

**Douglas County West Community
Middle School**

2021-2022

Student Handbook



We are looking forward to a Fantastic School Year!

During the eRegistration process, please make sure that you complete the online signature.

Thank You!

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DOUGLAS COUNTY WEST COMMUNITY MIDDLE SCHOOL

401 S. Pine St., Valley, NE. 68064

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 378 – Valley, NE 68064

Office: 402-779-2646 Fax: 402-779-2534

MISSION STATEMENT

Douglas County West Community Schools creates passionate learners by maximizing student achievement through dynamic learning experiences which inspire and provide a quality education for all students within a safe and community-supported environment

PREAMBLE

The purpose of this handbook is to provide procedural guidelines for situations that may arise for students and parents throughout the school year and to provide answers to questions with daily procedures. While this handbook covers many of the possible scenarios and situations encountered, it is not intended as an all-inclusive document. The administration reserves the right to manage the unexpected situations not covered in this handbook.

SCHOOL COLORS – Red, Black, & Silver

SCHOOL MASCOT – Falcon

SCHOOL CONFERENCE – Nebraska Capitol Conference

NSAA CLASSIFICATION – Class C-1

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Dr. Melissa Poloncic, Superintendent402-359-2583
Mr. Jeremy Travis, Principal.....402-779-2646
Mrs. Nicole Pechous, Special Education Director.....402-779-2646

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Deputy Corbin Brown.....402-779-2646

D.C. WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHING STAFF

Department	Teachers
6 th Grade.....	Mrs. Sara Horstman, Mr. Nolan Zimmer Mrs. Kerry Reker, Ms. Danielle Peterson
Intervention & Enrichment.....	Ms. Desi Samson
7 th grade English Language Arts.....	Ms. Erica Medina
8 th grade English Language Arts.....	Ms. Raychel Swanson
7 th & 8 th Grade Mathematics.....	Ms. Jenny Wright, Ms. Lindsey Pearson Mr. Chip Daehling
7 th & 8 th Grade Science.....	Mrs. LeAnn Siekman, Mrs. Lindsey Boardman
7 th & 8 th Grade Social Studies.....	Mrs. Taylor Smurr
Art.....	Mrs. Amber Bradley, Mr. Sean Pralle
Computer Technology & Physical Education/Health.....	Mr. Bob Wald
Information Technology.....	Mr. Ben Knobbe
Guidance Counselor, Careers Readiness & Social Skills.....	Mrs. Debbie Finnicum
English Language Learners & Spanish.....	Ms. Alyssa Lindahl
Library & Media Research.....	Ms. Jennifer Webster
Music.....	Mrs. Elizabeth Guinn (Instrumental) Mrs. Dawn Beyl (Vocal & Theatre)
Physical Education/Health.....	Mr. Russ Ninemire
Strength and Conditioning.....	Mr. Adam Loftis
French.....	Mrs. Liescheski
Family & Consumer Science.....	Ms. Cynthia Thomas
Special Education Services.....	Miss Amber Goddard, Mrs. Dawna Daily

MIDDLE SCHOOL DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE (Monday-Thursday)

Teachers Available	7:45
Breakfast Served	7:30-7:55
Warning Bell	7:50
1st Hour	8:00-8:45
2nd Hour	8:48-9:33
3rd Hour	9:36-10:21
4th Hour	10:24-11:09
Lunch	11:09-11:39
Pride/Guided Study	11:42-12:12
5th Hour	12:15-1:00
6th Hour	1:03-1:48
7th Hour	1:51-2:36
8th Hour	2:39-3:24

FRIDAY EARLY DISMISSAL SCHEDULE

Teachers Available	7:45
Breakfast Served	7:30-7:55
Warning Bell	7:50
1st Hour	8:00-8:35
2nd Hour	8:38-9:13
3rd Hour	9:16-9:51
4th Hour	9:54-10:29
5th Hour	10:32-11:07
Lunch	11:07-11:37
Pride/Guided Study	11:40-12:10
6th Hour	12:13-12:48
7th Hour	12:51-1:26
8th Hour	1:29-2:04

GENERAL INFORMATION**ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**

Any accident or illness 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Any organization, student, teacher, or staff member wishing to include an announcement in the daily announcements should have it submitted to the secretary before 9:00 a.m. that morning. All announcements are subject to administrative review.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

Students are not allowed to enter the school building before 7:30 a.m. unless they are under the supervision of a staff member. Upon arriving at school, students should proceed to the cafeteria if they are eating breakfast or the middle school commons area until the 7:50am bell.

BACK PACKS

Students will be allowed to carry their back packs with them throughout the school day for this upcoming school year. However, there is a built-in combination locker available for each student to use also.

BIRTH CERTIFICATES

All new students entering the school district must provide the Guidance Counselor's office with a registered copy of the student's birth certificate. This must be on file with the district within thirty days after enrollment. State law requires school district personnel to report students missing a birth certificate to the local police for investigation.

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.

CLOSED CAMPUS

D.C. West Middle School 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.

DISASTER DRILLS

We must 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. Students may practice an evacuation procedure and be transferred to an off-site location.

DRUG FREE ZONE

The D.C. West Schools have taken steps to insure that the school premises will be free from drugs/alcohol. In addition to declaring the school property as a Drug Free Zone, the school prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs, look alike drugs, alcohol and its container, electronic cigarettes and its container (and electronic cigarette paraphernalia), non-prescribed pills, and steroids by any student during school hours or after school hours as part of the school's activities program.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Philosophy and Purpose. The District strongly discourages students from bringing and/or using personal electronic devices at school. When students arrive to school, they are expected to place such items immediately into their backpacks upon entering the doors of the building. Student use of electronic devices for instructional purposes in the classroom is at the discretion of the teacher. Unapproved electronic devices will be confiscated for a period of time to be determined by the administration. If a student's electronic device is turned into the office by a staff member, the following steps will be taken:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1 st Offense: | Phone call to parent/guardian and the electronic device is returned to the student at the end of the day. |
| 2 nd Offense: | Phone call to parent/guardian and the parent/guardian will need to pick up the electronic device at school. |
| 3 rd Offense: | Phone call to parent/guardian, the parent/guardian will need to pick up the electronic device at school and the student will need to check in their electronic device upon arrival to school for the remainder of the year. |
| 4 th Offense: | Phone call to parent/guardian, the parent/guardian will need to pick up the electronic device at school and the student will no longer be allowed to have their electronic device at school. |

The use of electronic devices can be disruptive to the educational process and are items that are frequently lost or stolen. In order to maintain a secure and orderly learning environment, and to promote respect and courtesy regarding the use of electronic devices, the District hereby establishes the following rules and regulations governing student use of electronic devices, and procedures to address student misuse of electronic devices.

b. Definitions.

- (1) "Electronic devices" include, but are not limited to, cell phones, iPads, Mp3 players, iPods, personal digital assistants (PDAs), compact disc players, portable game consoles, cameras, digital scanners, lap top computers, and other electronic or battery powered instruments which transmit voice, text, or data from one person to another.
- (2) "Sexting" means generating, sending or receiving, encouraging others to send or receive, or showing others, through an electronic device, a text message, photograph, video or other medium that:
 - (i) Displays sexual content, including erotic nudity, any display of genitalia, unclothed female breasts, or unclothed buttocks, or any sexually explicit conduct as defined at Neb. Rev. Stat. § 28-1463.02; or
 - (ii) Sexually exploits a person, whether or not such person has given consent to creation or distribution of the message, photograph or video by permitting, allowing, encouraging, disseminating, distributing, or forcing such student or other person to engage in sexually explicit, obscene or pornographic photography, films, or depictions; or,
 - (iii) Displays a sexually explicit message for sexual gratification, flirtation or provocation, or to request or arrange a sexual encounter.

Violations

- (1) Prohibited Use of Electronic Devices: Students shall not use electronic devices for: (a) activities which disrupt the educational environment; (b) illegal activities in violation of state or federal laws or regulations; (c) unethical activities, such as cheating on assignments or tests; (d) immoral or pornographic activities; (e) activities in violation of Board or school policies and procedures relating to student conduct and harassment; (f) recording others (photographs, videotaping, sound recording, etc.) without direct administrative approval and consent of the person(s) being recorded, other than recording of persons participating in school activities that are open to the public; (g) “sexting;” or (h) activities which invade the privacy of others. Such student misuses will be dealt with as serious school violations, and immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be imposed, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion from school.
- (2) Penalties for Prohibited Use of Electronic Devices: Students who receive a “sexting” message are to report the matter to a school administrator and then delete such message from their electronic device. Students shall not participate in sexting or have any “sexting” message on their electronic devices regardless of whether the message was received while on school grounds or at a school activity.
- (3) Reporting to Law Enforcement: Violations of this policy regarding the prohibited use of electronic devices that may constitute a violation of federal or state laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the Nebraska Child Protection Act or the Nebraska Child Pornography Prevention Act shall be reported to appropriate legal authorities and law enforcement.

c. Responsibility for Electronic Devices. Students or their parents/guardians are expected to claim a confiscated electronic device within ten (10) days of the date it was relinquished. The school shall not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for any unclaimed electronic devices. By bringing such devices to school, students and parents authorize the school to dispose of unclaimed devices at the end of each semester. The District is not responsible for the security and safekeeping of students’ electronic devices and is not financially responsible for any damage, destruction, or loss of electronic devices.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

The D.C. West School is an equal opportunity employer in accordance with Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicapping condition.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives parents certain rights with respect to their children’s education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the right have transferred are “eligible students”. Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student’s education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student’s education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, “directory” information such as a student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, dates and attendance, and the height and weight of students for activity programs. While it is the general practice of the D.C. West Schools to not release this information, interested persons may examine these records unless a parent/legal guardian wishes to have all or part of this information excluded from release.

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. Beverage machines are provided for student use before and after the school day. Proper disposal of all bottles and wrappers will insure that the machines will stay in place. 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.

GRIEVANCE

Whenever a student or a parent of a student in D.C. West Schools has a problem with another person, the first step is to discuss that problem with that person to try to resolve the conflict. If that procedure is unsuccessful, then the problem is to be taken in order to a classroom teacher, then to the principal, then to the superintendent, and finally to the Board of Education for resolution.

HARASSMENT/BULLYING/INTIMIDATION/VIOLENCE (including dating violence)

It shall be the policy of the D.C. West Schools to ensure that all students have a right to work and study in a safe, supportive environment that is free from harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence (including dating violence). This policy applies to the premises of the D.C. West Schools and any other premises where the school district can lawfully exert its jurisdiction. It is a violation for any supervisory personnel (administrator or teacher) to knowingly permit harassment, bullying, intimidation and violence (including dating violence) in the school.

Bullying means 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 at school-sponsored athletic events. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This applies when it is directed toward a student which has an effect of interfering with academic performance/grades or creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive, unsafe, or unwholesome learning environment. Dating violence means a pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner. Observed or experienced violations of this policy by students should be immediately reported to the classroom teacher, advisor, counselor, or administrator.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Credit for the automated lunch accounting system can be purchased in the cafeteria 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 their lunch for the day. Students with negative balances or no money in their account will not be allowed a lunch.
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.
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. 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:
 - They must report and sign into the office.
 - They must wear a visitor badge which is available in the office.
 - They must wait in the office for the student to meet them and escort them to lunch.
 - They must eat at the designated table/area (MS Commons) that will be assigned for visitors eating lunch with students.
 - They must under no circumstances talk with other students in a negative or confrontational manner.
 - They must sign back out in the office when leaving after lunch.

In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. To file a complaint

of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Television and radio stations will announce school cancellations due to inclement weather. Parents may also be notified by a phone call from the school district "alert now" system. 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 at any time. Occasionally, weather conditions force the closing of school during the day. It is suggested that parents make arrangements for their children to stay with friends or neighbors when necessary.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

LB 79-217 states that each school district shall require each student to be protected against measles, mumps, rubella, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus by immunization prior to enrollment. Any student who does not comply with this shall not be permitted to continue in school until he or she so complies.

LB-222 states that a student may be provisionally enrolled in school if the student has begun immunizations required under section 79-217 and is receiving immunizations as rapidly as is medically feasible. As a condition for the provisional enrollment, a parent or guardian of the student shall provide the school with a signed written statement certifying that the student has completed the course of immunizations required by section 79-217. The provisional enrollment of a student qualified for such enrollment shall not continue beyond sixty days from the date of such enrollment. At such time the school shall be provided written evidence of compliance with section 79-217. The student shall not be permitted to continue in school until such evidence of compliance is provided.

LB 79-248 states that whenever a child apparently shows symptoms of any contagious or infectious disease, such child shall be sent home immediately or as soon as safe and proper conveyance can be found. Such student may be excluded from school until medical documentation is provided for the student to safely return to school.

The Nebraska School Immunization Rules and Regulations effective July 1, 2001, require the following immunizations for students before attending classes. The school must have a record of these immunizations. Students failing to comply will be excluded from school until such requirements are met:

Grade K-12 students -

-3 doses DTaP, DTP, DT or Td vaccine with at least one dose at or after 4 years of age.

-3 doses polio vaccine.

-2 doses MMR or MMRV vaccine with first dose at or after 12 months of age with the 2 doses separated by at least 28 days.

-3 doses hepatitis B vaccine or 2 doses of adolescent vaccine if student is 11-15 years of age

- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age or written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider. If the child has had varicella disease, the child does not need any varicella shots.

Additional, for 7th grade only:

-1 dose of Tdap (must contain pertussis booster) – this dose can be received any time after 10 or 11 years of age depending on which brand of vaccine is received.

INSURANCE

D.C. 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.

INTERNET CONTRACT

Students of D.C. West Schools will use worldwide communication via 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/iPad privileges.

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.

MEDICATION

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.

1. Parents who come to school to administer medication to a student must ask that the student be called to the office.
2. No students are allowed to administer their own medication without the prior approval of the administration.
3. 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. The medication must be in the original container and labeled with the name of the medicine and the dosage.
 - d. 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.

NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS

Pupils whose parent(s) or guardian(s) are not legal residents of the D.C. West School District may attend D.C. West School upon acceptance by the School Board. The tuition amount is established annually by the Board of Education. Information concerning non-resident tuition can be obtained from the Superintendent's Office.

NOTICE CONCERNING DISCLOSURE OF STUDENT RECRUITING INFORMATION

The Federal Law requires D.C. West Schools to provide military recruiters and institutions of higher education access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone listings. Parents and secondary students have the right to request in writing that D.C. West Schools not provide this information (i.e. not provide the student's name, address, and telephone listing) to military recruiters or institutions of higher learning without prior written parental consent. D.C. West Schools will comply with any such written request.

NOTICE CONCERNING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Upon request, D.C. West Schools will give parents the following information about their child's classroom teacher:

- (1) Whether the teacher has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- (2) Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or provisional teaching certificate.
- (3) The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher. You may also get information about other graduate certification or degrees held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.

We will also, upon request, tell parents whether their child is being provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, the qualifications of the paraprofessional. The request for information should be made in writing to an administrator in your child's school building. The information will be provided to you in a timely manner. Finally, D.C. West Schools will give timely notice to you if your child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet the requirements of the Act.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The D.C. West School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or handicap in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the school's compliance with Title IX, Section 504, and the American Disabilities Act is directed to contact the School District's Board of Education Secretary, PO Box 378, 401 South Pine St., Valley, NE 68064. Telephone 359-2583. The Principals have been designated to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with Title IX, Section 504 and the American Disabilities Act.

Title IX and Section 504 Grievance Procedures

The following policies and procedures are established in order to assist in the fair resolution of a student, faculty, or staff grievance (a claim by a student, faculty member, or staff member that a violation of Title IX or Section 504 regulations has occurred). Whenever a grievance occurs, the following procedure will be followed, with every effort to secure an appropriate resolution as early as possible.

1. The term "grievant" means the individual student, parent, faculty member, or staff member filing a grievance under this policy; the term "days" means days when school is in session except when a grievance is filed on or after May 15, when "days" refers to Mondays through Fridays, except for legal holidays.
2. A grievance may be filed by an individual or by a parent on behalf of a student, if the grievant feels that sex discrimination or discrimination on the basis of handicap has occurred in this school district.
3. No grievance shall be recognized unless it is filed at the appropriate level within ten (10) days after the occurrence of the event which is the subject of the grievance.
4. The purpose of time limits in this policy is to insure prompt action. In circumstances where the grievant does not pursue the next step of the procedure within the time period specified, unless there is a mutually agreed extension of time, the grievance

shall be considered settled and no further action shall be required. In the absence of a written reply to a grievance by the appropriate administrator within the required time period, the grievance shall be considered denied, and the grievant may submit the grievance in writing to the next level.

Procedures

Level One: A grievant shall make an appointment with his or her principal or immediate supervisor and discuss the matter of the grievance within ten (10) days after the occurrence of the event of the grievance. Every effort will be made to resolve the grievance informally at this level, with the principal or immediate supervisor giving an oral response.

Level Two: If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level One, he/she shall submit the signed grievance in writing to the principal or immediate supervisor within five (5) days after the oral response at Level One. A written grievance shall contain a detailed description of the factual circumstances upon which the grievance is based, and an explanation of how these facts result in sex discrimination or discrimination on the basis of handicap. The principal or immediate supervisor must submit a written answer within five (5) days after receipt of the written grievance.

Level Three: If the grievant is not satisfied with the resolution of the grievance at Level Two, he/she may submit the written grievance within five (5) days thereafter to the area superintendent, who will respond in writing to the written grievance within five (5) days.

Level Four: If the grievant is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Three, he/she may submit the written grievance to the Director of Title IX and Section 504, who will convene a grievance committee for the purpose of examining evidence of sex discrimination or discrimination on the basis of handicap in the case submitted. The grievance committee will consider all relevant evidence presented in connection with the grievance, and may request individuals to testify before the committee. Within twenty (20) days after receipt of the written grievance, the grievance committee shall determine what action, if any, should be taken to resolve the grievance. The decision of the grievance committee is final, and a copy of the decision shall be delivered to the grievant.

NURSE AND MEDICAL HELP

The D.C. West Schools utilize service of the Douglas County Visiting Nurses Association. The nurse is available on a limited basis. Any student needing these services must make an appointment in the office.

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.

OPTION ENROLLMENT

The Nebraska Department of Education, as established in Title 92, Chapter 19, Section 7, allows the D.C. West Schools to participate in the option enrollment program. Application of option students submitted between September 1 and March 15 for enrollment during the following and subsequent school years will be approved subject to capacity limitations. Applications submitted after March 15 shall be accompanied by a written release from the resident school district. The option school district shall provide the resident school district with the name of the applicant on or before April 1. The option school district shall notify, in writing, the parent or legal guardian of the students and the resident school district, and the State Department of Education whether the application is accepted or rejected on or before April 1. Further information regarding option enrollment policies of the district may be obtained by contacting the office of the Superintendent.

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.

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.

PURCHASING MATERIALS

Students cannot purchase any items for use by a club or organization. Purchase orders will be accepted only from the organizations' sponsors. Unauthorized purchases will not be paid for by the school organization. Students are not to use the school address when making any private purchases.

SCHOOL BILLS AND FINES

Students are responsible to meet all financial obligations they incur at D.C. West Schools. All fines and bills are to be paid as soon as possible. Parents will be notified of any outstanding bills, and the bills must be paid before the student's report card or records will be released. Students who fail to correct the situation after that notification may be subject to exclusion from school and/or school activities until arrangements are made by agreement with the principal, parent and student.

SMOKE and TOBACCO FREE ENVIRONMENT

D.C. West Schools declares all of our school buildings and grounds to be smoke and tobacco free. We would appreciate parent help in meeting the goal of a smoke- and tobacco-free environment for our children. When parents attend school events, including athletic events, we ask that parents please remember that our grounds are smoke and tobacco free and abide by our District's policy.

STUDENT FEES POLICY

The Board of Education of D.C. West Schools has adopted a student fees policy in accordance with the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act. Students in grades 7-12 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.

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. Student 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 a parking fine.

STUDENT PROPERTY

Students should not bring valuable personal possessions or large sums of money into the school building. These items include electronic devices, collectibles, or any other valuable items. Students, not the school, are responsible for their private property. Do not leave valuables in your locker and make sure your locker is locked at all times, including locker room lockers. The sale or trading of personal property will not be allowed on school premises. If the occasion exists that you must bring large sums of money or other items of value, it is recommended that you deposit them with the office for safekeeping. Unapproved items found in a student's possession may be confiscated for a time to be determined by the administration.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students shall have the right to express themselves by speaking, writing, wearing, or displaying symbols of ethnic, cultural, or political values; except that the administration may regulate expression, provided there is factual basis for believing a specific form of expression by a specific student will cause or is causing substantial disruption of school activities or the learning process of other students. No student shall disrupt the educational process within a school.

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 you must use the phone, please bring a pass from your teacher with you 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 to the office during class time, a message will be taken and given to the student.

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

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 Superintendent.

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.

WELLNESS POLICY

The Douglas County West School District is to provide curriculum, instruction, and experiences in a health-promoting school environment to instill habits of lifelong learning and health. The district has a School Nutrition and Wellness Committee to monitor and review the School Wellness Policy and, if necessary, make recommendations for revision to the Board of Education.

DISCIPLINE INFORMATION

- A. It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent to develop and maintain a system of uniform discipline. The discipline which may be imposed includes actions which are determined to be reasonably necessary to aid the student, to further school purposes, or to prevent interference with the educational process, such as (without limitation) counseling and warning students, parent contacts and parental conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, lunch detention, restriction of extracurricular activity, or requirements that a student receive counseling upon written consent of the parent or guardian, or in-school suspension. The discipline may also include out-of-school suspension (short-term and long-term) and expulsion.
- B. The purpose of the D.C. West Behavior Management Plan is to support the mission of D.C. West Schools. The management plan is designed to help students develop self-responsibility, self-management, ownership for behavior and life-long problem solving skills. The district staff believes that skills can and will be taught to all students.

I. GOALS:

- A. To create an environment that enhances learning for all students.
 1. To teach, model, and practice responsible choices, problem solving, and conflict resolution.
 2. To recognize appropriate behavior by the use of positive interventions, class incentives, and/or rewards.
 3. To teach classroom, lunchroom, hallway, and common area rules and procedures.
 4. To work cooperatively with parents to promote our student management policies.
 5. To focus on prevention.
- B. To promote effective communication skills that enable students to be successful in their social and educational environments.
- C. To promote behavior management skills that enable students to be successful in their social and educational environments.
- D. To increase all individuals' sense of respect for self and others by enhancing self-esteem and personal responsibility.
- E. To enhance positive parent-student-teacher interaction.

- F. To focus on using instruction to develop responsible staff and student decision-making.
- G. To promote the care and respect of school and personal property.
- H. To incorporate problem solving and conflict resolutions for the prevention of behavior problems.

II. THE ROLE OF THE STUDENT

We believe it is the student's responsibility to help himself/herself succeed by:

- A. respecting others and their property.
- B. doing his/her best and helping others to do their best.
- C. respecting the building and school grounds.
- D. being responsible and held accountable for the choices that he/she makes.
- E. working to maintain a positive attitude and an eagerness for learning.
- F. learning and using problem solving and conflict management strategies.
- G. behaving in a manner which allows other students to learn. Behavior that distracts students or the teacher is not appropriate.

III. THE ROLE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

We believe it is the parents' responsibility to help students succeed by:

- A. knowing what kind of behavior is expected of middle school students.
- B. discussing with their children what the middle school expects of its students and the consequences for failing to meet those expectations.
- C. being aware of their children's behavior and successes and/or challenges at school.
- D. supporting and following through with school rules and policies to include signing for receipt of the handbook and doing their best to maintain communication with staff members.
- E. making sure their children arrive in good health, including sufficient rest, hygiene, and nourishment.
- F. providing necessary school supplies.
- G. getting their children to school on time.
- H. notifying the school of their child's absence or tardiness.
- I. insuring their children complete all missing assignments.
- J. reviewing office referrals with their child.

IV. THE ROLE OF THE STAFF

We believe it is the staff's responsibility to help students succeed by:

- A. setting the tone by teaching appropriate behaviors and manners.
- B. encouraging student self-discipline and cooperation while respecting the rights, property, and safety of others.
- C. reviewing the rules, incentives, and consequences of the student management plan.
- D. teaching and modeling the skills and processes necessary for students to understand and be successful within the plan.
- E. teaching appropriate behaviors for specific areas of school, e.g. hallway, lunchroom, bathroom, as well as classroom.
- F. expecting support and assistance when requested. (e.g. physically dangerous situations, flagrant disrespect, destruction of property, or chronic disruptions)
- G. being responsible for documentation of parent contact, problematic student behavior, office referrals, etc.
- H. being consistent in the application of the management plan.

V. THE ROLE OF THE COUNSELOR AND SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

We believe it is the counselor's and school psychologist's responsibility to help students succeed by:

- A. offering individual and/or small group counseling.
- B. receiving and responding to referrals of a personal nature from the teachers and administrators.

VI. THE ROLE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

We believe it is the administration's responsibility to help children succeed by:

- A. setting the tone by establishing, facilitating, and implementing the student management plan.
- B. assuring the student management plan is reviewed with staff at the beginning of each school year and throughout the year with all new staff members.
- C. scheduling in-services for the skills and processes necessary for students to understand and be successful with the plan.
- D. providing support and assistance from the counselor or school psychologist when necessary. (e.g. physically dangerous situations, flagrant disrespect, destruction of property, or chronic disruptions)
- E. communicating effectively with students, staff members, and parents by providing consistent, frequent feedback.
- F. following district policies and guidelines, consistent with state and federal laws.
- G. coordinating a process for record keeping and data collection.
- H. following through with consequences and providing support for the teachers.
- I. ensuring the front desk is staffed and responsive to school personnel and visitors at all times.
- J. scheduling meetings and parent contacts.

VII. THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

We believe it is the SRO's responsibility to help the students succeed by:

- A. Enhancing the safety of the school and protecting the learning environment.
- B. Building relationships with students, staff, parents, and community members.
- C. Providing educational resources for students.

BUS RULES

D.C. 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. Busses 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.
4. Students are expected to leave the bus only at their designated stops unless they present to the driver a written request from their parents, which has been approved by an administrator.
5. Students are to stand off the roadway until the bus has come to a stop, then board and go directly to their seats. The bus will not move until students are seated.
6. At the discretion of the bus driver, each student may be assigned a seat.
7. When it is necessary to cross the road after leaving the bus, students are to walk to a distance of approximately ten feet in front of the bus, stop, then proceed to cross the road only upon the signal from the driver.
8. Student conduct has a direct bearing on the safety of all passengers, so students are to observe these rules:
 - Comply promptly with bus driver's requests.
 - Remain seated at all times when the bus is in motion and keep the aisles clear.
 - Open and close windows only upon receiving permission from the driver.
 - Never extend head, arms or hands out of bus windows.
 - Avoid unnecessary conversation with the bus driver.
 - Do not eat food, candy or drinks while on the bus.
 - Treat other passengers with respect. Inappropriate language or actions will not be tolerated.
 - Permission from the parent or guardian is necessary each time a student elects to not ride the bus.
9. Violation of bus rules may result in loss of privilege to ride the bus and/or other disciplinary action.

BUS DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The procedures listed below 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: Written warning and parent notification
 Second Offense: 3-5 day suspension from the bus
 Third Offense: 5-10 day suspension from the bus
 Fourth Offense: suspension from the bus for the remainder of the semester/year

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.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT CONDUCT AND GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINE

The following additional student conduct expectations are established. Failure to comply with such rules is grounds for disciplinary action. When such conduct occurs on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle being driven for a school purpose by a school employee or by his or her designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event, the conduct is grounds for long-term suspension, expulsion or mandatory reassignment.

1. 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 dangerous to the health and safety of anyone or interferes with the learning environment or teaching process in our school.

Continual violations of the dress code will result in more stringent disciplinary actions, up to expulsion. Further, in the event the dress code violation is determined to also violate other student conduct rules (e.g.,

public indecency, insubordination, expression of profanity, and the like), a first offense of the dress code may result in more stringent discipline, up to expulsion.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

Whenever a student has a problem with another person, the first step is to discuss that problem with the person involved to try to resolve the conflict. If that procedure is unsuccessful, then the problem is to be taken in order, to a classroom teacher, counselor or school psychologist, then to the principal, then to the superintendent, and finally to the Board of Education if not resolved at an earlier step.

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 that immediate day after school if the homework has not already been turned into 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.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Early intervention when discipline problems first occur is very important. Often severe discipline problems progress from minor problems. Early parental involvement is mandatory. If a student’s behavior is a legal or safety issue, the student will be referred to the office.

OFFICE REFERRALS

- When a student is referred to the office, a behavior log entry may be entered into Powerschool. With severe or multiple infractions, parents will be notified.
- Standards of acceptable behavior are necessary for us to provide the best educational opportunities possible for students. The enforcement of student discipline without parental support is extremely difficult.

DRESS CODE

For the health and safety of all students, the following dress code will be enforced:

1. Students will be neat and clean.
 2. Students will be clothed in a non-distracting manner. Students are not allowed to wear sagging pants, clothing that has large tears or exposes undergarments, or clothing with references or advertising that includes alcohol, tobacco, or drugs or any inferences that contain sexual overtones.
 3. Students will wear footwear at all times. During warm weather, students may wear shorts of mid-thigh length. Cut-off shirts, cut-off pants or sweats, long Johns, mid-riff baring, halter/tank tops and spaghetti string clothing will not be allowed during regular school hours.
 4. Students will not be allowed to wear headwear (hats, caps, bandanas) in the building during regular school hours.
- Students whose dress for the day is deemed inappropriate by an administrator will be asked to return home to change or have someone bring appropriate attire to the school. Students may be required to make up missed class time. Students should remember that what they wear is a reflection on themselves, their parents, and the school.

DRUGS/ALCOHOL/CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

Students in attendance at school or school functions/activities and suspected to be under the influence of drugs/alcohol or other controlled substances will be confronted by the administrator and staff on duty. The student will be informed of the charge against him/her, parents/guardians will be called, and the proper authorities will be called according to state law (N.R.S. 79-293). A student suspected of using alcohol may choose to prove his/her innocence by volunteering to take a breathalyzer test. Violations of any of the above prohibitions will result in the student’s emergency exclusion from school, during which time a decision will be made with respect to additional disciplinary action.

HAZING AND INITIATIONS

D.C. 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.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)

As a means of preserving the educational process for other students, the administration of D.C. West Schools may assign a disruptive or misbehaving student In School Suspension (ISS). The student will be placed under direct adult supervision and will be suspended from taking part in the regular classroom activity, passing time, and lunchroom privileges. Students assigned to ISS are required to report to school at normal times, and will be counted tardy or absent under other policies in this handbook if he/she fails to report. Assignments will be collected from the teachers for the student to complete during ISS. Students are responsible to have all academic work completed upon returning to class following an ISS.

INAPPROPRIATE DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Publicly displaying the affection of one student for another is prohibited at school. Physical contact of any kind (kissing, hugging, etc.) is inappropriate in school and is considered an infraction against our attempts to maintain an orderly environment at school.

REQUESTS TO CONTACT STUDENTS AND STUDENT INTERVIEWS BY NON-SCHOOL PERSONNEL

In dealing with law enforcement officials including the school resource officer (SRO), Douglas County West Community Schools' employees are not to obstruct government operations or unreasonably refuse or fail to aid a peace officer, but are also to attempt to prevent undue interference with District operations or educational programming.

REMOVAL OF STUDENTS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS

Law enforcement officers should not be permitted to remove a child from school while the child is properly in attendance, without permission of the child's parent or guardian, except when legally authorized to do so. For purposes of this policy, a law enforcement officer is defined as: sheriffs, coroners, jailers, marshals, police officers, state highway patrol officers, members of the National Guard on active service by direction of the Governor during periods of emergency, and all other persons with similar authority to make arrests (Neb. Rev. Stat. 49-801)

Law enforcement officers may in the line of duty require a student to accompany him or her for questioning or detention either with or without an arrest warrant. A peace officer has the lawful authority to take immediate temporary custody of children under the age of 18 with an arrest warrant, or without a warrant or order of the court by reasons listed in the board policy #5413.

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.

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

An administrator may determine that it is necessary to exclude a student from classes. The decision to exclude would be made after the administrator has investigated the facts, given the student and parent oral or written notice of the charges against the student, and provided an opportunity for the student to present his/her version. The range of possible exclusion includes: short-term out of school suspension, emergency exclusion, long-term out of school suspension, or expulsion. In addition, the administrative and teaching personnel may take other actions regarding student behavior, such as: counseling of students, parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, alternative educational placement, requirements that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work, requirements that a student receive counseling from outside agencies or qualified professionals with written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation, loss of privileges, or restriction of extracurricular activities.

Additional Student Conduct Expectations and Grounds for Discipline. The following additional student conduct expectations are established. Failure to comply with such rules is grounds for disciplinary action. When such conduct occurs on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle driven for a school purpose by a school employee or by his or her designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event, the conduct is grounds for short or long-term suspension, expulsion or mandatory reassignment.

SHORT-TERM OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION: Students may be excluded by an administrator from school or participation in any school function for a period of up to five school days on the following grounds:

1. Conduct constituting grounds for expulsion as hereinafter set forth; 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 connection between such conduct and school.
3. The following process will apply to short-term suspension:
 - (a) The party considering the short-term suspension shall make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. In

addition, such short-term suspension shall be made only after a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.

(b) Prior to commencement of the short-term suspension, the student shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student. The student shall be advised of what the student is accused of having done, and the basis of the accusation, and an explanation of the evidence the authorities have.

(c) The student shall be afforded an opportunity to explain the student's version of the facts to the person affecting the short-term suspension.

(d) An opportunity shall be afforded to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, to have a conference with regard to the matter with the administrator ordering the short-term suspension before or at the time the student returns to school. The administrator shall determine who, in addition to the parent or guardian, shall attend the conference.

(e) A student who is on a short-term suspension shall not be permitted to be on school grounds without the permission of the principal.

EMERGENCY EXCLUSION: Emergency Exclusion may be enacted for a period of time up to 5 school days if the student's presence is deemed dangerous to himself/herself or others. Emergency Exclusion may also be enacted if school personnel need more time to further investigate the situation. A student cannot attend school or take part in any school functions.

LONG-TERM OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION: A long-term suspension means an exclusion from school and any school functions for a period of more than five school days but less than twenty 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. 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: 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 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 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.

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 recommendation 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.

NOTICE TO BE GIVEN FOR LONG-TERM OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Upon determination by an administrator that a student will be given a long term suspension or expulsion the administrator will notify the student and parent(s)/guardians in writing. The student and parent(s)/guardians will be given a statement explaining the student's rights to a hearing upon the specified charges. A description of the procedures for the hearing and a time schedule to request a hearing will be included with that statement.

A request for a hearing form must be received by the principal's office within five (5) school days of receipt of the written notification from the school. If no request notice is received, the recommended disciplinary action shall automatically go into effect. If a hearing request form is received more than five (5) days after receipt of the written notice but prior to thirty (30) days after actual receipt, the student shall be entitled to a hearing but disciplinary action that has been taken may continue in effect pending final determination.

SCHOOL BOARD AUTHORITY REGARDING LONG-TERM SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

School boards may suspend enforcement of a long-term suspension or expulsion and, as a condition, assign the student to an

alternative educational setting or rehabilitation program. Students who satisfactorily complete an alternative educational setting program or a rehabilitation program may be reinstated and the expulsion may be expunged from the student's record.

STUDENT'S RIGHT TO APPEAL

Students that have been excluded from school for an emergency exclusion, long-term suspension or expulsion have the right to appeal the disciplinary action taken against them. The procedure to follow in requesting a hearing to appeal the disciplinary action is as follows:

A. THE HEARING PROCEDURE

1. A hearing examiner is appointed by the Superintendent when a written request by the parent or guardian is received.
2. The hearing examiner may be any person who did not bring charges against the student, is not to be a witness at the hearing, and has no involvement in the charge.
3. Within two days after being appointed, the hearing examiner shall give written notice of the time and place of the hearing.
4. The hearing will be held within a period of five school days after it is requested (unless changed for good cause).
5. No hearing will be held upon less than two school days notice unless otherwise agreed upon by the concerned parties.
6. Records, written statements, and the statement of any witness may be examined and explained prior to the hearing. The hearing examiner will also be available to answer questions concerning the nature and conduct of the hearing.
7. The hearing shall be attended by the hearing examiner, the principal (or designee), the student, and the student's parents or guardian. The student may have a representative.
8. Witnesses shall be present only when testifying.
9. The student may be excluded at the discretion of the hearing examiner in compliance with state statutes.
10. A student may speak in his/her own defense and may be questioned on his/her testimony.
11. The principal (or designee) shall present statements about the student's conduct and/or the student's record.
12. Witnesses may be asked to testify and may be questioned. Their testimony will be under oath or affirmation.
13. The hearing will be recorded at School District expense.
14. The hearing examiner shall prepare a report of his findings and recommendations. This report will be presented to the Superintendent.
15. The Superintendent will review the hearing examiner's report and reach a determination. The Superintendent may not impose a more severe sanction than that recommended by the hearing examiner.
16. The Superintendent's determination will be personally delivered or sent by registered or certified mail to the student, student's parents, or guardian.
17. The punishment takes effect upon receipt of the Superintendent's determination.

B. APPEAL PROCEDURE

1. The Superintendent's determination may be appealed to the Board of Education within fifteen school days following a hearing.
2. The appeal request must be written and filed with the Secretary of the Board, PO Box 378, 401 S. Pine St.
3. A hearing shall be held before a committee of the Board, consisting of not less than three Board members.
4. The hearing shall be held at or before the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.
5. An appeal shall be made on the record, except that new evidence may be admitted to avoid a substantial threat of unfairness. New evidence shall be recorded at School District expense.
6. After examining the record and taking new evidence, if any, the Board committee may withdraw to deliberate privately upon the record and new evidence.
7. The Board may reopen the hearing to obtain additional evidence.
8. The Board may alter the Superintendent's decision, but may not impose a more severe sanction.
9. Notice of final Board action will be by personal delivery or registered or certified mail.
10. The final Board decision may be appealed by filing a petition in the District Court within thirty days after receipt of notice of the Board decision.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

There are 4 Levels of Behavior Infractions:

1. **Productive Personal Environment** – Behaviors that affect students in the classroom. Behavior examples are:
 - a. Coming to class without books, papers, and writing tools
 - b. Sleeping in class
 - c. Not working on intended curriculum
 - d. Refusing to work
 - e. Failing to earn minimum academic credit
 - f. Other behavior determined to be personally nonproductive

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES FOR LEVEL 1 INFRACTIONS BEGIN WITH THE CLASSROOM TEACHER AND MAY PROGRESS TO THE ADMINISTRATION.

2. **Productive Classroom Environment** – Behaviors that occur in the classroom and interfere with the learning of others. Behavior examples are:

- a. Failing to follow reasonable request of the teacher
- b. Talking out of turn
- c. Disturbing another student in any way
- d. Failing to remain in assigned seat/area
- e. Using equipment improperly
- f. Putting down another person
- g. Cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty
- h. Other behavior determined to be nonproductive to the class environment

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES FOR LEVEL 2 INFRACTIONS BEGIN WITH THE CLASSROOM TEACHER AND MAY PROGRESS TO THE ADMINISTRATION.

3. **Orderly Environment** – Behaviors that occur outside the classroom that are not intended to cause physical or mental harm to another individual, are not illegal, but negatively affect an orderly environment. Behavior examples are:

- a. Being disruptive on school property or at school activities
- b. Being out of class or out of the building without permission
- c. Being in or on school property without permission
- d. Being excessively tardy, truant, or absent from class
- e. Using profanity
- f. Using or possessing vulgar or obscene literature or technology
- g. Displaying illegal drug association verbally, with paraphernalia, clothing, jewelry, written work, or pictures
- h. Inappropriately displaying affection to another
- i. Soliciting unauthorized items at school
- j. Violating the dress code
- k. Creating or causing unsanitary conditions (spitting, throwing food, etc)
- l. Other behavior determined to be disorderly to the school environment

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES FOR LEVEL 3 INFRACTIONS BEGIN WITH THE ADMINISTRATION.

4. **Safe Environment** – Behaviors that intend to cause another physical or mental harm or are illegal. Behaviors that contribute to an unsafe environment will not be tolerated and will be dealt with immediately.

Nebraska State Statute Section 79-267. The following school conduct shall constitute grounds for short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment, subject to the procedural provisions of the Student Discipline Act, when such activity occurs on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle being driven for a school purpose by a school employee or by his/her designee, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event.

Behaviors that contribute to an unsafe environment include:

- Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member, or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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. 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.
- Public indecency or sexual conduct.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 had the potential to create a substantial interference with school purposes, such as the use of the telephone or internet off-school grounds to threaten.
- A repeated violation of any rules established by the school district or school officials if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes.
- Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities.
- 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, gender, disability, national origin, or religion.
- Dressing or grooming in a manner which is dangerous to the student's health and safety or a danger to the health and safety of others or repeated violations of the student dress and grooming standards; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that is lewd or indecent, vulgar or plainly offensive; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that school officials reasonably conclude will materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school; dressing, grooming, or engaging in speech that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use.
- Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for riding school buses or vehicles.
- 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:
 - i. 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
 - ii. The knowing and intentional possession, use, or transmission of a dangerous weapon other than a firearm.

DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES FOR LEVEL 4 INFRACTION BEGIN WITH THE ADMINISTRATION

ACTIVITIES THAT RESULT IN SUSPENSION OR EMERGENCY EXCLUSION

The following activities that are in violation will result in suspension or emergency exclusion for students.

1. Drinking, possessing, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages on school premises or at school activities. Students in possession of alcohol or under the influence at school or school activities will be turned over to the proper authorities.
2. Smoking, using or possessing tobacco on the school premises or at school activities.
3. Vandalizing or willfully destructing school property or property of others. Appropriate legal action will be taken and restitution for damages will be demanded.
4. Fighting, stealing, gambling or unlawful threats.
5. Harassing others because of race, nationality, disability, religion, appearance, sex, age, or marital status, etc.
6. Displaying gross disrespect toward a student or adult, to include the use of profanity.
7. Possessing certain items such as weapons, explosives, lasers, firearms, or knives.
8. Using, furnishing, buying, selling, possession of or being under the influence of illegal substances or look- a-like illegal drugs, non-prescribed prescription drugs, or possession of drug paraphernalia.. Any information concerning the use of illegal substances in the school or by students will be turned over to the proper authorities.
9. Filing false emergency reports, such as fire alarms and bomb threats or tampering with fire safety or automatic external defibrillator equipment

RESPECT OF SCHOOL FACULTY & SUPPORT STAFF

Students are to follow instructions given by those in our school who are responsible for their supervision. The school district hires teachers, bus drivers, custodians, library & teacher paraprofessionals, maintenance crew, food service personnel and secretaries. These are people who carry out the functions of the school and whose directions are to be followed without question or argument. Students are expected to treat all personnel with dignity and respect at all times. Students are to refer to school staff as Dr./Mr./Mrs./Ms. followed by the last name of that individual.

SEARCH AND SEIZURES

The District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention. When it is determined based on searches that a person has violated a Board policy, administrative regulation, building rule, student conduct rule or personnel expectation, or the law, the person shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and a report to law enforcement may be made.

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

The following procedures will be used for conducting searches:

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 rule violation. The search must be conducted in a reasonable manner under the circumstances. Random searches of student lockers, desks, and other similar school property provided for use by students may be conducted in the discretion of the administration.
2. School officials may search offices and storage devices provided to or used by employees where permitted by law, such as where reasonable grounds exist for suspecting that a search will turn up evidence that the employee has committed work-related misconduct, or that a search is necessary for a non-investigatory work-related purpose, such as to retrieve a file.
3. Searches of the District's computer system may be conducted in the discretion of the administration at any time.

The following procedures will be used for the removal of personal property:

1. Illegal items or other items reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety of others or a threat to educational purposes may be seized by school officials. Any illegal drugs, firearm or dangerous weapon shall be confiscated and delivered to law enforcement as soon as practicable.
2. Items which have been or are reasonably expected to be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process may be removed from student possession.

The District is not responsible for the security or safety of personal property which employees, students, or other building users may bring to school.

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE SEARCHES BY LAW ENFORCEMENT/CANINE UNITS

The district retains the right to utilize the services of Law Enforcement Authorities Canine Units in the detection of illegal drugs and/or contraband at anytime, announced or unannounced at the District's schools and programs.

1.The Superintendent, building principal, or his/her designee may request the canine unit be utilized to search all inside areas or a school building, including lockers, at a time when student are or are not present. If a search takes place in a classroom when students are present, all will exit the room, leaving all items behind. Students may also be instructed to place all personal items in the closest hallway and reenter the classroom while the canine units search personal belongings in the hallway.

2.The Superintendent, building principal, or his/her designee may request that a canine be utilized to search vehicles in a school parking lot or in other areas where student vehicles are parked during or after school hours. If a dog alerts to a student's vehicle, the student will be required to unlock the vehicle doors and trunk for internal inspection. Any refusal to unlock the vehicle will be handled by law enforcement.

3.Any illegal drugs, illegal contraband, or other school-banned substances/items found on school grounds, whether in a student locker, vehicle, or any other place on school grounds, will be confiscated and the student may be subject to disciplinary action specified in the Code of Conduct.

4. The student's parent/guardian shall be notified should illegal drugs and/or contraband be discovered.

TRUANCY/SKIPS

Unauthorized absence from school is considered truancy. Parents of students who are truant from school will be contacted by school personnel. The procedures for dealing with truant students may include a parental conference, counseling, disciplinary action, or changes in the educational program. In the event truancy continues, the County Attorney's office shall be notified of a student who fails to comply with attendance standards of the school and the State of Nebraska. Habitually truant students may be excluded from the school district if attendance does not improve after other disciplinary procedures. A skip shall be defined as a class absence in which proper check-out procedures are not followed, or an absence without an administrator's approval. A student who has skipped a class may receive no credits for the day's work that was missed. An administrator shall be the final authority for excusing any student absence.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

SRO's 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 or serious bodily injury and/or criminal law matters, school discipline issues should not 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.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

The Middle School issues report cards four times during the year. In addition to report cards, progress reports are available during the middle of each 9-week grading period. At other times, parents may receive weekly reports about your child's progress from the teacher or via email 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.

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 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 first semester and two days second semester, with involvement from the advisor, counselor, parent, and teacher.

CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher-Student conferences are used at DC West Schools improve communication between parents, teachers, and students. These conferences will be held twice during the year to give parents an opportunity to meet one-on-one with each of their son/daughter's teachers to discuss academic progress. Parents are invited to call or stop in at school when there is a concern or a question on a child's education.

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.

GRADING

Students will be graded on their classroom work by each teacher, with grades being given to parents at the end of each quarter. The purpose of the grade is to communicate to the student and parents the student's level of ability and progress.

A = 94-100%

B+ = 90-93%

B = 87-89%

C+ = 83-86%

C = 77-82%

D+ = 73-76%

D = 70-72%

F = 69% & Below

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, 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 the student being assigned to complete the work before or after school and may result in a failing grade. Our 6th/7th/8th 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 90.5% 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 88%, without a grade of D or below.

LOCKERS

There is a built-in combination locker available for each student. Students are cautioned not to give their locker combinations to others. Students are not to trade, switch, or share lockers with other students. Students are responsible for their lockers. If a locker is not working properly, it should be immediately reported to the office.

MISSED SCHOOL WORK

Any school work missed because of absence is the responsibility of the student to make up in a designated amount of time as determined by the classroom teacher. Students that will be absent for an extended period of time are required to get assignments and should work on them at home. A student will have one instructional day to make up school work for each consecutive day they have missed due to the illness, injury or other unexpected absence. For example, if a student is absent on Monday, they would be expected to obtain their assignments the next class period (Tuesday) to be due on Wednesday. Any work assigned prior to the absence is due upon the student's return to school.

PLAGIARISM/CHEATING

D.C. West Middle School believes all students should demonstrate honesty and integrity in their work. Each student is expected to do his/her own work. This includes test taking, homework, class assignments, the creation of original essays, compositions,

research papers, and scientific research. Sharing work with another student during tests, on in-class essays or assignments, or on homework is considered cheating. If submitted work is not a true reflection of a student's own effort and ability, the student has demonstrated unacceptable academic behavior. The consequences for academic misbehavior will be determined by the classroom teacher, and in most cases the MINIMUM consequence will be NO CREDIT for the assignment. For subsequent infractions, academic dishonesty may result in administrative disciplinary action as well as no credit for the assignment.

- access to information will be viewed as intent
- claiming credit for work not the product of one's own honest effort
- providing unwarranted access to materials or information so that credit may be wrongly claimed by others
- lending work to another
- changing or attempting to change a mark on a report card or other school document
- knowing about and tolerating any of the foregoing
- improper collaboration
- using another's work to prepare an assignment
- discussing or sharing test or quiz information with another student after taking an examination in order to provide the student with information before he/she takes the test or quiz
- going beyond the collaboration directed by the teacher

Plagiarism:

- using ideas from a source without giving credit and integrating those ideas into your essay or other written assignment or project
- paraphrasing part of a source - merely changing several words in a sentence or paragraph does not permit use of the passage unless credit is given to the author
- verbatim copying: The systematic copying of material from another source is a most serious offense. The nature of the original source is immaterial. You may not copy from any source - a book, an article, or work of another person.

PRIDE

In PRIDE, each student will have a teacher who will serve as the student's mentor throughout their years at the middle school. The mentor and student will work together to provide an educational foundation for success. The mentor assists the student in developing and monitoring long and short term goals, assists the student in maintaining academic progress through the timely completion of school work, assists the student with organizational planning, communicates with the student's teachers and parents on academic progress, maintains the student's records with an educational plan, and is available to serve as a resource person for the student. Pride will last approximately 10 minutes every day followed by a built in Guided Study Hall for all students that will then be approximately 20 minutes every day.

STUDENT AWARDS AND HONOR CONVOCATIONS

At the end of each semester, an awards program will be held to recognize students who have achieved academic excellence during the school year. Teachers will present awards to students in their classes who have exhibited academic excellence, above-average growth, or participation during the semester.

STUDENT RECORDS

A cumulative file is maintained in the guidance office 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.

SUPPLIES

Students are expected to provide their own supplies needed for normal classroom work. At times, class assignments may require an additional cost to the student.

TESTING AND ASSESSMENT

D.C. 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.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND MOVEMENT INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE

A goal of D.C. West Middle School is to promote punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility in all students. There has been a high correlation between good attendance and good academic performance of students. Nebraska State Statute 79-201 states that “every person residing in a school district within the state of Nebraska who has legal or actual charge or control of any child who is of mandatory attendance age or is enrolled in a public school shall cause such child to enroll in, if such child is not enrolled, and attend regularly a public, primate, denominational, or parochial day school which meets the requirements for legal operation prescribed in Chapter 79, or a school which elects pursuant to section 79.1601 not to meet accreditation or approval requirements, each day that such school is open and in session, except when excused by school authorities or when illness or severe weather conditions make attendance impossible or impracticable”.

Nebraska State Statute 79-209 states that a school must have a written policy on excessive absenteeism. Excessive absenteeism is defined as a student exceeding five days per quarter or the hourly equivalent. Excused and unexcused absences may be used for purposes of this policy. A school district shall render all services in its power to compel such child to attend school to address the problem of excessive absenteeism. Such services shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) One or more meetings between a member of the school administrative staff to attempt to solve the problem of excessive absenteeism;
- (2) Educational counseling to determine whether curriculum changes, including, but not limited to, enrolling the child in an alternative program that meets the specific educational and behavioral needs of the child, would help solve the problem of excessive absenteeism;
- (3) Educational evaluation, which may include a psychological evaluation, to assist in determining the specific condition, if any, contributing to the problem of excessive absenteeism, supplemented by specific efforts by the school to help remedy any condition diagnosed; and
- (4) Investigation of the problem of excessive absenteeism by a member of the school administrative staff to identify conditions which may be contributing to the problem. If services for the child and his/her family are determined to be needed, a member of the school administrative staff shall meet with the parent or 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 problem of excessive absenteeism.

Nebraska State Statute 79-209 further states, “if the child is absent more than twenty days per year or the hourly equivalent, the school shall file a report with the county attorney of the county in which such person resides. The county attorney may file a complaint against a person violating section 79-201 before the judge of the county court of the county in which such person resides charging such person with violation of section 79-201 or may file a petition under the Nebraska Juvenile Code alleging the person violating section 79-201 is a juvenile described in subdivision (3)(a) or (3)(b) of section 43-247. Nothing in this section shall preclude a county attorney from being involved at any stage in the process to address excessive absenteeism”.

To help all students with their attendance, the following procedures will be followed:

1. All parents should contact the school by phone the morning of a known absence of a student or provide their child with a written excuse upon return stating reason for the absence and dates missed. The office will attempt to contact parents when the student is absent and the school has not been notified. The student should check in at the office upon return to school.
2. Students and parents are expected to make medical, dental, personal appointments, and vacations outside the school day.
3. Each teacher will record attendance of all students each class period and Pride.
4. Students not in attendance at school during the day cannot attend school activities that night.

DRIVING

Students are not allowed to drive their vehicles during the school day. In extreme situations, students may receive permission from home and then from office personnel to drive a vehicle to get items from home.

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.

TARDIES

Students are counted tardy if they are not in their scheduled classroom before the passing bell rings. If students are not in attendance after 15 minutes of the start of the class period, it will be considered an absence. The accumulation of three tardies will result in an absence for that class period. Students are to plan their time so they can move from one class to the next during the passing time. If a student shows a continuous pattern of tardiness a student may be subject to the following consequences: Lunch Detention, Before or After School Detention, Parent Meeting, Tardy/Attendance Plan, or In-School Suspension. The goal is for the student to be in class on time and ready for their daily instruction.

ACTIVITY INFORMATION

STUDENT ACTIVITY PASS

Students in grades 7-12 may purchase a student activity pass from the office. The fee for a student activity pass is (\$35) and that is set on an annual basis. This pass allows the student admission to all home activity events, except tournaments and special events. All students involved in organized groups or athletics must purchase an activity pass. You may also purchase a family pass (\$125) or an adult only pass (\$50). Senior citizens are free in our school district.

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. Middle School dances will be attended by DC West students only.

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 (including dances) the following week, Wednesday through Tuesday. Students attending an activity while on the ineligibility list will be ineligible for an additional week. The duration for the cumulative grade eligibility roster will be for one nine weeks grading period.

Students who are failing a class will be provided a Progress Report on Monday (or asap following a holiday) of each eligibility period. Staff will be notified of all students on the list. Students will have until Wednesday (end of the day) to bring their failing grades up. Once a passing grade is achieved, the student will have their teacher sign off on the Progress Report and return the Progress Report to the Principal's office. If a student raises their grades to meet the eligibility requirement, he/she may participate in activities. All students that are failing two classes by Wednesday will be ineligible for a minimum of one week.

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. A student must have their detention time made up prior to going on a field trip or participating in an activity.

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.

NEW ORGANIZATIONS

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

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 March 15, 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.

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. Absence from school on these events will be noted on the student's attendance record and will be allowed as any other absence from school.

STUDENTS ATTENDING POST-SEASON TOURNAMENTS

Students wanting to go to DC West post-season tournaments need to have parent permission submitted to the office the day 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.

ACTIVITIES CODE

This Activities Code applies to all students participating in the following extra-curricular activities: Cross Country, Football, Volleyball, Basketball, Wrestling, Track, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Yearbook, Art Club, and Student Council.

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.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITY PHILOSOPHY

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 them better individuals and citizens.

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.

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.

EXTRA CURRICULAR 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.

SCOPE OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

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.

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.

PARENTAL PERMISSION

Once each year, prior to the first practice session, each participant must have on file a signed parental permission form to

compete in a sport. (included with this code)

INSURANCE RELEASE FORM

Once each year, prior to the first practice session, each athlete must have on file a signed insurance form which releases the school from responsibility for any injury.

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.

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.

All collections for lost equipment will be handled by the Activity Director. The student cannot participate in the next sport and grades will be withheld until all equipment is turned in.

PRACTICE ATTENDANCE

Activity participants are expected to be at all practices scheduled by the coach/sponsor. Should a participant not be able to attend a practice or contest, he/she must contact the coach/sponsor in advance. The coach will determine whether the reason for absence is excused or unexcused. Students must be in attendance by the start of 3rd period to be able to participate in practice, games, or contests that day. Any deviation from these procedures must be approved by the Activities Director and communicated to students and parents.

SUNDAY PRACTICES

Sunday activity practices will only be held when a varsity team is schedule to compete on Monday. Practices which 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.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE/ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

All students who participate in school activities must attend school **periods 3-8** 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.

If any student participating in a school activity has a cumulative failing grade in any two classes one week, he/she becomes ineligible to participate in activities until he/she no longer appears on the ineligibility list. The ineligibility list will be reported on the first day of the school week. Students attending an activity when on the ineligibility list will be ineligible for an additional week.

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.

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.

TEAM TRAVEL

All participants must ride to and from contests and practices by means of approved school transportation. All member of an activity will return from a contest or practice by the same transportation provided for taking them to the contest or practice. If circumstances exist that an athlete or participant needs to go home separately, approval must first be obtained from the administration. A travel release form must be used. Dress of team members should be neat, clean and of good taste.

TRAVEL RELEASE FORM

When an emergency arises and a student needs to travel with someone other than the school provided transportation, a travel release form must be filled out by the student and their parent/guardian. Students traveling with the parent/guardian need to give the completed form to the sponsor for approval. When students are traveling with someone other than the parent/guardian the form must be turned into the administration or coach/sponsor so that permission may be granted.