume any liability of non school-age children allowed on the field trip.

## **Fire Drills**

Schools are required to have one fire drill during each month. All students are to leave the building immediately through the nearest exit at the time the fire alarm bell is sounded. The fire signal is an automated message with an intermittent ring. Students are not to stop to take coats or books with them and are required to move a distance of one hundred feet from the building. The classroom instructor is responsible for the class during the fire drill. Upon the signal of the school bell, all students will return to their classes.

## **Tornado Drills**

When the tornado bell rings and an announcement is made over the intercom. Everyone will proceed to the designated storm shelter, which is the entire preschool wing. Classrooms will have specific rooms to take shelter within this pod.

### **Weather**

In the event of school cancellations due to inclement weather, parents/guardians will be notified by our automated calling system. This system can send out a recorded message to all staff and students within seconds. Radio and local TV stations will also announce school cancellations due to bad weather. Parents are requested to refrain from calling the school for this information.

Parents or designated adults who become fearful of the weather conditions may pick up their children any time. Occasionally weather conditions may force the closing of school during the day. It is suggested that parents make arrangements for their children to stay with friends or neighbors if the need should arise. In an active tornado warning students and staff will be sheltered, please do not come to school to pick up students. They will not be checked out to leave during this time.

In the event that the building goes into shelter during a time that impacts dismissal, please note that students will not be dismissed until we can determine that there is no threat to the student and the all clear has been given by the superintendent.

### **Lost and Found**

Lost and found items will be turned into the bin in the cafeteria. Items not claimed will be given to deserving agencies.

### **Sporting Events**

During football games students are requested to sit in the bleachers to watch the football game. Students may be on the sideline if they are with their parents. Football catch, tag, tackle football or other games are not allowed in or around the football field. Students are encouraged to promote school spirit by cheering for the Falcons.

### **Change of Address**

Whenever a student moves or changes his address or phone number, the student should report this change to the office immediately.

### **Substitute Teachers**

In the absence of the regular classroom teacher, a substitute teacher may be asked to teach the class. All students are expected to follow the regular established classroom procedures under the direction of the substitute teacher and will address the substitute teacher in the same manner as any other staff member.

### **Lunch Times/Procedures**

Monday-Thursday Grade Level Lunch Times

Kindergarten	11:15-11:45
--------------	-------------

1st grade	11:20-11:50
2nd grade	11:50-12:20
3rd grade	11:55-12:25
4th grade	12:25-12:55
5th grade	12:30-1:00

- All students will go to recess before lunch and then transition to the lunchroom with their class.
- Water bottles are allowed at lunch
- We ask that no soda is brought to lunch
- Students are not allowed to share food off their plates or give food to another student
- Students that have a family visitor are only allowed to pick 2 friends to sit with them. This rule helps to prevent our students from fighting and arguing about joining the table.

*In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.*

*Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.*

*To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at:*

*<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:*

**1.**

**2. mail:**

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

**3. fax:**

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

**4. email:**

[Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider*

## **Use of Personal Electronic Devices and Cell Phones**

The DC West Community Schools is committed to safeguarding instructional time to ensure every student thrives academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally. The Personal Electronic Device procedures aim to minimize distractions and enhance academic focus, which is grounded in robust research. Protecting instructional time by reducing digital interruptions is a proven strategy to enhance academic focus, support higher achievement, foster an optimal learning environment, and support the mental health and well-being of our students. Personal electronic devices include cell phones, smart watches, earbuds, etc.

### **Elementary School**

- Restrict personal electronic devices during school hours.
  - Students must power off devices and store them in a backpack or locker until dismissal.
  - This approach minimizes distractions and ensures that young children focus on learning and social development without the influence of technology.

- Exceptions may be granted for educational purposes outlined in a student's IEP or 504 Plan, or for medical needs as documented in the Individualized Health Plan.

## Consequences for Non-Compliance

### 1. First Offense:

- The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- The administrator documents the infraction into Educlimber.
- The student retrieves the device from an administrator at the end of the school day.

### 2. Second Offense:

- The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- The administrator contacts the parent.
- The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- The student loses privileges for the next school day. The device is checked in with an administrator in the morning, or not brought to school.

### 3. Third Offense:

- The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- Administrator contacts the parent.
- Administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber..
- The parent must pick up the device from an administrator.
- The student loses privileges for five school days. The device is checked into the office in the morning or not brought to school.

### 4. Fourth Offense:

- The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- The administrator contacts the parent.
- The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- The parent must pick up the device from an administrator.
- The student loses privileges for the remainder of the semester. The device is checked into the office in the morning or not brought to school.

## **Searches on Ipads**

Use of iPads and Computers and access to network services at DC West is provided to you primarily to conduct research and to work on assignments at school. By accepting an iPad for use at school you are agreeing to follow the Falcon Way to use in a responsible way.

Searches: We want you to be able to conduct research for assignments and use your iPad for learning. However, there are times when some students are searching for inappropriate terms or topics. If you cannot show a direct tie between a search and the class subject you are in, then do not search.

Please know:

1. All searches that are inappropriate are reported to your Principals.
2. Inappropriate searches may result in a visit and conversation and possible disciplinary action.

Please follow these guidelines when conducting a search:

1. If the search is for a word/term/topic that you would not feel comfortable raising your hand and asking in class, then do not search.
2. If the search is for a word/term/topic that is not a part of the school subject, do not search.
3. If you search a word and it gets blocked - you get no definition - stop. Do not search again. It might be inappropriate.
4. If you search a word that you did not mean to search, and it gets blocked, then report it to your

teacher.

## **Section 2 Middle School Specific Information Middle School**

### **Staff**

#### **Administrative Staff:**

Dr. Jeffrey Kerns, Principal  
Dr. Melissa Poloncic, Superintendent Dr.  
Dawn Marten, Director of Learning  
Mrs. Nicole Pechous, Director of Student Services  
Mr. Jeremy Travis, Director of Athletics & Activities 7-12

#### **Middle School Staff:**

Mrs. Kristen Phillips, School Psychologist Mrs.  
Rachel Smith, Speech Pathologist  
Sandi Kerkhoff, District Technology Coordinator

#### **School Resource Officer:**

Deputy Alex Johnson School

#### **Nurse:**

Mrs. Sara Widholm

#### **Office Staff:**

Mrs. Chelsea Dembinski (Secretary) Mrs.  
Autumn Burmeister (Health Para)

#### **Teaching Staff:**

**Interventionist:** Desi Samson (Reading), Janna Giles (Math)

**Guidance Counselor:** Ty Hansen

**English Language Learners:** Alyssa Lindahl

**Special Education:** Amber Goddard, Lisa Masters, Michelle Anderson

**6<sup>th</sup> grade:** Megan Garcia (Math), Kerry Reker (Science), Nolan Zimmer (Social Studies), Molly Dembinski (ELA)

**6<sup>th</sup> grade Specials:** James Eddy (STEM), Russ Ninemire (Health), Logan Dunn (Digital Citizenship/HAL), Dawn Beyl (Theatre), Bob Wald (Computers), Morgan Thompson (Band Lessons), Liz Guinn (Band Lessons)

**7<sup>th</sup> grade:** Lindsey Pearson (Math), Jesse Hays (Science), Ady Watts (Social Studies), Julia Reddel (ELA)

**7<sup>th</sup> grade Specials:** James Eddy (STEM), Russ Ninemire (Health), Lisa Benson (French), Ty Hanson (Careers), Logan Dunn (Media/Yearbook)

**8<sup>th</sup> grade:** Traci Evans (Math), Jalen Hausmann (Science), Ben Steward (Social Studies), Sherry Dill (ELA)

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Specials:** James Eddy (STEM/Falcon Athletic Advantage), Russ Ninemire (Health), Lisa Benson (Spanish), Cyndi Thomas (Family Consumer Science), Morgan Bergen, (Falcon Athletic Advantage), Ty Hanson (Careers 2)

**Instrumental Music (Band):** Elizabeth Guinn

**Vocal Music (Choir):** Dawn Beyl

**Physical Education/Health:** Bob Wald, Russ Ninemire

**Art:** Sara Gotch

### **Bell Schedule**

#### **MIDDLE SCHOOL DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE (Monday-Thursday)**

<b>Teachers Available</b>		7:45
<b>Breakfast</b>		7:30-7:55
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Hour</b>		8:00-8:45 (45 MINS)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Hour</b>		8:48-9:33 (45 MINS)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Hour</b>		9:36-10:21 (45 MINS)
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>		10:24-11:09 (45 MINS)
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	Class	10:24-11:00 (36 MINS)
	Lunch	11:00-11:30 (30 MINS)
	Class	11:30-11:39 (9 MINS)
	Pride	11:42-12:12 (30 MINS)
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	Class	10:24-11:09 (45 MINS)
	Pride	11:12-11:15 (3 MINS)
	Lunch	11:15-11:45 (30 MINS)
	Pride	11:45-12:12 (27 MINS)
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	Class	10:24-11:09 (45 MINS)
	Pride	11:12-11:30 (18 MINS)
	Lunch	11:30-12:00 (30 MINS)
	Pride	12:00-12:12 (12 MINS)
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>		12:15-1:00 (45 MINS)
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>		1:03-1:48 (45 MINS)
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>		1:51-2:36 (45 MINS)
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>		2:39-3:24 (45 MINS)

#### **FRIDAY EARLY DISMISSAL SCHEDULE**

<b>Teachers Available.</b>	7:45
<b>Breakfast</b>	7:30-7:55
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Hour</b>	8:00-8:35 (35 MINS)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Hour</b>	8:38-9:13 (35 MINS)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Hour</b>	9:16-9:51 (35 MINS)
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>	9:54-10:29 (35 MINS)
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>	10:32-11:07 (35 MINS)
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	Class 10:32-11:00 (28 MINS)
	Lunch 11:00-11:30 (30 MINS)
	Class 11:30-11:37 (7 MINS)
	Pride 11:40-12:10 (30 MINS)

<b>7<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	Class	10:32-11:07	(35 MINS)
	Lunch	11:07-11:37	(30 MINS)
	Pride	11:40-12:10	(30 MINS)
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	Class	10:32-11:07	(35 MINS)
	Pride	11:10-11:15	(5 MINS)
	Lunch	11:15-11:45	(30 MINS)
	Pride	11:45-12:10	(25 MINS)
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>		12:13-12:48	(35 MINS)
<b>7<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>		12:51-1:26	(35 MINS)
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>		1:29-2:04	(35 MINS)

### **Backpacks**

Students will be allowed to carry their backpacks with them throughout the school day for this upcoming school year. However, there is a built-in combination locker available upon request.

### **Use of Personal Electronic Devices and Cell Phones**

The DC West Community Schools is committed to safeguarding instructional time to ensure every student thrives academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally. The Personal Electronic Device procedures aim to minimize distractions and enhance academic focus, which is grounded in robust research. Protecting instructional time by reducing digital interruptions is a proven strategy to enhance academic focus, support higher achievement, foster an optimal learning environment, and support the mental health and well-being of our students. Personal electronic devices include cell phones, smart watches, earbuds, etc.

### **Middle School**

- Restrict personal electronic devices during school hours. They may be used before and after school.
  - Students must power off devices and store them in a backpack or locker until dismissal. For students who do not carry a backpack or have a locker, the device will be given to the student's Advisory teacher.
  - Middle school students are particularly vulnerable to distractions, cyberbullying, and social comparison via smartphones.
  - Prohibiting access during class and free periods fosters better academic performance and social engagement.
  - Exceptions may be granted for educational purposes outlined in a student's IEP or 504 Plan, or for medical needs as documented in the Individualized Health Plan.

### Consequences for Non-Compliance

#### **1. First Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- c. The student retrieves the device from an administrator at the end of the school day.

#### **2. Second Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. The administrator contacts the parent.
- c. The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- d. The student loses privileges for the next school day. The device is checked in with an administrator in the morning, or not brought to school.

**3. Third Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. Administrator contacts the parent.
- c. Administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber..
- d. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator.
- e. The student loses privileges for five school days. The device is checked into the office in the morning or not brought to school.

**4. Fourth Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. The administrator contacts the parent.
- c. The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- d. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator.
- e. The student loses privileges for the remainder of the semester. The device is checked into the office in the morning or not brought to school.

**Change of Address**

Changes of address or phone number, as well as any new members of the family (new babies, adoptions), should be reported to the office so that we may keep our census up-to-date.

**Field Trips**

Teachers may include a field trip away from the building as part of a planned class activity. Students are expected to observe regular school rules and to follow the directions of their teacher or supervisor. All field trips must be approved by the administration.

**Fire Drills**

Schools are required to have periodic fire drills during each school year. All students are to leave the building immediately through the nearest exit at the time the fire alarm bell is sounded.

Students are not to stop to take coats or books with them and are required to move a distance of one hundred feet from the building. The classroom instructor is responsible for the class during the fire drill. The administration will notify the students when they should return to their classes.

**Food and Drink**

Food and drinks are strictly prohibited outside of the cafeteria area. Students are not allowed to take food or beverages into academic classes or the library. Sometimes the consumption of food or beverage is part of the regular planned classroom activity. The administration will give permission for the classroom teacher to allow consumption of these items during these special times. Students that bring or consume food or beverage items, with the exception of these planned activities, are in violation of school rules.

**Insurance**

DC West School makes an insurance program available to students through a qualified insurance carrier. Information concerning the cost to parents, type of coverage, and other information will be made available in the yearly registration materials before school begins in the fall. Students will not be required to purchase this insurance; however, it is required for students who are participating in athletics to be covered by some type of insurance.

### **Lost and Found**

Lost and found items will be turned into the office. Items not claimed will periodically be given to deserving agencies in the local area.

### **Property Checked Out to Students**

Books and other school equipment or materials will be checked out to students throughout the school year for specific school work. Students are responsible for these materials and for their safekeeping. At the end of the year, the student will be expected to return the materials in good condition or to pay for any loss or abnormal wear.

### **Student Parking**

Students driving their cars to school must register that car in the office. Students are to park in designated parking areas and at no time should students park in areas behind the school or in spaces reserved for faculty parking. Students are expected to park on school property and not on any of the side streets or lots surrounding the school property. Students are not to be in their cars during the school day or during the lunch period. Students needing to go to their car to get items must first get permission from the administration. Violations of these procedures may result in disciplinary action.

### **Substitute Teachers**

A substitute teacher may be asked to teach the class in the absence of the regular classroom teacher. All students are expected to follow the regular established classroom procedures under the direction of the substitute teacher and will address the substitute teacher in the same manner as any other staff member.

### **Detentions**

Students may be assigned additional time before or after school to receive assistance from their teachers to complete assignments, to make up work, or due to their classroom behavior. Our middle school students may be assigned to “The Falcon’s Nest” (an after school academic detention area) which will be supervised by a staff member from 3:30-4:00. The student is expected to report immediately after school to work on the missing assignment(s) and/or turn in the missing assignment(s). If a student is assigned to “The Falcon’s Nest” and they need to make transportation arrangements then they may come to the office to do so. All students that are assigned to “The Falcon’s Nest” are expected to report immediately after school if the homework has not already been turned in to their teacher. Failure to report may result in further disciplinary action to improve the student’s homework completion. The goal is for the students to turn in their completed assignments on time or in a timely manner and to essentially raise our homework completion percentages which will then assist in their overall academic performance.

### **Library and Media Center Rules**

While in the library, all students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which enables others to study without interruption. Students should take care of all books, magazines, and other materials used or borrowed. When checking out materials or books, students will be given a "due date". Students are responsible for returning these items on time. Fines will be charged for damaged or lost books. In addition to fines, the library may issue detention time for books not returned on time. The library is available to students at 7:45 a.m. until 3:45 p.m. each day.

### **Counseling**

The counseling program is available as a service to all students and parents who wish to receive help concerning personal, education and career matters. Students are encouraged to visit with the counselor and should make arrangements to do so before, during, and after school.

### **Falcon Reward System**

The Middle School Student Council sponsors the Falcon Reward System that will be celebrated at the end of each quarter. Students who have no failing grades, no written office referrals, and no missing assignments, will be given the opportunity to participate in a special activity. The activity is a reward for the student's positive behaviors and provides an educational experience as well as some fun for the student. The student's attendance records may be used in determining eligibility.

### **Homework**

Teachers may assign work to the students that cannot be completed during the regular class period. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that this class work is completed by the assigned time. Failure to complete classroom assignments on time may result in the student being assigned to complete the work before or after school and may result in a failing grade. Our 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade students may be assigned to "The Falcon's Nest" (an after school academic detention area) which will be supervised by a staff member from 3:30-4:00. The student is expected to report immediately after school to work on the missing assignment(s) and/or turn in the missing assignment(s). If a student is assigned to "The Falcon's Nest" and they need to make transportation arrangements then they may come to the office to do so. All students that are assigned to "The Falcon's Nest" are expected to report that immediate day and failure to do so may result in further disciplinary action to improve the student's homework completion. The goal is for the students to turn in their completed assignments on time or in a timely manner and to essentially raise our homework completion percentages which will then assist in their academic performance.

### **Honor Roll and Merit Roll**

An Honor Roll and Merit Roll list will be published at the end of each quarter. This list will recognize the student's academic success. The Honor Roll will consist of all students who have accumulated an average grade of 87% or higher for that grading period, without a grade of C or below. The Merit Roll list will consist of students with an average grade of 80%, without a grade of D or below.

### **Advisory**

In our Advisory Period, each student will have a teacher who will serve as the student's mentor throughout the school year. The mentor and student will work together to provide an educational

foundation for success. The Advisory Period serves as an anchor for adolescents, a predictable routine that students need more than ever as they undergo rapid physical, emotional, and intellectual changes. Advisory provides a space and structure for teachers to support middle school students, both individually and as a group, as they develop their sense of self and identity in connection to their relationships with peers.

### **Student Awards and Honors**

At the end of the year, an awards program will be held to recognize students for their participation in activities and for academic excellence during the school year.

### **Student Records**

A cumulative file is maintained on each student. This file includes the grades and credits earned, special test scores, health records, and other student information. This file is open to the parents and the student upon request. If there appears to be a discrepancy with grades recorded or credits, the guidance office should be notified immediately. Before any information in the file may be forwarded to any other school or agency, a written or personal request from the student and/or parents must be presented to the school. Official records are mailed directly from the school to the school or agency requesting them.

### **Testing and Assessment**

DC West Schools use test data to assist students in understanding their strengths and weaknesses and to assist in the development of curriculum. Formative and summative classroom assessments are administered throughout the year, as well as criterion referenced and norm referenced assessments. Yearly performance is reported to the public and to the State Department of Education. Tests required by the school are administered without cost to students.

### **Passes**

Teachers are encouraged to keep students in the classroom. If a student needs to leave class, they are expected to have a pass from their supervising teacher with them at all times.

**Section 3 High School Specific Information**  
**SCHOOL CONFERENCE – Nebraska Capitol Conference**

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Dr. Melissa Poloncic, Superintendent	402-359-2583
Jim Knott, Principal	402-359-2121
Dr. Dawn Marten, Director of Learning	402-359-2583
Nicki Pechous, Director of Student Services	402-359-2583
Jeremy Travis, Director of Athletics & Activities 7-12	402-359-2121
Shawna Younghans, Administrative Facilitator	402-359-2121

**SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER**

Deputy Alex Johnson	402-359-2121
---------------------	--------------

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT STAFF**

Jenny Finck, Administrative Assistant	402-359-2121
Rachel Higginson, Medical Para/Administrative Assistant	402-359-2121
Nicole Billeddeaux, Counselor Assistant	402-359-2121

**DC WEST HIGH SCHOOL TEACHING STAFF**

Art	Sean Pralle
Alternative Education	Randy Donner
Business	Ben Knobbe
Computer Technology	Ben Knobbe, Lisa Leonard
Counselor	Katie Richards
English Learner Program	Alyssa Lindahl
Health/Family & Consumer Science	Cyndi Thomas
Industrial Technology	John Brockhaus, Lisa Leonard
Language Arts	Trey Baker, Maggie Dailey, Kristi Eggen, Jared Wiemer
Library/Media	Logan Dunn
Mathematics	Heather Cox, Chip Daehling Jacob Gagner, Karmen Koch
Music	Dawn Beyl, Liz Guinn, Morgan Thompson
Physical Education	Brant Loewe, Morgan Bergen
Science	Lindsey Boardman, Taylor Hyatt Mike Troy
School Psychologist	Kristen Phillips
Social Studies	Matt Caldwell, Brad Henderson Kim LaChapelle
Special Education	Peggy Cooper, Garrett Hoffman Kimberly Loofe
Speech Language Pathologist	Rachel Smith
World Language	Lisa Benson (French), Logan Johansen (Spanish)

## GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>MONDAY-THURSDAY</b>		<b>FRIDAY</b>	
Teachers Available	7:45	Teachers Available	7:45
Breakfast Served	7:30 - 7:52	Breakfast Served	7:30 - 7:52
Students Enter	7:50	Students Enter	7:50
Warning Bell	7:55	Warning Bell	7:55
Period 1	8:00 - 8:45	Period 1	8:00 - 8:35
Period 2	8:48 - 9:33	Period 2	8:38 - 9:13
Period 3	9:36 - 10:21	Period 3	9:16 - 9:51
Period 4	10:24 - 11:09	Period 4	9:54 - 10:29
Period 5	11:12-11:57	Period 5	10:32 - 11:07
<b>Lunch=11:57-12:27, Keystone=12:30-1:00</b>		<b>Lunch=11:45-12:15, Keystone=12:18-12:48</b>	
Period 6	1:03 - 1:48	Period 6	11:10-11:45
Period 7	1:51 - 2:36	Period 7	12:51-1:26
Period 8	2:39 - 3:24	Period 8	1:29-2:04
<b>Teacher Professional Development</b>		<b>Teacher Professional Development</b>	2:30 - 3:45

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Any organization, student, teacher, or staff member wishing to include a message in the daily announcements should have it submitted to the HS secretary before 8:30 a.m. that morning. All announcements are subject to administrative review.

## COUNSELING

The counseling program is available as a service to all students and parents who wish to receive help concerning personal, education and career matters. Students are encouraged to visit with the counselor and should make arrangements to do so before, during, and after school.

## DANCES AND PARTIES

Various organizations may sponsor school dances and parties. They must be arranged with their sponsor and approved by the administration. Students will be expected to be at the dance within thirty minutes after the start of the dance and will not be allowed to enter after that time, unless there have been prior arrangements made with an administrator. Once a student enters a school dance or party, he/she will not be allowed to leave and then return. At all times, students are expected to observe school rules. High school students will not be allowed to attend middle school dances and middle school students will not be allowed to attend high school dances. Unless currently enrolled in our school district, individuals attending must be twenty years or younger. The school district reserves the right to test for drugs/alcohol at any school dance/party. Any violations of the code of conduct are subject to school discipline procedures. Law enforcement may be contacted by school personnel.

## DISASTER DRILLS

Schools have set rules to follow for the safety of all persons during a disaster, therefore disaster drills are practiced. When there is notification of a disaster, students should follow the procedures

designated by the teacher/administrator. Students may practice an evacuation procedure and be transferred to an off-site location.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

Schools are required to have periodic fire drills during each school year. All students are to leave the building immediately through the nearest exit at the time the fire alarm bell is sounded. Students are not to stop to take coats or books with them and are required to move a distance of one hundred feet from the building. The classroom instructor is responsible for the class during the fire drill. The administration will notify the students when they should return to their classes.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Teachers may include a field trip away from the building as part of a planned class activity. Students are expected to observe regular school rules and to follow the directions of their teacher or supervisor. All field trips must be approved by the administration.

## **FOOD AND DRINK**

Lunch is to be consumed in the cafeteria as directed by school personnel. Limited food and drink consumed outside of the cafeteria during the school day is allowed as long as students do not cause a disruption to class and are cleanly with food-related trash. This privilege may be suspended for individual students or the entire student body if food and drink consumption become a disruption to the educational environment or students are not able to dispose of trash appropriately.

Sometimes the consumption of food or beverage is part of the regular planned classroom activity. The administration will give permission for the classroom teacher to allow consumption of these items during these special times.

## **HOT LUNCH PROGRAM**

Credit for the automated lunch accounting system can be purchased in the cafeteria or through E-Funds before school. Students are expected to pay for their lunches in advance. If a check is returned by the bank due to insufficient funds, the funds will be deducted from your student's lunch account, along with a \$5.00 fee.

1. The cost of breakfast and lunch will be set by the school.
2. ***Students may bring lunch from home.***
3. ***Students will not be allowed to charge extra items if they have a negative balance.***
4. Free or reduced priced lunches are provided for those children whose parents qualify. Application forms are available in the superintendent's office.
5. Students will remain in the cafeteria until the end of the lunch period.
6. Students will remove trays and materials from the table when finished unless they have permission to leave from an administrator.
7. Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria from 7:30 to 7:55 a.m.
8. Eating in the cafeteria is considered a privilege. Continued occurrences of improper conduct during breakfast or lunch may result in a student being required to make other arrangements for meals.
9. Students are not allowed to use outside food delivery services (DoorDash, Ubereats, Grubhub, etc) during lunch or school day.

*In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.*

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

**1. mail:**

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

**2. fax:**

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

**3. email:**

[Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider*

## **HAZING**

DC West School does not condone or encourage initiations or hazing of any kind directed by any group of its students to any other group of students. The school encourages all parents and students to refuse to take part in such actions and activities, and will follow disciplinary action to the extent possible for those students insisting on carrying out such acts of hazing and initiation, regardless of the level of willingness on the part of the participants. School staff are encouraged to report any knowledge of such activities immediately to the administration, and parents will be notified.

## **INITIATIONS**

Certain organizations may initiate members into their group during the school year. Only formal ceremonies may be held, and must be under the supervision of their sponsor and with the approval of the administration. Any type of informal hazing of students will result in disciplinary action.

## **INSURANCE**

DC West Schools offers an insurance program to students through a qualified insurance carrier. Information concerning the cost to parents, type of coverage, and other information will be made available in the yearly registration materials before school begins in the fall. Students will not be required to purchase this insurance; however, it is required for students who are participating in athletics to be covered by some type of insurance.

## **INTERNET CONTRACT**

Students of DC West Schools will use the internet to complete projects in various classes. Students will access the internet through the use of a filtered computer system. This filtered system will ease the use of the internet while locking out sites deemed inappropriate. To obtain permission to use such technology at school, students must first sign an agreement of rights and responsibilities and receive training and a security code. Parents will also need to sign this contract, indicating their knowledge and agreement of the guidelines. Students and parents will receive a copy of this contract and the procedures for use of the Internet system. Violations of this contract may result in loss of computer privileges.

## **LIBRARY AND MEDIA CENTER RULES**

While in the library, all students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that enables others to study without interruption. Students should take care of all books, magazines, and other materials used or borrowed. When checking out materials or books, students will be given a "due date". Students are responsible for returning these items on time. Fines will be charged for damaged and lost books. In addition to fines, the library may issue detention time for books not returned on time. The library is available to students at 7:45 a.m. until 3:45 p.m. each day.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found items will be turned into the office. Items not claimed will periodically be given to

deserving agencies in the local area.

## **NEW ORGANIZATIONS**

Any school group that wishes to organize a new club or organization shall submit a proposed constitution to the administration for consideration.

## **OFFICE USE**

The school offices are available to help students, parents, and teachers. The offices will best be able to assist the student if a businesslike atmosphere exists. The office is not a social gathering place. Students who have specific business in the office should complete that business and return to class as quickly as possible. Students are to address the secretaries, who will direct them to the person who can assist them.

## **PEP RALLIES**

Pep Rallies may be held during the day to help support activities programs. Cheerleaders will arrange the activities under the supervision of the sponsor. Good sportsmanship, good manners, and a high degree of school spirit should be a part of each rally.

## **PLANNED ABSENCES**

Students who know in advance when they are going to miss classes due to school activities or for personal reasons are expected to communicate with their teachers before the planned absence in order to formulate a plan to complete the work and gain the knowledge missed. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate with the teacher and follow up after the absence to make sure all work is completed and turned in.

## **POSTERS**

Any student, group, or organization will need to have the approval of the sponsor and of the administration before any poster or sign is allowed to be hung on school property.

## **SKIP DAYS**

DC West Schools will not sanction any unsponsored or unapproved skip days for any student or groups of students. Students involved in unsponsored skip days will be counted absent for the class time that is missed. Regular school attendance is important for academic success.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE/PASS**

Students in grades 9-12 are required to pay a student activity fee which includes free admittance to all home activity events, except tournaments and special conference, district, or state-level events. The School Board will set all fees on an annual basis.

## **STUDENTS ATTENDING POST-SEASON TOURNAMENTS**

Students wanting to go to DC West postseason tournaments need to have parent permission communicated to the office before attending the tournament. Students involved in another activity would be allowed to return to school to practice on the day of their absence if these procedures are followed.

## **STUDENTS ATTENDING ATHLETIC CONTESTS DURING SCHOOL TIME**

A few athletic contests are scheduled during the school day. Students participating in the scheduled activity will be excused from their classes provided they have made arrangements for completing their school work. Students who desire to attend these events as spectators may be excused upon approval from their parents. Absence from school on these events will be noted on the student's attendance record.

## **STUDENT PARKING/ CAMPUS SAFETY**

Students driving their cars to school must register that car in the office. Students are to park in designated parking areas and at no time should students park in areas behind the school or in spaces reserved for faculty parking. Students are expected to park on school property and not on any of the side streets or lots surrounding the school property. Students are not to be in their cars during the school day or during the lunch period. Students needing to go to their car to get items must first get permission from the administration. Violations of these procedures may result in disciplinary action, including suspension of school parking privileges.

## **SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

A substitute teacher may be asked to teach the class in the absence of the regular classroom teacher. All students are expected to follow the regular established classroom procedures under the direction of the substitute teacher and will address the substitute teacher in the same manner as any other staff member.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

The telephone in the office is provided for emergencies or official business only. If a student must make a voice phone call, he or she needs to bring a pass from the teacher to the office. Students should not be released from class to use the phone, unless it is an emergency. If a student receives a phone call during class time, a message will be taken and given to the student.

## **USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE AND CELL PHONES**

The DC West Community Schools is committed to safeguarding instructional time to ensure every student thrives academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally. The Personal Electronic Device procedures aim to minimize distractions and enhance academic focus, which is grounded in robust research. Protecting instructional time by reducing digital interruptions is a proven strategy to enhance academic focus, support higher achievement, foster an optimal learning environment, and support the mental health and well-being of our students. Personal electronic devices include cell phones, smart watches, earbuds, etc.

### **High School**

- Personal electronic devices may be used during passing periods, lunch break, before school, and after school.
- Personal electronic devices are strictly prohibited in locker rooms and restrooms.
- Personal electronic devices are prohibited during class to improve focus and reduce distractions, as studies show significant academic performance benefits when devices are restricted.
- Exceptions may be granted for educational purposes outlined in a student's IEP or 504 Plan, or for medical needs as documented in the Individualized Health Plan.

### Consequences for Non-Compliance

#### **1. First Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.

- c. The student retrieves the device from an administrator at the end of the school day.

**2. Second Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. The administrator contacts the parent.
- c. The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- d. The student loses privileges for the next school day. The device is checked in with an administrator in the morning, or not brought to school.

**3. Third Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. Administrator contacts the parent.
- c. Administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber..
- d. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator.
- e. The student loses privileges for five school days. The device is checked into the office in the morning or not brought to school.

**4. Fourth Offense:**

- a. The device is confiscated by the teacher and turned over to an administrator.
- b. The administrator contacts the parent.
- c. The administrator documents the infraction into Edclimber.
- d. The parent must pick up the device from an administrator.
- e. The student loses privileges for the remainder of the semester. The device is checked into the office in the morning or not brought to school.

## **VAPE DETECTORS**

To ensure the safety and well-being of all students, our school has installed vape detectors in restroom areas. These detectors are designed to alert school staff—via secure notifications—when vapor is detected. Upon activation, staff will promptly investigate and student code of conduct will be followed.

## **SCHOLASTIC INFORMATION**

### **ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL (Falcon Achievement Center)**

The Douglas County West Alternative High School is available for at-risk students who, for a variety of reasons, are not able to be successful in the traditional high school setting.

#### **GOALS OF THE ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL:**

1. Improve the academic engagement and achievement of at-risk students.
2. Emphasize student strengths to meet their academic and social needs.
3. Provide progressive academic and behavioral expectations
  - a. Each student will have a AEP (Alternative Education Plan)
  - b. Each student will have a schedule that is conducive to his or her individual needs.
4. Provide for social and emotional growth.
5. Promote perseverance, productivity, and work ethic.
6. Explore future educational, career, and technical interests.
7. Ensure community and family involvement.

#### **SELECTION TO THE ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL:**

There is a set process that must be followed before a student is selected to the DC West Alternative High

School. Below are the three main ways a student can be brought to the admission committee:

1. Student (or parent) application
2. Suggestion by the High School Principal, Administrative Facilitator, or Counselor
3. Assigned by the High School Principal or Administrative Facilitator

After a referral is made, a committee will meet. That committee may be made up of the parent, student, high school principal, high school administrative facilitator, high school counselor, student services director, and the alternative school lead teacher will meet to discuss possible selection to the DC West Alternative High School. Topics that may be discussed and considered are academic, social, and behavioral struggles along with other extreme hardships that may make the alternative high school the right “fit” for the student. The high school principal or his/her designee will make the final decision on student acceptance within five school days of the committee meeting.

Each student (and their parent/guardian) who is selected to the alternative high school will be required to participate in an academic plan with expectations. The contract spells out behavioral, academic, and attendance expectations and consequences.

### **ASSEMBLIES, CONVOCATIONS, GUEST SPEAKERS**

Assemblies, convocations and guest speakers provide students with additional learning experiences. When speakers attend a classroom or when students attend assemblies, the students must give the speakers and performers their attention. School rules of behavior are in effect during these events.

### **CLASS RANK**

All courses taken in high school are counted for class rank.

Weighted courses at DC West will include advanced placement courses, on-campus college dual-credit courses, and the more academically rigorous courses.

Points Are Earned As Follows:

		$\frac{1}{2}$ Weighted	Full Weighted
A	4.0	4.5	5.0
B+	3.5	4.0	4.5
B	3.0	3.5	4.0
C+	2.5	3.0	3.5
C	2.0	2.5	3.0
D+	1.5	2.0	2.5
D	1.0	1.5	2.0
F	0.0	0.0	0.0

NC = 0 Points (Given for late withdrawals.) NG =

Does not affect honor roll or class rank.

### **COLLEGE/CAREER REPRESENTATIVES**

The counseling department arranges times for college and career representatives to speak to students. Students are notified and encouraged to contact these people when they have been scheduled. Scheduled times usually occur before or after school and during the lunch period.

## **CREDIT RECOVERY**

The Douglas County West administration and staff believes strongly that the best education for high school students is in the classroom. However, students occasionally may need to recover credits to stay on track for graduation because of a failing grade in the classroom. In these instances, the Principal or his/her designee may offer the student an online or alternative course to make up credits. The discretion to offer online or alternative credit recovery is completely up to the principal or his/her designee.

Occasionally, for varied reasons, the administration may decide that it is best for a student to receive all of his/her classes online outside of the school building. In these instances, the school will check the student's progress and communicate with the student and/or parent at least once per month. Students completing all classes online outside of the school building during their final semester may not participate in the graduation ceremony and will receive their diploma by mail or by arrangement during the week following graduation.

## **DUAL-ENROLLMENT AT COLLEGE**

Some students may have the experience of attending college, taking college classes through distance learning, taking independent study courses, or receiving college course instruction on site while still enrolled in high school. Interested students should contact a counselor for the list of courses and arrangements. In most circumstances, the student is responsible for the tuition, fees and books for the course(s).

## **EARLY GRADUATION**

### Early Completion Plan - Policy 5206

Douglas County West Community Schools supports the concept of early completion as a means of accelerating students toward the achievement of lifetime plans. The following guidelines have been established for students to be eligible for early completion. The failure to meet any of the criteria or time lines listed in the policy may cause the student to become ineligible for early completion.

- (1) A student will be allowed to transfer in a maximum of eight credits from educational courses taken outside the Douglas County West Community School District. These courses must have prior approval by the high school principal in order to be used to meet the graduation requirements of the Douglas County West Community Schools. Students transferring into Douglas County West Community Schools may transfer in hours that are listed on their official Transcript.
- (2) Students must meet all completion requirements established by the Board of Education in order to be eligible for completion as well as the credit hour requirements in each specific subject matter area.
- (3) Application for early completion must be requested, in writing, to the high school principal by February 1 of the applicant's Junior year of high school. The application must be accompanied by a written plan of action

stating the reasons why the student is requesting early completion. The application must contain the signatures of the applicant's parents/parent/guardian to verify parental approval of early completion.

- (4) The Board of Education will make the final decision in regards to an applicant's early completion at the April board meeting of the applicant's Junior year.
- (5) Once given approval, the applicant will have until February 1 of the applicant's Senior year to notify the high school principal of the applicant's decision in regards to participating in the regularly scheduled graduation ceremony. The applicant must also attend one (1) Commencement practice in order to participate in the Commencement ceremony. No early graduation ceremonies will be provided for a student who opts for the early completion route. If a student completes the graduation requirements at the conclusion of their third year (or earlier) of high school, they retain the option of going through the graduation ceremony with their four-year cohort class. However, they will not have the option of taking part in the graduation ceremony of an earlier graduation class.
- (8) A student who decides to opt for early completion is not eligible to participate in school sponsored activities following the last day the student attends classes. The effective date for participation will end with the last day that the student is enrolled in classes. The only school activities that the applicant is eligible for will be prom and the regularly scheduled graduation ceremony.
- (9) This policy shall be evaluated annually by the high school principal or his/her designee.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS - Policy 5205**

The high school will give students a structured educational pattern for a four-year education, help students meet the needs of new college entrance requirements, prepare citizens for the future and experience a wide range of activities to develop students as a complete person. The following requirements for graduation have been established by the Board of Education for students at DC West High School. In addition to the High School Diploma, students may choose a second diploma path (High School Diploma with Distinction). Students may choose the path which best meets their educational needs and future goals. The two-diploma paths area is outlined below.

The credits in each department required for graduation are listed below:

### **High School Diploma—47 Credits for Class of 2026; 48 Credits for Class of 2027+**

8 credits – Language Arts 6

credits – Mathematics 6

credits – Science

6 credits – Social Science

4 credits – Career and Technical Education (Class of 2027+: 5 total – Computer Science Principles) 4  
credits – Health and Physical Education  
2 credits – Fine Arts 11  
credits – Electives

### **High School Diploma with Distinction– 57 Credits**

8 credits – Language Arts  
8 credits – Mathematics (graduation class of 2027) 6  
credits – Science  
8 credits – Social Science  
4 credits – Career and Technical Education 4  
credits – Health and Physical Education 2  
credits – Fine Arts  
Electives to 57 Total Credits

\*\*\* 8 Total Credits Must Be Weighted Classes

Within the requirements, every student must complete at least one five-credit high school course in personal finance or financial literacy prior to graduation. Each student shall also complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid prior to graduation, unless the required opt-out form is completed by either: (1) the student's parent or legal guardian; (2) the Principal, if the Principal determines that good cause exists not to require the student to complete the FAFSA; or (3) an emancipated student or student of at least 19 years of age.

#### **½ Weighted Grade Scale Class Offerings**

H English 9	Economics	H Physical Science
H English 10	H English 11	H Geometry
French III	H Chemistry	
Spanish III	H Algebra II	

#### **Full Weighted Grade Scale Class Offering**

Advanced Art	Spanish IV
Physics	French IV
Anatomy and Physiology	Biology II

#### **Dual Credit Class Offerings (Full Weighted Grade Scale)**

Metro Creative Writing	Metro Statistics	Metro Spanish IV
Metro Composition II	Metro Introduction to Algebra	Metro Composition 1
Metro Ethnic Literature	UNO Medical Math	Metro Construction Management
Metro Multicultural Literature	Metro CTE Math	Metro Personal Finance
Metro Introduction to Literature	Metro Health Careers	Metro Business
Metro College Algebra	Metro American Government	Metro Entrepreneurship
Metro Trigonometry	Metro World Civilization I/II	Metro Marketing
Metro Calculus	Metro US History	UNO Leadership Weights

### **FALCON'S NEST**

The Falcon's Nest is a mostly voluntary, after-school academic help, school work completion, and task-organization program for students. It is held Monday-Thursday from 3:30-4:15 weekly. Each attending student will work with the Falcon's Nest Coordinator to create an Academic Recovery Plan. This Academic Recovery Plan will be shared with the student's teachers, parents/guardians, school counselor, coach/sponsor (if currently in a school sport or activity) and the Principal / Administrative

Facilitator. After the Academic Recovery Plan is created, the student is encouraged to follow through with the plan (including future attendance at the Falcon's Nest) until he or she is passing all classes.

## **FALCON REWARD SYSTEM**

The High School Student Council sponsors the Falcon Reward System. Once per year, students who have not been on the failing list and have not received an ISS/OSS, will be given the opportunity to attend a school sponsored field trip. Transportation is provided by the school district. The student may incur all other costs. The field trip is a reward for student's positive behaviors and provides an educational experience as well as some fun for the students. The student's attendance records may be used in determining eligibility.

## **HELP FROM TEACHERS**

The main role of teachers is to be of assistance to the students. Students should feel free to ask teachers for help at any time. The teachers will arrange time to be available to help students during their classroom time, Keystone time, Academic Support time, Falcon's Nest time, planning time, or before and after school.

## **HOMEWORK**

Teachers may assign work to the students that cannot be completed during the regular class period. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that this class work is completed by the assigned time. Failure to complete classroom assignments on time may result in a failing grade and the student may be assigned to Academic Support.

## **HONOR ROLL, ACADEMIC LETTERS and ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE RECOGNITION**

An Honor Roll of Distinction and an Honor Roll of Merit will be published at the midpoint of each semester. These lists will recognize the student's academic success. The **Honor Roll of Distinction** will consist of all students who have accumulated a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for that grading period. Students who maintain an "A" average in all classes, will be recognized by an asterisk next to their name. The **Honor Roll of Merit** will consist of students with a grade point average of 3.0 to 3.5.

All students that have made the Honor Roll for all four quarters will receive an **Academic Letter**. This letter represents high achievement in school coursework. Qualifying students will receive a Douglas County West Academic Letter (chenille letter) for year 1; a bronze academic star for year 2, a silver academic star for year 3 and a gold academic star for year 4. Graduating seniors will wear their academic medals during the Commencement Program.

Seniors with a 4.0 G.P.A. or higher will be recognized during the graduation ceremonies and will receive an academic excellence award representing their academic achievement during their four years of high school. Students who finish in the top 10% of their graduating class and earn a Diploma with Distinction (56 credit minimum) will have the option to speak at commencement.

## **KEYSTONE & ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

A **KEYSTONE** is the wedge-shaped stone at the top of an arch that locks its parts together. Without its support, the arch would collapse. At DC West, Keystone plays much the same role, serving as the central unified source of support and stability for the student's educational program. In Keystone, each student will have a teacher who will serve as a mentor. The mentor and student will work together to

provide an educational foundation for success. The mentor will assist the student in developing and monitoring long and short-term goals, assist the student in selecting appropriate courses in his/her career field, communicate with the parents of the student about his/her progress, maintain student records in his/her personal folder, and be available to serve as a resource person for the student. Students who are struggling academically and are on the weekly ineligibility list two or more times will be required to attend ACADEMIC SUPPORT sessions during Keystone time. Students or parents should contact the mentor with any questions regarding the educational program. Keystone is an integral part of every student's daily schedule.

## **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY – DOUGLAS COUNTY WEST CHAPTER**

The National Honor Society is founded on four core principles:

- **Scholarship:** Scholarship is a commitment to learning, both inside and outside the classroom.
- **Service:** Service is the willingness to help others, and the action to make it happen.
- **Leadership:** Leadership is the ability to set examples where others want to follow you.
- **Character:** Character is the will to make the right choice, even if it isn't the most popular.

Each of these core principles is important, not only for membership in the organization, but also to become productive citizens outside of high school. Ultimately, NHS should not only recognize students with these talents but also train them to better utilize their skills to be successful no matter what they do after high school.

To be considered eligible for the DC West Chapter of NHS, a student must...

- Have and maintain a 3.0 GPA (on a 4 point scale).
- Demonstrate examples of service that are both current and varied. It is especially important for applicants to volunteer during the school year in which they wish to apply. This shows commitment to the school and community.
- Demonstrate examples of current leadership that go beyond merely participating in voluntary events. A leader is someone who steps up to take positive roles in their activities, as well as someone who is recognized by their peers or supervisors for outstanding leadership qualities. For example, if a student is a participant in Student Council, they can demonstrate leadership by taking on leadership roles within the activities in which they are participating (volunteering to organize a food drive or organizing Valentine's Day sales).
- Be willing to go out of their way to be inclusive of others.

There are numerous opportunities to accumulate service as a member of other student organizations, athletics, and activities. Interested applicants should be willing to take advantage of these opportunities leading up to their candidacy.

Students who are not selected are encouraged to work on their application deficiencies and apply again the following year.

Those chosen for DC West NHS are expected to maintain their adherence to the core principles by taking on leadership positions, completing outside service hours, participating in NHS service projects, and acting as an upstanding student and citizen both inside and outside of school.

For a more detailed explanation of the purpose, goals, rules, and procedures of the Douglas County West Chapter of the National Honor Society, please refer to the *DC West High School National Honor Society Bylaws* under High School Activities on the DC West School website.

## **SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL AID**

The counseling department will assist students in becoming aware of scholarships and financial aid, which are available for college students. College representatives visit the school to discuss possibilities at their institution. A Senior Parents Night is held to help parents and students understand the process of obtaining financial aid and completing the necessary forms. After selecting a college or technical school, the student, with the help of the counselor, should contact the department of financial aid of that institution for obtaining financial assistance. Seniors are eligible for many kinds of scholarships and the counseling department will help them become aware of what is available. It is the responsibility of the student to complete the application forms and to take other necessary steps in securing the scholarships.

## **STUDENT AIDES**

Juniors and seniors may request to be a student aid for a teacher or in the office. Students should make the request through the counselor's office, get approval from the teacher or the office then receive final approval from the counselor/ administration.

## **TESTING AND ASSESSMENT**

DC West Schools use test data to assist students in understanding their strengths and weaknesses and to assist in the development of curriculum. Formative and summative classroom assessments are administered throughout the year, as well as criterion referenced and norm referenced assessments.

Yearly performance is reported to the public and to the State Department of Education. Tests required by the school are administered without cost to students. The Nebraska Department of Education has designated that all Juniors are required to take the ACT exam during the spring semester.

Students are also provided with information about other tests administered by agencies outside the school district. These tests can be taken by students who meet qualifying criteria and are taken at the student's own expense. Such tests include the ACT test for college entrance (this test is the qualifier for the Nebraska Regents Scholarship), the PSAT (the National Merit Scholarship qualifying exam), and SAT.

## Section 4 High School Activities Specific Information

### **ACTIVITY INFORMATION - Policy 5103**

Extracurricular activity programs enrich the curriculum of the school by making available a wide variety of activities in which a student can participate. Extracurricular activity programs are considered an integral part of the school's program of education that provide experiences that will help students physically, mentally and emotionally.

The element of competition and winning, though it exists, is controlled to the point it does not determine the nature or success of the program. This is considered to be educationally and psychologically sound because of the training it offers for living in a competitive society. Students are stimulated to want to win and excel, but the principles of good sportsmanship prevail at all times to enhance the educational values of contests. Participation in activities, both as a competitor and as a student spectator, is an integral part of the students' educational experiences. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, team, student body, community and the students themselves. In their play and their conduct, students are representing all of these groups. Such experiences contribute to the knowledge, skill, and emotional patterns that they possess, thereby making better individuals and citizens.

### **STUDENT 24-HOUR ACTIVITY CODE OF CONDUCT**

The DC West High School athletic teams and activities groups are before the public eye throughout the school year. Therefore, it is imperative that a high standard of conduct, training, and eligibility is established as part of the program. Regulations governing participation have been developed into a 24-Hour Activity Code (the 24 Hour Code means this code is in effect for 24 hours a day, seven days a week). The Activity Code will apply during the entire school year from the first day of fall practices to the final day of the NSAA sponsored spring activities. All students participating in or attending school sponsored activities will be held accountable for these expectations. Junior High violations of this policy will not carry over to the high school, however, eligibility requirements will need to be met.

It is the philosophy of DC West Community Schools that it is important for students to conduct themselves as responsible representatives of the school and conduct themselves in such a manner during the season (activity) or out of season, in uniform or out of uniform, on campus or off campus.

Membership of a team or organization, as well as, participation as a spectator of school activities is considered a privilege and failure to abide by the Code of Conduct is subject to disciplinary/restorative action.

This Activities Code applies to all students participating in the following extra-curricular activities: Cross Country, Football, Volleyball, Softball, Basketball, Wrestling, Baseball, Golf, Soccer, Track, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Newspaper, Yearbook, Speech/Drama, One-Act Play, All School Production, FBLA, Robotics, Academic Decathlon/Quiz Bowl, Cheerleading, Dance Team, Art Club, Science Club, World Language Club, Student Council, and National Honor Society.

Activity participants and attendees should note that a Violation of the Activities Code could occur through improper activities related to poor conduct choices. The HS Administration will deal with these violations on an independent basis, will weigh the severity and repetitiveness of poor conduct choices, and will place sanctions after completing their investigation on all conduct violations. If the infraction is

severe, progressive discipline may jump to the second or third offense immediately.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY CODE OF CONDUCT**

Purpose of the Code of Conduct. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege. The privilege carries with it responsibilities to the school, team, student body, and the community. Participants are not only representing themselves, but also their school and community in all of their actions. Others judge our school on the student participants' conduct and attitudes, and how they contribute to our school spirit and community image. The student participants' performance and devotion to high ideals and values make their school and community proud. Consequently, participation is dependent upon adherence to this Code of Conduct and the school district's policies, procedures and rules.

Activities Subject to the Code of Conduct: The Code of Conduct applies to all extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities means student activities or organizations which are supervised or administered by the school district which do not count toward graduation or grade advancement and in which participation is not otherwise required by the school.

## **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

Any student who has a cumulative failing grade at the time of the eligibility report, in any two classes, will not be eligible for school activities (excluding dances) the following week, Wednesday through Tuesday. The duration for the cumulative grade eligibility roster will be for the current semester grading period. Students who are failing a class will be provided a Progress Report on Monday (or as soon as possible following a holiday) of each eligibility period.

Staff will be notified of all students on the list. Students will have three days (Monday-Wednesday) to bring their failing grades up to passing. Once a passing grade is achieved/confirmed on the Powerschool grading report (or verbally/written by the teacher), the student will communicate the progress to the Activities Director (or his or her designee). If a student raises their grades to meet the eligibility requirement, he/she may participate in activities. All students who are failing the same two classes at the end of the school day on Wednesday (or other designated day due to the school calendar) will be ineligible until the following week. Special consideration on the enforcement of this policy will be given to special education students through the IEP team decision-making process. The eligibility period may be suspended due to holiday breaks, snow days, etc. at the discretion of the administration. The administration may also use discretion on enforcement of the policy due to teacher absence or inability to grade assignments/tests/projects by the end of the day on Wednesdays.

## **BEHAVIOR / TOBACCO / ALCOHOL & DRUG VIOLATIONS**

The banned substances for DC West participants are: tobacco (and its container), alcohol (and its container), illegal drugs and inhalants, vaporizing devices and its contents and containers, or controlled substances (except under authorized prescription), including look-alike substances of this nature. The use or possession of such substances, or procuring such substances for others, is a violation of DC West Schools Code of Conduct for extra-curricular and co-curricular activity participation.

Possession, for purposes of the Code of Conduct, has a less strict meaning and is much broader than possession under criminal laws. It includes actual, constructive and other types of possession as defined herein. It includes situations where, for example: (1) alcohol or the substance is in a vehicle in which a participant is present—the participant is considered to be in possession if the participant is aware that

the alcohol or substance is in the vehicle, even though the participant has not touched or consumed the alcohol or substance, provided that the alcohol or substance is not in the control of a parent or guardian or other responsible adult (age 21 or older) and (2) alcohol or the substance is present at a party attended by the participant—the participant is considered to be in possession if the participant is aware that alcohol or substance is at the party, even though the participant has not touched or consumed the alcohol or substance, provided that the alcohol is not in the control of a parent or guardian or other responsible adult (age 21 or older). Smoking shall be defined as being seen holding a lit or unlit cigarette (or any vaporizing device or paraphernalia), or being seen throwing a cigarette/vaping device or contents away, or being seen with smoke coming out of the nose or mouth, or admitted to having smoked or vaped.

## 1. BEHAVIOR

In addition, DC West participants are expected to not engage in violation of the criminal laws. A student charged with a criminal offense or upon completion of the investigation by school administration is reasonably suspected to be in violation of the Code of Conduct shall be considered to be in violation of the DC West Schools Code of Conduct for extra-curricular and co-curricular activity participation. In the event school officials determine a violation of the law has occurred or that, if the conduct had been committed on school grounds, such would be a violation of school rules.

## 2. TOBACCO/CIGARETTES/VAPORIZING DEVICES

Tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes and all other vaporizing devices and paraphernalia), alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect. Any participant seen smoking, using vaporizing devices, or chewing tobacco (or possessing these items) by a coach/sponsor, faculty member, administrator, or legal authority, or who admits to smoking, using vaporizing devices, or chewing tobacco (or possessing these items), or upon completion of the investigation by school administration are reasonably suspected to be in violation of the Code of Conduct.

## 3. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND DRUGS/CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

Any participant seen drinking alcoholic beverages or using drugs/controlled substances by a coach/sponsor, faculty member, administrator, or legal authority, or who admits to drinking alcoholic beverages or using drugs/controlled substances, or who shows evidence of having had alcoholic beverages/drugs/controlled substances, or who is in possession of alcoholic beverages/drugs/controlled substances, or is present at a location in which alcoholic beverages/drugs/controlled substances are available (according to the previous definitions) or upon completion of the investigation by school administration are reasonably suspected to be in violation of the Code of Conduct.

### First Offense:

After a discussion with the high school Athletic Director or Principal (or his or her designee), the student and/or parent/s must choose two or three of the following consequences/restorative actions. 1) Suspension from participation in school activities/competitions for 10 calendar days. 2) School-provided activities relating to the poor student choice/offense. 3) A minimum of 8 hours of community service worked at the school. The 10-day suspension shall start the day of the school student/parent/school administrator report. A reasonable timeline will be provided by the school administrator, with input

from the parent, on the course-work and community service options. The failure of the student to fulfill his or her course work and/or community service obligation will result in suspension from school activities until completion of the obligation/s. While the participant is suspended, he/she will

participate in practices and attend (not in uniform) contests/competitions if contests/competitions are not during school hours.

**Second Offense:**

The student will be suspended from participation in school activities/competitions for 21 calendar days. The suspension shall start of the day of the student/parent/school administration report. The second offense signifies a second violation of any of the items listed above, not necessarily two violations of the same regulation, within the same school year of the first offense. While the participant is suspended, he/she will participate in practices and attend (not in uniform) contests/competitions if contests/competitions are not during school hours.

**Third Offense:**

The student will be suspended from participation in school activities/competitions for the remainder of the school year. The suspension shall start the day of the student/parent/school administrator report.

Third offense signifies a third violation of any of the items listed above, not necessarily three violations of the same regulation, within the same school year of the first and second offense. While the participant is suspended, he/she will participate in practices and attend (not in uniform) contests/competitions if contests/competitions are not during school hours.

**CLASSROOM WORK**

The Activities Director and Principal, along with the coaching staff, shall reserve the right to withhold any student from participation should the classroom work indicate at any time that the student is not working up to his/her ability.

**DANCES AND PARTIES**

Various organizations may sponsor school dances and parties. They must be arranged with their sponsor and approved by the administration. Students will be expected to be at the dance within thirty minutes after the start of the dance and will not be allowed to enter after that time, unless there have been prior arrangements made with an administrator. Once a student enters a school dance or party, he/she will not be allowed to leave and then return. At all times, students are expected to observe school rules. High school students will not be allowed to attend middle school dances and middle school students will not be allowed to attend high school dances. Unless currently enrolled in our school district, individuals attending must be twenty years or younger. The school district reserves the right to test for drugs/alcohol at any school dance/party. Any violations of the code of conduct are subject to school discipline procedures. Law enforcement may be contacted by school personnel.

**DRESSING ROOMS**

All athletes will be under the direct supervision of the coach in charge while dressing. An athlete must not linger in the dressing room, or endanger the safety of others. All cases of misconduct while dressing will be dealt with by the coach in charge.

**DUE PROCESS**

All cases of misconduct by the participant concerning the above rules will be reviewed by the head coach/sponsor, Activities Director, and Principal.

Students should consult with these individuals if there are questions concerning these rules.

In appealing a decision relating to the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) or DC West

High School, the NSAA Annual Yearbook due process procedures will be followed. This publication is available in the high school office.

## **ELIGIBILITY RULES OF THE NEBRASKA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION**

In order to represent a high school in interscholastic activity competition, a student must abide by eligibility rules of the Nebraska School Activities Association. A summary of the major rules is given below. Contact the Principal or Activities Director for an explanation of the complete rule.

1. Student must be an undergraduate.
2. Student must be enrolled in at least twenty hours per week and regular in attendance, in accordance with the school's attendance policy at the school he/she wishes to represent in interscholastic competition.
3. Student must be enrolled in some high school on or before the 11th day of the current year.
4. Student is ineligible if 19 years of age before August 1 of the current school year. (Student may participate on a high school team if he/she was 15 years of age prior to August 1 of the current school year.)
5. After a student's initial enrollment in grade nine, he/she shall be ineligible after eight semesters of school membership.
6. Student must have been enrolled in school the immediate preceding semester.
7. Student must have received twenty semester hours of credit the immediate preceding semester. (4 full credits)
8. Once the season of a sport begins, a student shall compete only in athletic contests/meets in that sport which are scheduled by his/her school. Any other competition will render the student ineligible for a portion of, or all of, the season in that sport. The season of a sport begins with the first date of practice as permitted by NSAA rules.
9. A student shall not participate in sports camps or clinics during the season of a sport in which he/she is involved, either as an individual or as a member of a team.
10. A student shall not participate on an all-star team while a high school undergraduate.
11. A student entering grade nine for the first time after being promoted from grade eight of a two-year junior high, or a three-year middle school, or entering a high school for the first time after being promoted to grade ten from a three-year junior high is eligible. After making a choice of high schools, any subsequent transfer will cause the student to be ineligible for ninety school days. If a student has participated on a high school team at any level as a seventh, eighth, or ninth grade student, he/she has established his/her eligibility at the high school where he/she participated. If the student elects to attend another high upon entering ninth or tenth grade, he/she shall be ineligible for ninety school days.
12. When the parents of a student change their domicile from one school district which has a high school to another school district which has a high school, the student is ineligible for ninety school days except:
  - (a) If the change in domicile by the parents occurs during a school year, the student may remain at the school he/she is attending and be eligible until the end of the school year or transfer to a high school located in the school district where the parents established their domicile and be eligible.
  - (b) If a student has been attending the same high school since initial enrollment in grade nine and the school is located in the school district from which the parents moved, he/she may remain at that high school located in the school district

where the parents established their domicile and be eligible.

(c) If the parents moved during the summer months and the student is in grade twelve, the student may remain at the high school he/she has been attending and retaining eligibility.

13. Guardianship does not fulfill the definition of parent. If a guardian has been appointed for a student, the student is eligible in the school district where his/her natural parent(s) have their domicile. Individual situations involving guardianship may be submitted to the Executive Director for his review and a ruling.

14. A student shall not participate in a contest under an assumed name.

15. A student must maintain his/her amateur status

## **END OF THE SEASON/YEAR AWARDS**

The following four end of the year awards will be given in the Activities Program:

1. Female Athlete of the Year
2. Male Athlete of the Year

The athlete awards will be chosen from a list of students in grades 9-12 currently participating in two sports.

The head coaches in each sport will vote for one female and one male athlete.

3. Female Fine Arts Student of the Year
4. Male Fine Arts Student of the Year

The fine arts awards will be selected by the fine arts coaches, based upon the criteria established by the Arts & Humanities Committee.

Each of the four recipients will receive a small plaque and have their name placed on the appropriate large plaque for that individual award.

Each activity program will give the following two end-of-the-season awards:

1. Most Improved Participant
2. Most Dedicated Participant

These awards will be determined by the coach/sponsor of that activity. Each recipient will receive a medal. Each activity program may give up to six additional end-of-the-season awards. These awards will be determined by the coach/sponsor, based upon statistics and criteria established for that program. Each recipient will receive a certificate.

## **EQUIPMENT**

All equipment will be checked out to individuals at the beginning of the season by the coach in charge. The athlete will be responsible for this equipment and should be prepared to pay for the cost of replacement if it is not checked in at the end of the season in reasonable condition.

It is the responsibility of the participant to check in the equipment at the end of the season or immediately should they quit an activity. If a participant fails to check in their equipment at the designated time (immediately, should they quit an activity), he/she will be expected to pay for the cost of replacement. The Activity Director will handle all collections for lost equipment. The student cannot participate in the next sport and grades will be withheld until all equipment is turned in.

## **FIELD TRIPS, ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES**

In some classes, part of the planned activity by the teacher may include field trips away from the building. All field trips must be approved by the administration. At other times, students may represent the school at activities or athletic events. At all times, students are expected to observe regular school rules. Students must fill out an activity sheet from the sponsor and have parent permission before attending the scheduled event.

## **INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

Non-participating students displaying inappropriate behavior at any school activity may be banned from attending or participating in school activities, home and away, for a period of up to 90 days. Further offenses may result in a ban from all home and away activities for the remainder of the school year.

Such behavior includes, but is not limited to: involvement in physical or verbal altercations, use of inappropriate language towards others including players and officials, use of inappropriate signs or slurs, and the inability to abide by redirection from DC West staff, administrators, or supervisors. Activity participants that act inappropriately during their activity are subject to suspension from the activity by the coach/administration.

## **INJURY**

In the event of an injury, the athlete will immediately report the injury to the coaching staff. Any type of injury, if not properly treated, may lead to complications, which are harmful to the athlete's physical well-being and detrimental to his/her recovery time for practice and competition. If injured, the athlete must continue to attend practices and games. This means being on the bench during the games. It will be the understanding of the coach that the failure to attend the practice and game will mean the student has quit the activity and cannot letter in that sport. Practice attendance may be waived through written permission by the coach. Copies of this waiver will be given to the student and kept by the coach and Activities Director.

## **LETTERING REQUIREMENTS**

Students will letter based on the lettering policy of each individual sport or activity. Lettering represents a higher level of mastery of the sport or activity than simply being a part of the team or activity. Each coach or sponsor will disseminate lettering information to participants at the beginning of the season.

Letters will apply to NSAA sponsored activities only.

## **NSAA ELIGIBILITY RULES (Participation on Other Teams)**

Any individual who is a member of any DC West interscholastic athletic squad cannot participate in the same sport, in school or out of school, during the period that he/she is a member of the DC West interscholastic squad.

Examples: NO town team or church league basketball during basketball season NO

AAU track or sponsored marathon runs during track season.

NSAA Eligibility:

- (1) You were not 19 years of age before August 1;
- (2) You have not attended grades 9-12 more than 8 semesters;
- (3) You were enrolled in school by the 11th day;
- (4) You were in school the preceding semester;
- (5) You passed 20 semester hours of credit the preceding semester;
- (6) You are currently passing 20 semester hours;

- (7) You have not graduated from high school;
- (8) You do not play on an independent team during the season of that sport;
- (9) You do not play on an all-star team during the school year;
- (10) You have not changed schools without your parents changing residence or your parents have not changed their residence to another school district.

(Exception – If school has started you will be eligible to compete that year.)

- (11) You shall not participate in a contest under an assumed name;
- (12) You must maintain your amateur status;
- (13) Students are eligible for eight semesters.

### **OPTION ENROLLED/TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Nebraska School Activities Association guidelines state that Enrollment Option transfers, transfers from public-to-private, private-to-public, private-to-private, intra-district transfers, and transfers from out-of-state must be completed by May 1st for fall enrollment and the school receiving the transfer student must notify the NSAA in writing, postmarked no later than May 1st in order that the student can be eligible in the fall. Failure to meet this May 1st deadline will result in a 90 school days ineligibility period for the transfer student. Only after that period of time can students legally participate in any interscholastic activity governed by the NSAA.

### **PARENTAL PERMISSION AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION**

Before students are allowed to participate in school-sponsored activities, students and parents must acknowledge with a written signature (PowerSchool) that they have read and understand the student activities standards and code of conduct that have been developed and are in effect.

### **PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS**

Each student who expects to participate in athletics (grades 7-12) shall present to the head coach of the sport or the Activity Director, once each year, before participation in any practices, a physician's certificate on a form prescribed by the school that he/she is physically fit for athletic participation.

The certificate of fitness must be signed by both the doctor and the student's parent. All physician certificates of fitness will be kept on file in the Activity Director's office.

### **PEP RALLIES**

Pep Rallies may be held during the day to help support the athletic program. Cheerleaders will arrange the activities under the supervision of the sponsor. Good sportsmanship, good manners, and a high degree of school spirit should be a part of each rally.

### **PLAYING TIME**

The amount of playing time a student athlete receives is up to the discretion of the coach and is based on a variety of factors.

### **PRACTICE ATTENDANCE**

Activity participants are expected to be at all practices scheduled by the coach/sponsor. Coaches will set expectations for participants who miss a practice.

## **SAFETY**

The District's philosophy is to maintain an activities program which recognizes the importance of the safety of the participants. To ensure safety, participants are required to become fully familiar with the dangers and safety measures established for the activity in which they participate, to adhere to all safety instructions for the activity in which they participate, to inform their coach or sponsor when they are injured or have health problems that require their activities be restricted, and to exercise common-sense.

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE/ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION**

All students who participate in school activities must attend school all day the day the activity is scheduled to be eligible for participation. If a student is absent from school the day of an activity due to a dental/doctor appointment, funeral, family emergency, etc., they may participate upon return to school with an excused note from the professional office or parent (family emergency). This would need to be approved by an administrator. This applies to all practices, meets, contests, etc. All class work should be completed and turned in prior to leaving on the activity. Only students participating in the school activity will be excused from school on the day of the activity.

## **STUDENTS ATTENDING ATHLETIC CONTESTS DURING SCHOOL TIME**

A few athletic contests are scheduled during the school day. Students participating in the scheduled activity will be excused from their classes provided they have made arrangements for completing their school work. Students who desire to attend these events as spectators may be excused upon written approval from their parents. The permission sheet needs to be submitted to the office the day before attending the contest.

Absence from school on these events will be noted on the student's attendance record.

## **STUDENTS IN SIMULTANEOUS ACTIVITIES**

When a student chooses to participate in more than one activity in a season, conflicts in scheduling will occur. While these situations are rare, they create difficulties for the students and their sponsors/coaches. It is important that these conflicts be resolved with open communication between the student, the two coaches or sponsors, and the activities director. The affected parties should work together to resolve the conflict with the student's best interest as the primary focus. The purpose of these guidelines is to aid the students, sponsors, coaches and administrators in resolving these conflicts.

- Sponsors, coaches and administrators should communicate to the students their responsibilities regarding practices, performances, and competitions prior to an athletic season or co-curricular activity.
- Sponsors, coaches and administrators are strongly encouraged to investigate prior to the start of each season any potential conflicts that might occur. Careful attention should be given to the members involved in each activity to determine whether a student is involved in concurrent activities.
- Consideration should be given as to the impact a student has on a particular group or activity.
- A student should not be adversely affected or receive negative repercussions from the coach/sponsor as a result of a decision.
- If the events in conflict are of the same priority level in these guidelines, the two sponsors/coaches involved with the student in conflict should meet with the activities director to discuss the conflicting events and reach a decision that is best for the student.

The following grouping of activities is a suggested guide for sponsors, coaches and administrators to use

in resolving student participation conflicts. Activities have been tiered into three levels. Events within each grouping are listed in no particular order. Level 1 events take priority over levels 2 and 3, and level 2 events take priority over level 3.

**Level 1**

- National competitions and/or participation
- State competitions and/or performance events sponsored either by the NSAA or recognized state professional organizations (music, business, etc.)
- District or Sub-district competitions and/or performances, or national and state qualifying competitions and/or performances.

**Level 2**

- Nebraska Capitol Conference events, multi-school events of four or more schools participating (invitational tournaments)
- Major annual events within the school (All-school Play)
- Multi-school events of three or less schools participating, multi-school events and/or festivals involving any number of schools which are non-rated (parades, regular two-school athletic contests, marching festivals for participation only, etc.)

**Level 3**

- Single varsity athletic competitions, individual school concerts or performances
- Single sub-varsity athletic competitions
- Regular practices and/or rehearsals outside regular school hours

## **SUNDAY PRACTICES**

Sunday activity practices will only be held when a varsity team is scheduled to compete on Monday. Practices that are scheduled for Sundays must have the approval of an administrator. There will be no other team or partial team gatherings by any coach/sponsor unless authorized by an administrator.

## **SUSPENSIONS**

A participant may be suspended from competition and/or practice in an activity for any conduct that interferes with school purposes. The suspension may be for a period not to exceed the remainder of the school year. Such conduct shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Use of violence (including dating violence), force, coercion, threat, intimidation, provocation, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes;
- Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, or repeated damage or theft involving property;
- Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, to a school volunteer, or to any student. Personal injury caused by accident, self-defense, or other action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person shall not constitute a violation of this subdivision;
- Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student;
- Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon;
- Engaging 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;
- Public indecency as defined in section 28-806, except that this subdivision shall apply only to students at least twelve years of age but less than nineteen years of age;
- Engaging in bullying, which is defined as any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or his/her designee, or at school-sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events;
- Sexually assaulting or attempting to sexually assault any person if a complaint has been filed by a prosecutor in a court of competent jurisdiction alleging that the student has sexually assaulted or attempted to sexually assault any person, including sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults which occur off school grounds not at a school function, activity, or event. For purposes of this subdivision, sexual assault means sexual assault in the first degree as defined in section 28-319, sexual assault in the second degree as defined in section 28-320, sexual assault of a child in the second or third degree as defined in section 28-320.01, or sexual assault of a child in the first degree as defined in section 29-319.01, as such sections now provide or may hereafter from time to time be amended;
- Engaging in any other activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Nebraska which activity constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes; or
- A repeated violation of any rules and standards validly established pursuant to section 79-262 if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes.

## **TRAVEL RELEASE FORM**

When an emergency arises and a student needs to travel with someone other than the school provided transportation, a verbal/ written parental permission must be signed by the parent/guardian.

## **WARNING FOR PARTICIPANTS AND PARENTS**

The purpose of this warning is to bring your attention to the existence of potential dangers associated with athletic injuries. Participation in any intramural or athletic 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. Even with appropriate coaching, appropriate safety instruction, appropriate protective equipment and strict observance of the rules, injuries are still a possibility.

## **Section 5 Acknowledgement of Receipt**

### **AVAILABILITY OF HANDBOOKS**

The 2025-2026 Student-Parent Handbook of DC West Community Schools is available on the internet at [www.dcwest.org](http://www.dcwest.org).

### **RECEIPT OF 2025-2026 STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK**

Parents will receive a “receipt of acknowledgement” as part of the electronic online registration process. The signed “receipt of acknowledgement” signifies that parents and students have read and agreed to abide by the 2025-26 Student Handbook of DC West Community Schools. This receipt also serves to acknowledge that families understand the District’s policies of non-discrimination and equity, and that specific complaint and grievance procedures exist in the handbook and policy which should be used to respond to harassment or discrimination.