

Regular Board of Education Meeting

Monday, July 14, 2025 6:00 PM

Gering High School - Freshmen Academy Wing
1500 U Street
Gering, NE 69341



Minutes

1. GPS Board of Education Information

Absent: Matt Kautz, **Present:** Bryan Barrett, Josh Lacy, John Maser, Greg Trautman, Tracy Wiese.

2. Opening Procedures

2.1. Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Board President, Greg Trautman, at 6:01 p.m.

2.1.i. Oath of new board member.

Bryan Barrett

2.2. Roll Call

2.3. Pledge of Allegiance

2.4. Open Meetings Act

3. Consent Agenda

3.1. Minutes from the previous month's board meeting(s)

3.2. Approval of Claims/Bills

3.3. Board Policy Adoption

3.3.i. First Reading of Board Policies

3.3.ii. Second Reading of Board Policies

4. Student Fees Public Hearing

This public hearing was called to order by Board President, Greg Trautman, at 6:07 p.m. There were no public comments; hearing was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

4.1. Public Hearing for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions, or observations by taxpayers relating to setting the Student Fee Schedule.

5. Parental and Family Engagement Public Hearing

This public hearing was called to order by Board President, Greg Trautman, at 6:08 p.m. There was one comment from Lonnie O'Bryan. The hearing was adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

- 5.1. Public Hearing for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions, or observations by taxpayers relating to the reviewing of Policy 1005.3 - "Parental/Community Involvement in Schools", Policy 613.01 - "District Title I Parent and Family Engagement", and Policy 504.12 - "Cell Phone and Other Electric Communication Devices".

6. **Bully Prevention Public Hearing**

This public hearing was called to order by Board President, Greg Trautman, at 6:09 p.m. There were no public comments; the hearing was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

- 6.1. Public Hearing for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions, or observations by taxpayers relating to the reviewing of Policy 504.20 - "Bullying Prevention".

7. **Reports & Discussions**

7.1. Board Committee Report: Curriculum & Personnel

John Maser presented to the Board. He went over policy updates, specifically the cell phone policy and FMLA policy. Discussed the alternative program at Lincoln. Went over elementary and LINKS handbooks. Talked about PD workshops happening this summer for staff. Also talked about the mentor/mentee program and how it's a great program to get new teachers off on the right foot.

7.2. Board Committee Report: Business & Facilities

Josh Lacy presented to the board. He went over the financial review; only spent 82% of the budget, and we have one month left. We are going to have to spend more on the auditorium than originally planned. The LINKS building updates are done, and they have begun to work on Geil. We will have to find a new auditor for next year. The summer food program has been a huge success. We have given out over 22,000 meals to families in the area. This is federally funded, not using taxpayer dollars. School lunch prices will increase by 5 cents. This is mandated by the state. Northfield needs a new roof and the Middle School is getting new shower heads and valves in the boys' locker room. We do not have an update on the track.

7.3. Superintendent's Report

8. **Public Comments: 204.12**

Lonnie O'Bryan addressed the Board.

9. **Action Items**

- 9.1. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2025-26 school year LINKS, Elementary School, and Substitute Handbooks.
- 9.2. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2025-26 school year meal prices.

9.3. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of the 2025-26 Board of Education Schedule.

9.4. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding the approval of a resolution for Staff Training.

10. **Board Comments**

Tracy Wiese - Welcome Bryan!

John Maser - Welcome Bryan!

Josh Lacy - Congrats to Bryan. Thanks, Lonnie, for your comments.

Greg Trautman - Congrats to Bryan. Shout out to our maintenance crew this summer.

We have a certified plumber, HVAC, builder, electrician and great grounds crew that saves the district money. We are getting more work done by being able to have the special building fund.

10.1. Tentative Upcoming Board Meeting/Event Dates

11. **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Regular Board of Education Meeting

Monday, June 16, 2025 6:00 PM

Gering High School - Freshmen Academy Wing
1500 U Street
Gering, NE 69341



Minutes

1. GPS Board of Education Information

2. Opening Procedures

2.1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by board president, Greg Trautman, at 6:00 p.m.

2.2. Roll Call

Present: Matt Kautz, Josh Lacy, John Maser, Greg Trautman, Tracy Wiese.

2.3. Pledge of Allegiance

2.4. Open Meetings Act

3. Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was presented by Tracy Wiese, seconded by Josh Lacy. After voting, motion Passed.

Matt Kautz: **Yea**, Josh Lacy: **Yea**, John Maser: **Yea**, Greg Trautman: **Yea**, Tracy Wiese: **Yea**

3.1. Minutes from the previous month's board meeting(s)

3.2. Approval of Claims/Bills

3.3. Board Policy Adoption

3.3.i. First Reading of Board Policies

3.3.ii. Second Reading of Board Policies

3.4. Personnel Items

3.4.i. Certified Staff Contract(s)

3.4.ii. Certified Staff Resignation(s)

4. Celebration of Excellence

4.1. 25/26 Budget Preview - Stacy Rodriguez

Stacy Rodriguez presented to the board her budget review. She discussed how schools are funded and, depending on state aid, our cash flow fluctuates. If property values go up, then state aid will go down. Our state aid is going down for the next school year. We also have not changed the levy in 10 years.

4.2. Summer Camp Update - Trevor Teichrob and Kyla Walker

Trevor Teichrob and Kyla Walker presented to the board on the Summer Camp. Trevor discussed how we clearly have had a gap and a need for childcare in Gering. It has been vital to have the support of the YMCA and GPS to make the program a success. Over the last three years, the camp has grown in camp registrations, starting from year one at 67 to year three at 89. They have been able to provide 30 scholarships this year to families and 26 have received subsidies. They have between 60–70 kids a day, with their highest enrollment being preschool/kindergarten. They received a grant of almost \$250,000 from DHHS to provide fun activities and supplies for the camp! They have weekly themes all summer long that collate with a fun curriculum, which does include state standards. They have seen huge growth in kids who go to summer camp, then have to transition into the classroom.

5. Reports & Discussions

5.1. Board Committee Report: Curriculum & Personnel

John Maser presented to the board. He talked about the handbooks for all the schools and the few changes that were made. He also talked about the summer school programming and some of the changes we made this year. We added the accelerated learning program to help students with dual credit hours. This was all done through the REAP grant. He then talked about how we are moving the LINKS program over to the high school and the preschool expansion. We have added two more classes, one at Geil and Northfield.

5.2. Board Committee Report: Business & Facilities

Josh Lacy presented to the board. He discussed the repairs that we have had to do in the district and the amount of money we have saved using our own staff. The summer food program has been a success, serving over 500 kids this week. We will have a new construction house for our high school kids to work on. We are in the process of hiring a CM@R for our GMS bond project.

5.3. Superintendent's Report

6. Public Comments: 204.12

Lonnie O'Bryan addressed the board.

7. Action Items

7.1. Discuss, consider, and take action regarding handbooks for GHS, GMS, Prek, and Classified staff.

A motion to approve handbooks for GHS, GMS, Prek, and Classified Staff was presented by Josh Lacy, seconded by John Maser. After voting, motion Passed.

Matt Kautz: **Yea**, Josh Lacy: **Yea**, John Maser: **Yea**, Greg Trautman: **Yea**, Tracy Wiese: **Yea**

8. Board Comments

Josh Lacy - Welcome to Rich, new I.T. Director. It was great to hear from the summer camp!
Tracy Wiese - Good to hear about the summer camp. Looking forward to the special meeting.
Greg Trautman - Good to hear about the summer camp. Special thanks to Kyla Walker and Trevor Teichrob for their leadership with the program.

8.1. Tentative Upcoming Board Meeting/Event Dates

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Special Board of Education Meeting

Monday, June 16, 2025 7:00 PM

Gering High School - Freshmen Academy Wing
1500 U Street
Gering, NE 69341



Minutes

1. GPS Board of Education Information

Present: Matt Kautz, Josh Lacy, John Maser, Greg Trautman, Tracy Wiese.

2. Opening Procedures

2.1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board President, Greg Trautman, at 7:02 p.m.

2.2. Roll Call

2.3. Open Meetings Act

3. Action Items

Two applications were received by the Board, in which each candidate was interviewed in order of a draw. The board selected five interview questions from the Nebraska Association of School Boards, Board Vacancy guidelines to ask the candidates. They are as follows:

1. Greg Trautman - Please share with us your background and experiences. What motivates you to become a board member? Of the volunteer and work experiences you mentioned, which attribute do you believe will be the most beneficial for you as a board member?
2. John Maser - What is your vision for education in the school district?
3. Tracy Wiese - What do you see are a school board member's responsibilities and does that have a role in the day-to-day operation of the school district?
4. Matt Kautz - Can you, and should you support a board decision that you're not in favor of?
5. Josh Lacy - How would you handle a request or concern if approached by an individual or special interest group?

Each question was scored according to the response of the candidate, by each board member. The final tally was a cumulative score which produced the candidate with the highest score.

Each board member expressed gratitude for the quality of each candidate and encouraged them to stay engaged in the district.

3.1. Discuss, consider, and take all necessary action in choosing an applicant to fill the Board vacancy position.

A motion to select Bryan Barrett to fill the Board Vacancy was presented by Josh Lacy, seconded by Matt Kautz. After voting, motion Passed.

Matt Kautz: **Yea**, Josh Lacy: **Yea**, John Maser: **Yea**, Greg Trautman: **Yea**, Tracy Wiese: **Yea**

4. Public Comment: Policy 204.12

5. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Special Board of Education Meeting

Tuesday, July 1, 2025 12:00 PM

Gering Public Schools - Central Office
1519 10th St
Gering, NE 69341



Minutes

1. GPS Board of Education Information

Absent: Matt Kautz, **Present:** Josh Lacy, John Maser, Greg Trautman, Tracy Wiese.

2. Opening Procedures

2.1. Call to Order

This meeting was called to order by Board President, Greg Trautman, at 12:00 p.m.

2.1.i. Oath of new board member.

A motion to proceed on July 14th was presented by Josh Lacy, seconded by Tracy Wiese. After voting, motion Passed.

Matt Kautz: Absent, Josh Lacy: **Yea**, John Maser: **Yea**, Greg Trautman: **Yea**, Tracy Wiese: **Yea**

2.2. Roll Call

2.3. Open Meetings Act

3. Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was presented by Tracy Wiese, seconded by John Maser. After voting, motion Passed.

Matt Kautz: Absent, Josh Lacy: **Yea**, John Maser: **Yea**, Greg Trautman: **Yea**, Tracy Wiese: **Yea**

3.1. Board Policy Adoption

3.1.i. First Reading of Board Policies

3.2. Personnel Items

3.2.i. Certified Staff Resignation

Meredith Christiansen - SPED Teacher, GMS

4. Action Items

4.1. Consider, discuss, and take all necessary action to: (a) evaluate proposals for the construction management at risk contract, and (b) rank each construction management at risk proposal on the basis of best meeting the criteria in the request for proposals and taking into consideration the recommendation of the construction management at risk selection committee.

A motion to rank the proposals for a construction management at risk contract in the following order: (1) Sampson, (2) Beckenhauer & Hausman (tied), was presented by Tracy Wiese, seconded by John Maser. After voting, motion Passed.

Matt Kautz: Absent, Josh Lacy: **Yea**, John Maser: **Yea**, Greg Trautman: **Yea**, Tracy Wiese: **Yea**

4.2. Consider, discuss, and take all necessary action, including without limitation providing negotiating guidance, to direct the Superintendent and district legal counsel to negotiate a construction manager at risk contract between the school district and construction management firms in order of their ranking.

A motion to consider, discuss, and take all necessary action, including without limitation providing negotiating guidance, to direct the Superintendent and district legal counsel to negotiate a construction manager at risk contract between the school district and construction management firm, Sampson, in order of their ranking was presented by Tracy Wiese, seconded by Josh Lacy. After voting, motion Passed.

Matt Kautz: Absent, Josh Lacy: **Yea**, John Maser: **Yea**, Greg Trautman: **Yea**, Tracy Wiese: **Yea**

5. Public Comment: Policy 204.12

6. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:19 p.m.

June Check Listing

Payee Name	Amount	Fund
Jon Hutchison	\$2,351.50	1
The Mixing Bowl Cafe	\$838.16	1
Boston Gable	\$50.00	1
Dalton Gass	\$25.00	1
Cash-Wa Distributing of Kearney, Inc	\$884.44	1
City Of Gering	\$45,549.05	1
Ace Hardware	\$592.89	1
ArbiterSports LLC	\$6,430.16	1
B&C Steel Corporation	\$190.00	1
Bethany Gress	\$74.71	1
Bluffs Physical Therapy	\$2,780.97	1
Bytes Computer & Network Solutions	\$21,238.46	1
Column Software, PBC	\$68.72	1
Commercial Lighting	\$466.41	1
Contractors Materials	\$618.50	1
Culligan Of Scottsbluff	\$80.00	1
Dawn Garney	\$21.56	1
Dennis Supply Company	\$19.61	1
Eakes Office Solutions	\$57.68	1
Emily Rose	\$53.48	1
ESU13	\$37,227.03	1
FBG Service Corporation	\$222.00	1
First Student, Inc.	\$82,407.06	1
Hometown Leasing	\$5,007.17	1
Hullinger Glass & Locks, Inc.	\$1,385.00	1
Intralinks, Inc.	\$7,323.50	1
Jirdon Agri Chemicals	\$171.45	1
KSB School Law	\$6,062.00	1
Logoz Llc	\$90.00	1
Menards	\$316.87	1
Moravek, Michael	\$64.61	1
NCSA	\$600.00	1
Northwest Pipe Fittings, Inc.	\$369.43	1
Paul Reed Construction	\$30.64	1
Pepsi Cola Of Western Nebraska	\$150.05	1
Perry, Guthery, Haase & Gessford, P.C.,	\$432.00	1
Praise Windows, Inc.	\$1,100.00	1
Print Express	\$470.50	1

Raptor Technologies, LLC	\$695.00	1
Sandberg Implement, Inc.	\$339.37	1
Scottsbluff Public Schools	\$5,086.05	1
Sherwin-Williams Company	\$480.21	1
Taher, Inc	\$5,238.69	1
Teaching Strategies, LLC	\$2,421.00	1
Tri-State Sprinkler Systems LLC	\$160.42	1
Twin City Roofing & Sheet Metal, Inc.	\$1,781.09	1
Wal-Mart _18940	\$84.66	1
Wilson, Ashlee	\$65.66	1
D'Angelo Murillo	\$5.60	1
Ace Hardware	\$169.55	1
Benzel Pest Control	\$265.00	1
Charter Communications	\$135.00	1
Contractors Materials	\$393.80	1
Eakes Office Solutions	\$2,190.70	1
Frank Parts Company	\$41.24	1
Gannon Allred	\$7.05	1
IXL Learning, Inc.	\$1,305.00	1
Legacy Cooperative	\$68.00	1
Menards	\$21.98	1
Northwest Pipe Fittings, Inc.	\$1,691.14	1
Print Express	\$1,220.85	1
Pye-Barker	\$26,651.00	1
Tidal Wave Auto Spa	\$220.00	1
Western Ne Community College	\$31,973.50	1
Winsupply Scottsbluff Ne Co	\$553.01	1
Wpci	\$570.00	1
Quadient Finance USA, Inc.	\$1,000.00	1
Taher, Inc	\$2,842.00	1
Visa	\$4,735.79	1
Ace Hardware	\$87.00	1
Allo Communications	\$6,351.61	1
Bsn Sports	\$36.96	1
City Of Gering	\$1,529.00	1
Column Software, PBC	\$205.62	1
Crossroads Music	\$1,903.99	1
Das State Accounting - Central Finance	\$292.87	1
Docu-Shred	\$560.00	1
Eakes Office Solutions	\$1,261.29	1
Edgerton Explorit Center	\$1,631.67	1

Embassy Suites Lincoln	\$2,045.00	1
ESU13	\$39,341.29	1
First Student, Inc.	\$67,553.93	1
Gering Bakery-Ahlers Baking Inc.	\$37.42	1
Hampton by Hilton - North Platte	\$220.00	1
Hampton Inn Kearney	\$679.80	1
Ideal Linen	\$987.08	1
Jamie Selzer	\$263.25	1
Johnson Controls, Inc.	\$2,500.00	1
La Quinta Inn & Suites - Kearney	\$269.90	1
Logoz Llc	\$282.00	1
Menards	\$298.95	1
Midwest Connect, LLC	\$77.00	1
Nebraska State Fire Marshal	\$360.00	1
Northwest Pipe Fittings, Inc.	\$989.78	1
O'Reilly Auto Parts	\$178.87	1
OneSource	\$1,067.45	1
Pearson	\$41.80	1
Quadient Leasing USA, Inc.	\$616.14	1
Richard, Jana L.	\$226.68	1
SB Cony Pub Tran/Tri-City Road	\$40.00	1
Scotts Bluff Country Club	\$1,305.60	1
Scottsbluff Public Schools	\$4,882.11	1
Sherwin-Williams Company	\$1,147.49	1
Snell Services, Inc.	\$355.00	1
Snowie Shaved Ice Of Nebraska	\$287.00	1
Solution Tree	\$7,063.56	1
Twin City Roofing & Sheet Metal, Inc.	\$196.00	1
Wilson, Ashlee	\$61.89	1
YMCA	\$10,918.45	1
Regional Care, Inc.	\$269.50	3
Bridgeport High School	\$1,100.00	5
Bsn Sports	\$195.00	5
Chadron Public Schools	\$100.00	5
City of Gering: LANDFILL	\$25.06	5
Cobblestone Hotel & Suites - Mccook	\$404.00	5
Comfort Inn - Kearney	\$765.00	5
Domino'S Pizza	\$75.98	5
Kearney Catholic	\$90.00	5
Legacy Cooperative	\$59.97	5
Mike'S Husker Stuff	\$570.00	5

Nsaa	\$1,620.00	5
Panhandle Powerhouse	\$592.00	5
Pepsi Cola Of Western Nebraska	\$31.50	5
Taher, Inc	\$0.00	5
Universal Cheerleaders Association	\$2,696.00	5
Valentine High School Volleyball	\$250.00	5
Wild Roots Greenhouse & Market	\$1,793.92	5
Yanda's Music & Pro Audio	\$1,920.00	5
Taher, Inc	\$36.00	5
State of SD-Black Hills State University	\$1,480.00	5
Band Shoppe	\$347.65	5
GMS FCA CLUB	\$75.00	5
Jostens, Inc	\$2,636.80	5
Logoz Llc	\$4,548.00	5
Nebraska Coaches Association	\$1,995.00	5
Pepsi Cola Of Western Nebraska	\$294.60	5
Regional West Med Center, Inc.	\$1,333.00	5
Taher, Inc	\$18.00	5
Torrington High School	\$200.00	5
Nebraska Coaches Association	\$55.00	5
Nebraska FFA Association	\$590.00	5
Norfolk Lodge & Suites, LLC	\$540.00	5
Madison Seiler	\$240.00	5
Perez, Stephanie	\$120.00	5
Bowen Williams	\$240.00	5
Ryland Ray	\$60.00	5
Visa	\$17,749.35	5
Trranswest Ford LLC.	\$23,308.25	6
Cash-Wa Distributing of Kearney, Inc	\$3,382.02	6
Ace Hardware	\$21.59	6
Dennis Supply Company	\$18.98	6
Menards	\$40.97	6
Taher, Inc	\$27,357.91	6
Visa	\$899.33	6
Gering Public Schools	\$35,000.00	12

POLICY 205.2
GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GERING, NE

POLICY ADOPTION

The board shall give notice of proposed policy changes or adoption of new policies by placing the item on the agenda of two regular board meetings. The proposed policy changes shall be distributed and public comment will be allowed at each meeting prior to final board action. This notice procedure shall be required except for emergency situations. If the board adopts a policy in an emergency situation, a statement regarding the emergency and the need for immediate adoption of the policy shall be included in the minutes. The board shall have complete discretion to determine what constitutes an emergency situation.

The final action taken to adopt the proposed policy shall be approved by a simple majority vote of the board at the next regular meeting after the meeting allowing public discussion. The policy will be effective on the later of the date of passage or the date stated in the motion.

In the case of an emergency, a new or changed policy may be adopted by a majority vote of a quorum of the board. The emergency policy shall expire at the close of the third regular meeting following the emergency action, unless the policy adoption procedure stated above is followed and the policy is reaffirmed.

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-520 (Class III)
 79-521 (Class IV)
 79-522 (Class V)
 79-523 (Class VI)
 79-526
 84-712 et seq.
 NDE Rule 10.004.01A1

Cross Reference: 201.1 Board Powers and Responsibilities

USE OF METAL DETECTORS

Any search of a student's person as a result of the activation of the detector shall be conducted in private in accordance with the policy on Searches, Seizures and Arrests.

Cross Reference: 504.16 Searches, Seizures and Arrests
505 Student Discipline

4011
Employee Leave Under the Family and Medical Leave Act
(FMLA)

The school district shall provide leave to its employees in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA"). The terms used herein shall have the meaning ascribed to them under the FMLA. Employees may also qualify for leave under the Nebraska Family Military Leave Act, which is covered under the district's policy for that law. If an employee qualifies for leave under both the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Nebraska Military Leave Act, any leave taken by the employee will count concurrently toward the leave limits of both acts.

I. Qualifying for Leave

A. Qualified Employees

1. To be eligible for ***unpaid*** leave under this policy, an employee must:
 - a. Make the request for leave at a time when the school district employs 50 or more workers;
 - b. Have been working for the school district for at least 12 months prior to the request; and
 - c. Have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave.
2. The applicable 12-month period for computing an employee's entitlement to FMLA leave shall be "rolling" 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.
3. Employees ineligible for FMLA leave for any reason may be eligible for leave under the Nebraska Family Military Leave Act and should consult policy 4011.1.

B. Qualified Circumstances Necessitating Leave

1. The school district will grant an eligible employee up to a total of 12 workweeks of ***unpaid*** leave under the following conditions:
 - a. For birth of a son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child;
 - b. For placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care;
 - c. To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition;
 - d. Because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her job; or
 - e. Because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a Military Member on Covered Active Duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to Covered Active Duty) in National Guard, Reserves, and/or Regular Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation
2. The school district will grant an eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a Covered Servicemember a total of 26 workweeks of ***unpaid*** leave during a 12-month period to care for the service member as permitted under the FMLA. The leave described in this paragraph shall only be available during a single 12-month period.

For purposes of this provision and this policy, "Covered Servicemember" includes both Military

Members and covered Veterans, so long as the covered Veteran was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered Veteran.

3. During the single 12-month period described in paragraph I(B)(2), an eligible employee shall be entitled to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave under paragraphs I(B)(1) and I(B)(2). Nothing in this paragraph shall limit the availability of leave under paragraph I(B)(1) during any other 12-month period.

C. Limitations on Leave

1. Leave for birth or placement for adoption or foster care must conclude within 12 months of the birth or placement.
2. In any case in which a husband and wife both employed by the school district are entitled to FMLA leave:
 - a. The aggregate number of workweeks of FMLA leave to which both are entitled is limited to 12 during any 12-month period if such leave is taken (i) because of the birth of a son or daughter of the employee and in order to care for such son or daughter; (ii) because of the placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care; or (iii) to care for a sick parent who has a serious health condition; and
 - b. The aggregate number of workweeks of FMLA leave to which both that husband and wife are entitled is limited to 26 during the single 12-month period in which leave is taken to care for a Covered Servicemember and the husband and wife employees are both

either the son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of such Covered Servicemember, if the leave is taken for this reason or a combination of this reason and one of the three reasons described in paragraph I(C)(2)(a). If the leave taken by the husband and wife includes leave described in paragraph I(C)(2)(a), the limitation in paragraph I(C)(2)(a) shall apply to the leave described in I(C)(2)(a).

D. Qualifying Notice and Certification

Employees seeking to use FMLA leave will be required to provide:

1. 30-day advance notice when the need to take the leave is foreseeable; provided, if (a) the leave is for needed treatment which is required to begin in less than thirty days or (b) the leave is for the reason set forth in paragraph I(B)(1)(e), the employee shall provide such notice to the school district as is reasonable and practical;
2. Medical certification supporting the need for leave due to a Serious Health Condition affecting the employee or family member or to care for a Military Member, and/or due to a Serious Injury or Illness to care for a Veteran;
3. Second or third medical opinions and periodic re-certifications (at the school district's expense);
4. Certification supporting the need for leave because of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent is a Military Member on Covered Active Duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to Covered Active Duty) in the National Guard, Reserves, and/or

Regular Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation;

5. Certification supporting the need for leave to care for a Veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered Veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a Serious Injury or Illness; and
6. Periodic reports during leave, at a frequency reasonably requested by the superintendent, regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work.

E. Scheduling Leave

When leave is needed to care for a family member, for the employee's own illness, or to care for a Covered Servicemember, and such leave is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the employee must attempt to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the school district's operations.

II. Relationship with District During Leave

A. Leave to Be Unpaid

All leave provided to employees under the provisions of the FMLA and this policy shall be unpaid leave.

B. Substitution of Paid Leave

1. The school district requires employees to substitute any accrued paid vacation leave, paid personal leave, paid family leave, paid medical leave or paid sick leave for FMLA leave. However, nothing in this policy shall require the school district to provide paid sick or medical leave in any situation in which the

school district would not normally provide such paid leave.

2. If an employee uses paid leave under circumstances which do not qualify as FMLA leave, the leave will not count against the number of workweeks of FMLA leave to which the employee is entitled.
3. Any paid leave which is substituted for FMLA leave will be subtracted from the number of workweeks of unpaid leave provided by the FMLA and this policy.

C. Group Health Plan Benefits

1. The school district will continue group health plan benefits on the same basis as coverage would have been provided if the employee had been continuously employed during the FMLA leave period.
2. Any share of health plan premiums which have been paid by the employee prior to FMLA leave must continue to be paid by the employee during the FMLA leave period.

D. Intermittent or Reduced-Schedule Leave

1. Leave may be taken under this policy intermittently or on a reduced-leave schedule under certain circumstances.
 - a. When leave is taken because of a birth or because of a placement of a child for adoption or foster care, an eligible employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced-leave schedule only with the agreement of the school district. In such a case, the superintendent shall have the authority to approve or disapprove such intermittent or reduced leave schedule, in the superintendent's sole discretion.

- b. When leave is taken to care for a sick family member, for an employee's own serious health condition, or to care for a covered Veteran or Military Member, an eligible employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced-leave schedule when medically necessary.
- c. When leave is taken by an eligible employee because of any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a Military Member on Covered Active Duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to Covered Active Duty) in National Guard, Reserves, and/or Regular Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation, the employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced-leave schedule.
- d. When leave is taken by an eligible employee to care for a Covered Servicemember, including a Veteran who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable at any time during the five-year period prior to the first date the eligible employee takes FMLA leave to care for the covered Veteran, and who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy for a Serious Injury or Illness
- e. Intermittent or reduced leave shall not result in a reduction in the employee's total amount of leave beyond the amount of leave actually taken.
- f. When an instructional employee seeks to take intermittent leave in connection with a family or personal illness (e.g. physical therapy or periodic care for a sick relative) or to care for a covered Veteran

or Military Member, and when such leave would constitute at least 20 percent of the total number of working days in the period during which the leave would extend, the school district may require the employee to elect to take leave in a block, instead of intermittently, for the entire period or to transfer to an available alternative position within the school system that is equivalent in pay, for which the employee is qualified, and which better accommodates the intermittent leave.

2. If an eligible employee requests intermittent leave or leave on a reduced-leave schedule that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, including during a period of recovery from a serious health condition, the school district may require the employee to transfer temporarily to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee's regular position. Such alternative position must have equivalent pay and benefits as the employee's permanent position.
3. Leave taken on an intermittent or reduced-schedule basis will be tracked hourly.

III. Return from Leave

A. Restoration to Position

1. On return from FMLA leave, an employee is entitled to be returned to the same position the employee held when leave commenced, or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.
2. Any leave taken under this policy will not result in the loss of any employment benefits accrued

prior to the date on which the leave commenced.

3. An eligible employee is not entitled to accrual of any seniority or employment benefits during any period of leave, or any right, benefit, or position of employment other than to which the employee would have been entitled had the employee not taken leave.

B. Denial of Restoration

1. The school district reserves the right to deny restoration to any eligible employee who is a "key employee" (that is an employee who is salaried and among the highest paid 10% of the employees of the school district) if such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the operations of the school district.
2. If the school district intends to deny restoration to such an employee, it will:
 - a. notify the employee of his/her status as a "key employee" in response to the employee's notice of intent to take FMLA leave;
 - b. notify the employee as soon as the school district decides it will deny job restoration and explain the reasons for this decision;
 - c. offer the employee a reasonable opportunity to return to work from FMLA leave after giving this notice; and
 - d. make a final determination as to whether reinstatement will be denied at the end of the leave period if the employee then requests restoration.

C. Failure to Return from Leave

If an employee fails to return from FMLA leave after the period of leave to which the employee is entitled has expired, the employee shall reimburse the district for any premiums the employer paid for maintaining health insurance coverage for the employee during the employee's FMLA leave unless the reason the employee does not return is due to: (1) the continuation, recurrence, or onset of the serious health condition which entitled the employee to FMLA leave and the employee provides the district with sufficient certification from the proper health care provider of such continuation, recurrence, or onset of the serious health condition or (2) other circumstances beyond the employee's control.

IV. Notice to Employees

- A. The school district will post in conspicuous places where employees are employed notices explaining the FMLA and providing information concerning the procedures for filing complaints of FMLA violations with the U.S. Wage and Hour Division.
- B. To the extent that any provision in this policy is in any manner inconsistent with the provisions of the Act or the regulations promulgated thereunder, the Act and regulations shall prevail over the provisions of this policy. The school district reserves the right to modify this policy from time to time in its sole discretion.
- C. Employees may direct any questions or concerns regarding FMLA leave to the superintendent.

Adopted on: _____

Revised on: _____

Reviewed on: _____

REGULATED CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

~~Carrying a cellphone/~~The District prohibits the use of cell phones or other electronic communication devices by students while on school property or attending a school instructional function except as provided otherwise below. Violation of this policy may include disciplinary measures under the district's student conduct policies up to and including suspension or expulsion.

~~Other electronic communication device in the school building is~~means any device which transmits by electronic means any writing, sound, visual image, or data of any nature to another electronic communication device. This includes personally owned electronic tablets, "smart" watches, earbuds, headphones, and gaming devices. The term "electronic communication device" includes a ~~privilege~~ cell phone.

~~Students are not prohibited from using an electronic communication device while on school property or attending a right. Cellphones (including ear buds or other communication accessories) may be not used~~school instructional function under any of the following circumstances:

1. When required by a student's individualized education program developed under the Special Education Act and its rules and regulations or a plan developed under section 504 of federal statutes;
- ~~1.2.~~ When authorized by the District for educational purposes during class instructional time except when approved by the teacher as part of a specific class activity or school project.;

~~Any prohibited items or devices brought to school or school events may be confiscated by district staff. Prohibited items will be turned over to the student's parents or guardian on request unless the object seized is dangerous, contrary to law, or has been turned over to legal authorities.~~

~~Prohibited devices shall include any item which is sufficiently annoying, offensive, unpleasant, or obnoxious that it substantially interferes with or materially disrupts the educational process. Students shall be advised annually through the Student Handbook of items that are prohibited on school grounds or at school activities.~~

3. In the case of an emergency or perceived threat of danger;
4. When necessary to monitor or manage a student's health care; or
5. When appropriate under District policies or otherwise allowed by an appropriate school employee.

In addition to any prohibitions on electronic communication devices ~~defined in the student handbook stated above~~, students shall not use ~~electronics~~ such devices for recording or transmitting photographs, images or sounds of other persons without direct administrative approval and consent of all person(s) being recorded, other than the recording of persons participating in school activities that are open to the public. Students

shall not use electronic devices at any time where there is an expectation of privacy.
~~Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion from school.~~

This policy does not authorize monitoring, collecting, or otherwise accessing any information on an electronic communication device not owned by or provided for academic use by the school district.

Rules for confiscation of prohibited devices, returning of confiscated devices, and disciplinary measures will be published in the student handbook.

The development of this policy shall include stakeholder participation from students, parents, and educators in each community. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to implement this policy.

Legal Reference: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794
 2025 Neb. Legislative session LB140

Cross Reference: 504.03 Student Conduct
 505 Student Discipline

Approved _____ Reviewed _____ Revised _____

**POLICY 504.19R1
GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GERING, NE**

**STUDENT FEES
~~2024-25~~ 2025-26**

Gering High School

	Fund	Waiver Eligible	Maximum Cost
Band			
Uniform Cleaning	Activity	Yes	\$ 15.00
T Shirts	Activity	Yes	\$ 20.00
Marching Shoes	Activity	Yes	\$ 35.00
Black Slacks	Activity	Yes	\$ 25.00
Honor Band/Choir	Activity	No	\$ 40.00
Musical Groups	Activity	Yes	\$ 175.00
All School Musical	Fee	No	\$ 100.00
Class Projects	Activity	No	\$ 150.00
College Classes	Fee	No	\$ 800.00
Physiology Cholesterol Check	Direct Pay	No	\$ 25.00
Cap & Gown	Activity	No	\$ 30.00
Cheerleaders	Activity	No	\$ 750.00
Club Apparel	Activity	No	\$ 40.00
Club Dues	Fee	No	\$ 25.00
Field Trips (required)	Activity	Yes	\$ 20.00
Field Trips (not required)	Activity	No	\$ 65.00
Class Dues	Activity	No	\$ 10.00
Activity Tickets	Activity	No	\$ 35.00
Test prep course fees	Activity	No	\$ 20.00
Technology Usage Fee	Fee	Yes	\$ 20.00
Banquet/Dinners	Activity	No	\$ 20.00

Gering Junior High School

	Fund	Waiver Eligible	Maximum Cost
Band T-Shirt	Activity	Yes	\$ 15.00
Band Black Slacks	Activity	Yes	\$ 25.00
Honor Band Audition	Activity	No	\$ 40.00
Class Projects	Activity	No	\$ 100.00
Club Dues	Fee	Yes	\$ 5.00
Activity Tickets	Activity	No	\$ 20.00

POLICY 1005.3
GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GERING, NE

PARENTAL AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

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

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

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

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

It is the policy of the district to use only testing methods and testing instruments that are generally recognized by educational professionals to be within sound educational standards and both educationally and academically appropriate. It is the policy of the district to notify parents and family members of any standardized testing that may be scheduled within the school district.

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

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

1. The board will involve parents and family members in the development of the Title I plan, the process for school review of the plan and the process for improvement;
2. The board will provide the coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parental and family involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance;
3. The board will build the schools' and parents' and family members' capacity for strong parental and family involvement;
4. The board will coordinate and integrate parental and family involvement strategies under Title I with other programs such as Head Start, Reading First, etc.;
5. The board will conduct with the involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental and family involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the school served including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents and family members in Title I activities (with particular attention to parents and families who have low income, Limited English Proficient (LEP), minorities, disabilities and low literacy) and use the findings of the evaluation to design strategies for more effective parental and family involvement and to revise, as necessary, the parental and family involvement policies; and
6. The board will involve parents and family members in Title I activities.

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

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-530 to 533

Cross Reference: 507.01 Student Records Access
606.03 Objection to Instructional Materials
611.01 Student Progress Reports
611.04 Parent Conferences
1002. District Annual Report
1005.01 Public Complaints

Approved 2/16/04

Reviewed
8/22/16, 07/8/2024

Revised 9/19/16

Memo

To: The Board Of Education
From: Dr. Nicole Regan, Superintendent
Date: July, 14th 2025
Re: LB140 District Cellphone and Electronic Communication Device Policy

LB 140 requires that, before the 2025-2026 school year, all schools adopt a policy that bans the students' use of cell phones on school premises or attending a school instructional function, with these five exceptions:

1. When required by a student's individualized education program developed under the Special Education Act or a plan developed under section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
2. When authorized by a teacher for educational purposes during instructional time.
3. In the case of an emergency or perceived threat of danger.
4. When necessary to monitor or manage a student's health care.
5. When determined appropriate by the school board or otherwise allowed by an appropriate school employee.

LB 140 also requires each district to incorporate stakeholder participation before the new policy's adoption. We have included an agenda item for public comment for the purpose of gathering stakeholder feedback in order to formulate the required policy and to ensure transparency and gather diverse perspectives. Allowing public comment provides an opportunity for parents, students, and staff to express their views and concerns, which can help us make a well-informed decision that best serves Gering Public Schools.

REGULATED CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

~~Carrying a cellphone/~~The District prohibits the use of cell phones or other electronic communication devices by students while on school property or attending a school instructional function except as provided otherwise below. Violation of this policy may include disciplinary measures under the district's student conduct policies up to and including suspension or expulsion.

~~Other electronic communication device in the school building is~~means any device which transmits by electronic means any writing, sound, visual image, or data of any nature to another electronic communication device. This includes personally owned electronic tablets, "smart" watches, earbuds, headphones, and gaming devices. The term "electronic communication device" includes a ~~privilege~~ cell phone.

~~Students are not prohibited from using an electronic communication device while on school property or attending a right. Cellphones (including ear buds or other communication accessories) may be not used~~school instructional function under any of the following circumstances:

1. When required by a student's individualized education program developed under the Special Education Act and its rules and regulations or a plan developed under section 504 of federal statutes;
- ~~1.2.~~ When authorized by the District for educational purposes during class instructional time except when approved by the teacher as part of a specific class activity or school project.;

~~Any prohibited items or devices brought to school or school events may be confiscated by district staff. Prohibited items will be turned over to the student's parents or guardian on request unless the object seized is dangerous, contrary to law, or has been turned over to legal authorities.~~

~~Prohibited devices shall include any item which is sufficiently annoying, offensive, unpleasant, or obnoxious that it substantially interferes with or materially disrupts the educational process. Students shall be advised annually through the Student Handbook of items that are prohibited on school grounds or at school activities.~~

3. In the case of an emergency or perceived threat of danger;
4. When necessary to monitor or manage a student's health care; or
5. When appropriate under District policies or otherwise allowed by an appropriate school employee.

In addition to any prohibitions on electronic communication devices ~~defined in the student handbook stated above~~, students shall not use ~~electronics~~ such devices for recording or transmitting photographs, images or sounds of other persons without direct administrative approval and consent of all person(s) being recorded, other than the recording of persons participating in school activities that are open to the public. Students

shall not use electronic devices at any time where there is an expectation of privacy.
~~Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion from school.~~

This policy does not authorize monitoring, collecting, or otherwise accessing any information on an electronic communication device not owned by or provided for academic use by the school district.

Rules for confiscation of prohibited devices, returning of confiscated devices, and disciplinary measures will be published in the student handbook.

The development of this policy shall include stakeholder participation from students, parents, and educators in each community. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the principal, to implement this policy.

Legal Reference: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794
 2025 Neb. Legislative session LB140

Cross Reference: 504.03 Student Conduct
 505 Student Discipline

Approved _____ Reviewed _____ Revised _____

POLICY 613.01
GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GERING, NE

DISTRICT TITLE I PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS intends to follow the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy guidelines in accordance with federal law, *Section 1116(a)(1)(2)(A -F) ESSA, (Every Student Succeeds Act) of 2015.*

In General

The written District Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, updated periodically, and distributed to parents and family members of participating children and the local community in an understandable and uniform format. This policy agreed on by such parents describes the means for carrying out the requirements as listed below:

- Welcome and encourage all parents and family members of all students to become involved with their child's school and education; this includes parents and family members that have limited English proficiency, limited literacy or are economically disadvantaged, have disabilities, or are of racial or ethnic minority background;
- Involve parents in the development and improvement of the Title I program and the Parent and Family Engagement Policy;
- Conduct, with meaningful parent and family involvement, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy. Use the evaluation findings to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise the Parent and Family Engagement Policy;
- Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools;
- Involve parents in the activities of the schools served under this part; and
- Coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies and activities with other Federal, State and local programs.

Approved: 5/21/18

Reviewed 10/28/19

Revised 11/18/19

POLICY 504.20
GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GERING, NE

BULLYING PREVENTION

The board recognizes the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare, safety, and the school's learning environment and, therefore, prohibits such behavior. Bullying is defined as any ongoing pattern of physical, verbal, or electronic abuse on school grounds, in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by a school being used for a school purpose by a school employee or his or her designee, or at school sponsored activities or school-sponsored athletic events.

Bullying may constitute grounds for long-term suspension, expulsion or mandatory reassignment, subject to state and federal statutes and the district's student discipline and due process procedures.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent to implement appropriate programs or procedures for the purpose of educating students regarding bullying prevention.

This policy shall be reviewed annually.

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-254 et seq. (Student Discipline Act)

Cross Reference: 505 Student Discipline

POLICY 204.12
GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GERING, NE

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

The board recognizes the importance of citizen participation in school district matters. In order to assure citizens are heard and board meetings are conducted efficiently and in an organized manner, the board shall set time aside for citizen participation, either at a specific time during the meeting or during the discussion of agenda items. The board has the discretion to limit the amount of time set aside for public participation.

Instructions for members of the public who wish to speak:

- Getting started: When you have been recognized, please stand and state your name.
- Time Limit: Tonight the board will allow a total of 30 minutes for the presentation of ALL public comments. Individuals may speak only one time, and must limit comments to around 5 minutes. If there are more than 6 individuals who wish to address the board, the 30 minutes will be divided equally between the number of speakers. These time limits may be changed by a majority vote of the board members in attendance to extend the time for a specific item or speaker. You may only speak ONCE.
- Personnel or Student Topic: If you are planning to speak about a personnel or student matter involving an individual, please understand that our policies may require you to follow the district's complaint procedure before addressing the board. Board members will generally not respond to any questions you ask or comments you make about individual staff members or students. Please remember that slanderous comments will not be tolerated.
- General Rules: This is a public meeting for the conduct of business. Comments from within the audience while others are speaking will not be tolerated. Lewd, obscene, profane, slanderous, threatening and hostile conduct or statements and fighting words (words whose mere utterance entails a call to violence) will not be tolerated.
- No action by the Board: The board will not act on any matter which is not on the agenda and will not take action upon the conclusion of public comment.

If the pressure of business or other circumstances dictate, the board president may decide to eliminate this practice at a particular meeting. The board president will recognize these individuals to make their comments at the appropriate time. The orderly process of the board meeting shall not be interfered with or disrupted. Only those speakers recognized by the board president shall be allowed to speak. Comments by others are out of order. If disruptive, the individual making the comments or another individual causing disruption may be asked to leave the board meeting.

Citizens wishing to address the board on a certain agenda item must notify the superintendent prior to the board meeting. Citizens wishing to present petitions to the board may do so at this time. However, the board will only receive the petitions and not act upon them or their contents.

Subjects for comment should involve areas within the board's proper responsibility. Discussion on unrelated matters is to be discouraged.

Individuals who have a complaint about employees may bring their complaint to the board only after they have followed board policy addressing citizens' complaints. Students who have a complaint may only bring their complaint to the board after they have followed board policy addressing students' complaints.

Any written or printed materials to be circulated for a meeting of the school board must be submitted to the superintendent by the Wednesday preceding a Monday night meeting.

This material will be transmitted to the members of the board for their consideration.

Legal Reference: Nebraska Statute 84-1408 to 1414

Cross Reference: 201.7 School Board Liability
204.3 Public Hearings
204.10 Agenda
403.5 Public Complaints about Employees

Approved 01/20/2003

Reviewed 02/23/2015, 10/14/2021 6/9/22

Revised 09/14/2009, 7/20/22



**ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK
2025-2026**

**GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISTRICT NO. 16
GERING, NEBRASKA**

Introduction

Intent of Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information concerning the policies, regulations, and services that relate to the successful operation of the Gering Elementary Schools. This handbook does not form a contract, and the school reserves the right to change or modify the handbook as needed.

Communication and cooperation between the home and the school are essential in providing quality education to each child. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular contact with the school and to attend scheduled parent-teacher conferences. If a problem should arise or if clarification is needed, please contact your child's teacher or principal.

Members of the Board of Education

Greg Trautman, Board President

Tracy Wiese, Board Vice President

Matt Kautz, Member at Large

John Maser, Member at Large

Bryan Barrett, Member at Large

Josh Lacy, Member at Large

Administrative Staff

Dr. Nicole Regan, Superintendent of Schools – 436-3125

Stacy Rodriguez, Business Manager – 436-3125

Juile Siebke, Director of Student Services – 436-3125

Kory Knight, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment – 436-3125

Jennifer Sibal, Community Engagement Director, Gering Public Schools Foundation – 436-3125

Jesse Neugebauer, Principal of Lincoln Elementary – 436-2350

Angela Morris, Principal of Geil Elementary - 436-2545

Wendee Powell, Principal of Northfield Elementary – 436-5555

GERING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PreK A.M.: 8:05 a.m. -11:10 a.m.
Full-Day PreK follows building schedule

SCHOOL START/DISMISSAL

Geil | LCN | NF: 8:05a.m. to 3:20 p.m.
GMS: 8:00a.m. to 3:15 p.m.
GHS: 8:00a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

EARLY RELEASE
EACH WED
2:15 p.m.
2:15 p.m.
2:15 p.m.

NEW TEACHER ORIENTATION
NO SCHOOL STUDENTS
STAFF DEVELOPMENT
NO SCHOOL STUDENTS & STAFF
Holiday or Break
EARLY DISMISSAL
[] BEGIN/END NINE WEEKS

AUGUST 2025

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Aug 6-8 New Teacher Orientation

Aug 11-14 Staff Development

Aug 14 6th Grade Orientation 10am to Noon

Freshman Orientation 9am to 11am

Aug 15 K-12 First Day of School 1st Qtr Begins

Aug 18 PreK First Day of School

Students: 11 Staff: 15

JANUARY 2026

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Jan 1-2 No School: Holiday Students & Staff

Jan 5 No School Students Workday

Jan 6 Students Return -3rd qtr begins

Jan 23 No School Students Staff Development

Students: 18 Staff: 20

SEPTEMBER 2025

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Sept 1 No School: Holiday Students & Staff

Sept 2 No School Students Staff Development

Students: 20 Staff: 21

FEBRUARY 2026

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

Feb 16 No School Students (ESU Mid-Winter Conf.)

Feb 17 No School Students & Staff

Feb 27 No School Students Workday

Students: 17 Staff: 19

OCTOBER 2025

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Oct 3 No School Students Workday

Oct 6-7 PreK-5 P/T Conferences 3:45-7:30pm

Oct 8-9 6-12 P/T Conferences 3:45-7:30pm

Oct 10 No School Students & Staff

Oct 20 2nd qtr begins

Students: 21 Staff: 23

MARCH 2026

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Mar 2-3 K-5 P/T Conferences 3:45-7:30pm

Mar 4-5 No School PreK ONLY Home Visits

Mar 4-5 6-12 P/T Conferences 3:45-7:30pm

Mar 6 No School Students & Staff

Mar 16 4th qtr begins

Students: 21 Staff: 22

NOVEMBER 2025

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Nov 3 No School Students Staff Development

Nov 26-28 No School: Holiday Students & Staff

Students: 16 Staff: 17

APRIL 2026

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Apr 3-7 No School Students & Staff

Apr 17 No School GMS ONLY GHS Future Focus Day

Students: 19 Staff: 19

DECEMBER 2025

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Dec 19 2nd Qtr/1st Sem Ends

*Dec 22-31 No School: Holiday Students & Staff (*continues into January)

Students: 15 Staff: 15

MAY 2026

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

May 16 Graduation

May 18 Preschool Graduation 3pm

May 19 Last Day of School K-12 Early Release 11:30am 1/2 Staff Workday

May 20 Staff Workday

Students: 12.5 Staff: 14

308-436-3125

WWW.GERINGSCHOOLS.NET



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geringschools.net

Important Phone Numbers

Gering Public Schools - District Office
308.436.3125

Student Lunch Accounts
308.633.4385

Transportation (First Student)
308.635.6214

Geil Elementary
308.436.2545

Lincoln Elementary
308.436.2350

Northfield Elementary
308.436.5555

Gering Middle School
308.436.3123

Gering High School
308.436.3121

Important Dates

**First & Last Days for
K-12 Students**

***August 15, 2025 (Friday)
May 19, 2026 (Tuesday)**

**PreK students begin August 18, 2025*
5/19 will be the last day of school unless there are
days to be made up. Inclement weather may alter
the school calendar.*

Parent/Teacher Conferences

**October 6-7, 2025
March 2-5, 2026**

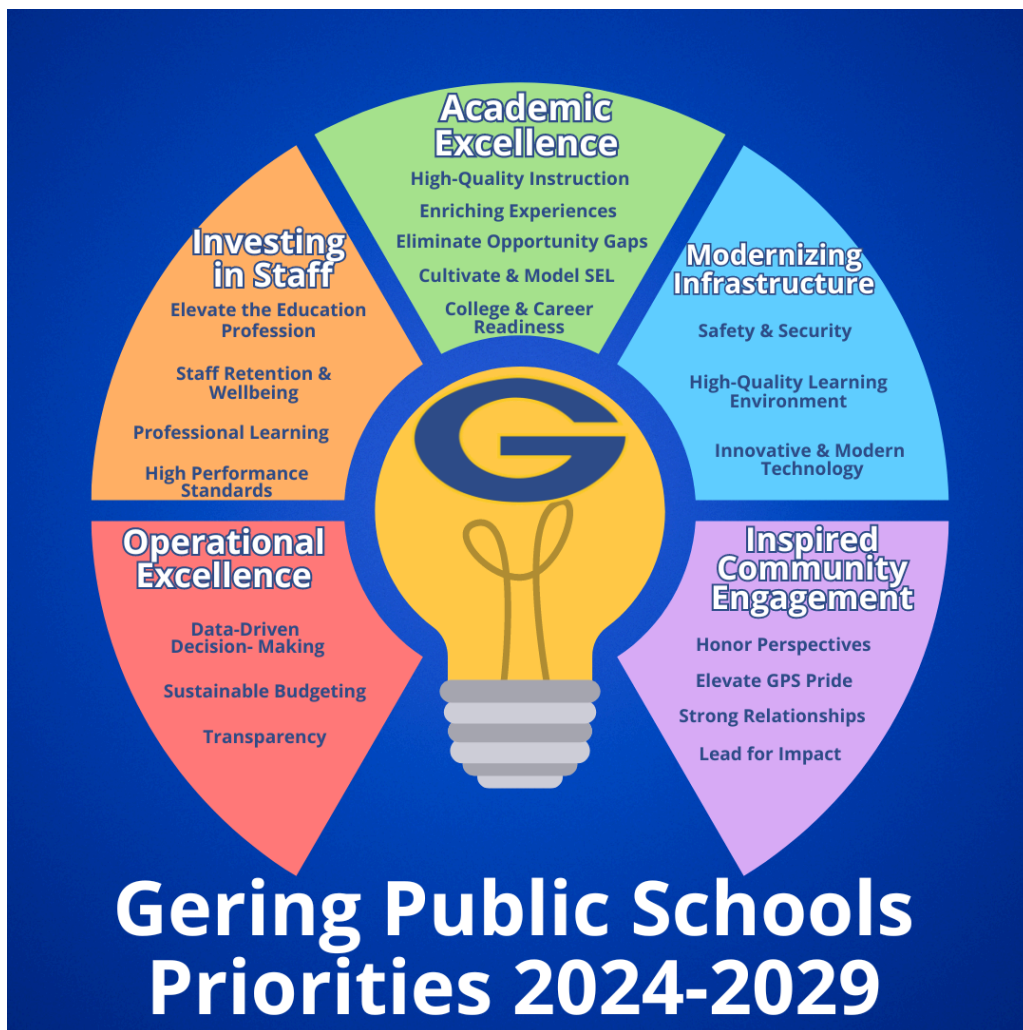
GPS district mission, vision, mantra and district goals

School Mission and Vision Statements

District Mission: Gering Public School exists to equip today's learners with the skills necessary to be tomorrow's leaders.

District Vision: Gering Public Schools is a community where all students feel valued, respected, and inspired to develop to their fullest potential.

District Goals:



Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Gering School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, marital status, disability, or age in admission or access to, or treatment of employment, in its programs

and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints, grievance procedures or the application of these policies or non-discrimination.

Dr. Nicole Regan, Superintendent
1519 10th Street, Gering, NE 69341
(308) 436-3125

If parents, employees and students do not feel that their complaints regarding Title IX, Title VI, section 504 have met with resolution at the local level, they can appeal their grievances to the regional Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. This would be their final opportunity for resolution. This address needs to be readily available to parents, employees and students for their appeals.

Office for Civil Rights
8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037
Kansas City, MO 64114
(816) 268-0550
FAX: (816) 823-1404; TDD 800-437-0833

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rebecca Hasty, Nontraditional/Equity Programs Specialist, Career & Technical Education, Nebraska Department of Education, PO Box 94987, Lincoln, NE 68509-4987, (402) 471-4823, FAX (402) 471-4565, e-mail - rhasty@nde.state.ne.us.

Title IX

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

- Title IX Coordinator: Superintendent and/or Designee
- Address: 1519 10th Street, Gering, NE 69341
- Email: nregan@geringschools.net
- Phone: (308) 436-3125

For information regarding the Gering Public School District procedure for complaints of sexual harassment including the complaint process, how to file a report or a complaint of sexual harassment, how to file a formal complaint of sexual harassment, and how the District will respond to such complaints see Board Policy 504.24 located at Gering Public Schools website (<https://www.geringschools.net>).

Mutual Respect

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

Multicultural Policy

The philosophy of the District's multicultural education program is that students will have improved ability to function as productive members of society when provided with: (a) an understanding of diverse cultures and races, the manner in which the existence of diverse cultures and races have affected the history of our Nation and the world, and of the construction made by diverse cultures and races (including but not

limited to African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and European Americans) and (b) with the ability and skills to be sensitive toward and to study, work and live successively with persons of diverse cultures and races. The mission shall also include preparing students to eliminate stereotypes and discrimination or harassment of others based on ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, age or disability.

Multicultural education is the identification, selection and infusion of specific knowledge, skills and attitudes for the following purposes:

- Affirming the culture, history and contributions that shall include but not be limited to African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans;
- Challenging and eliminating racism, prejudice, bigotry, discrimination and stereotyping based on race;
- Valuing multiple cultural perspectives; and
- Providing all students with opportunities to "see themselves" in the educational environment in positive ways and on a continuing basis.

To promote and support multicultural education within Gering Public Schools, it shall be the policy and practice of this district to create opportunities for all students to achieve academically and socially in an educational environment in which all students and staff understand and respect the racial and cultural diversity and interdependence of members of our society.

Complaint Procedures

The proper procedures for a parent or student to make complaints or raise concerns about school staff or the school programs or activities are set forth below.

1. Complaint Procedures:

Step 1. Have a scheduled conference with the staff person involved in the complaint matter.

Step 2. Appeal to the Principal if the matter is not resolved at Step 1.

Step 3. Appeal to the Superintendent if the matter is still unresolved at Step 2.

Step 4. Appeal to the Board of Education if the matter is still unresolved at Step 3. Written appeal should be made within five (5) days of the Superintendent's decision.

Step 5. If the complaint is regarding a federal program, and has not been resolved at the district level, the initiating party should contact the Director of Student Services. The Director of Student Services will provide the initiating party information on how to forward the complaint to the Nebraska Department of Education.

Using these procedures, the needs and desires of all parents can be met. It is the desire of all administrators and teachers to solve all problems at the building level whenever possible. Please remember that we stand ready to visit with you. We are more than willing to explain our position on a problem, and we will listen to your concerns.

All complaints shall be in writing, and no anonymous correspondence will be considered by the Board of Education.

2. Conditions Applicable to All Levels of Complaint Procedure:

All information to be considered at each appeal step should be placed in writing in order to be most effective. Appeal decisions shall be expedited as quickly as possible. A decision at any level should be rendered within ten (10) calendar days, unless a legal hearing is requested or required.

Daily Schedule (Kindergarten through 5th grade)

Building Time	Early Dismissal (Wednesdays)	
• Northfield Elementary	8:05 am to 3:20 pm	2:15 pm
• Lincoln Elementary	8:05 am to 3:20 pm	2:15 pm
• Geil Elementary	8:05 am to 3:20 pm	2:15 pm

These times are tentative and are subject to change.

Breakfast will be served starting at 7:40 each day.

Supervision for all children will be provided at the school building approximately 10 minutes prior to the start of each school day. For safety purposes, we are, therefore, requesting that children not arrive any earlier than 10 minutes before the start time of their particular building and leave school grounds immediately unless attending after-school programs or requested to stay by the principal or classroom teacher.

Severe Weather and School Cancellations

The Superintendent of schools is authorized by the Board of Education to close public schools in case of severe weather. Representatives of the Superintendent's staff will notify local news media when inclement weather warrants such action. The information is broadcast regularly by local radio and television stations.

Decisions to close schools. A decision to close school is made when forecasts by the weather service and civil defense officials indicate that it would be unwise for students to go to school. If possible, a decision about the next school day will be made by 9 p.m. for announcement during the 10 p.m. news. An early decision is not always possible because of uncertain weather conditions. School officials will make periodic assessments of conditions during the night and will decide early in the morning (by 6 a.m. if possible). In any case, **an announcement will be made to the news media when schools will be closed.** In some instances, schools will be open, but certain services may be canceled (bus transportation, kindergarten, student activities). Students and parents will want to pay special attention to which public school district and/or building is being closed.

After School Starts. Every attempt will be made to avoid closing school once classes are in session. In some instances closing school during the day is inevitable if children are to safely return home before the brunt of a major storm hits. In these cases as much advance notice as possible will be given to parents. If school is closed during the day, the notice will be broadcast by the media and **parents should have a plan in place to accommodate these circumstances. At the beginning of each school year, you will be asked to provide the school with a plan for your child to follow in the event that this should occur.**

Parental Decisions. Parents may decide to keep their children at home in inclement weather because of personal circumstances. Students absent because of severe weather when school is in session will be marked absent. The absence will be treated like any other absences for legitimate causes, provided parents properly notify the school of their decision. Parents may pick up their children in inclement weather at any time during the school day. Students will not normally be dismissed from school during severe weather on the basis of a telephone request.

What Not To Do. Parents should not attempt to come to school during a tornado warning. **School officials are not permitted to release students from the school building during a tornado warning.** Tornado safety procedures are practiced regularly by students and staff members. Also, parents are urged not to call radio and television stations and school buildings during severe weather. Every effort will be made to provide accurate and timely information through the media.

Emergency Conditions. Gering Public Schools has a signal which, when activated, includes the necessity to either evacuate the building or to move to safe areas in the building. All regular drills are held as required by law through the school year. There are plans for an Emergency Exit System, Tornado Warning System, and Critical Incident Response.

Emergency Procedures

In case of an emergency, it is absolutely necessary for school personnel to be able to contact the parents of a child or someone who knows the child. Therefore, it is very important that telephone numbers and addresses be kept up to date. If possible, an emergency phone number where a parent or guardian can be contacted at all times should be listed with the school. Unlisted numbers are becoming more frequent, and they handicap the school in contacting parents.

The school will not release an unlisted number to any individual, so please list a telephone number with the school. If the situation warrants, a Messenger call may go out explaining the emergency situation to parents.

At the beginning of the school year, you will be asked to provide the school with emergency contact information.

Change of Address and Telephone Numbers

It is CRITICAL THAT EVERY PARENT report a change of address and/or phone number to the elementary office as soon as possible.

Live Broadcast or Videotaping

Individuals may broadcast or videotape public school district events, including open Board meetings, as long as it does not interfere with or disrupt the school district event and it does not create an undue burden in adapting the buildings and sites to accommodate the request.

It shall be within the discretion of the Superintendent to determine whether the request is unduly burdensome and whether the broadcast or videotaping will interfere with or disrupt the school district event.

Videotaping of classroom activities will be allowed at the discretion of the administration.

News media coverage of sports and other special events is encouraged. Radio broadcasts of events will be arranged through the communications Director.

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.

Notice is further given that students and members of the public may photograph, video or otherwise record students and others at events open to members of the public. The School District may take action to prohibit or limit such recording when determined to be appropriate. However, the School District cannot give assurance that such recording will not occur. As such, those who attend events open to members of the public are deemed to consent to such recording.

Visitors

Parents are encouraged to visit school. Visits in classrooms should generally not exceed one hour in length, and the visitor should be an observer and not a participant in the learning process. Teachers and principals appreciate knowing in advance that you plan to visit. Visitation just prior to or after a holiday is not very beneficial to parents or the classroom teacher and is discouraged.

Visitation by students from outside the District and pre-school children visitations are discouraged. To assist teachers with beginning school in the fall and in closing school in late spring, the school asks that no visitations be made during the first two (2) weeks and the last two (2) weeks of a school year.

All visitors must report to the principal's office, sign in, and receive a visitor's badge before entering a classroom and upon leaving the building.

Smoke-Free Environment

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

Care of School Property

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, equipment, supplies and furniture supplied by the school.

Students, who disfigure property, break windows or do other damage to school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item. The administration reserves the right to determine the amount of all fines.

Fines on Chromebooks will be based on the damage incurred.

Fines on books are determined according to the following criteria:

Lost Book:	Replacement cost
Missing one or both covers:	Same as lost book
Loose Cover/Broken Binding:	\$1.00
Missing Page:	50 cents per page (up to replacement cost)
Torn Page:	20 cents per page (up to replacement cost)
Marks that cannot be erased:	20 cents per mark (up to replacement cost)

Students must pay all fines before they can receive school publications and final grades.

Searches

Searches within the school building or on school grounds will be authorized by the principal when there are circumstances that would cause a reasonable person to believe that the search of a particular person, place, or thing will lead to the discovery of the following:

1. Evidence of a violation of the student conduct standards contained in the policies of the Board of Education or a violation of federal, state or local laws.
2. Anything which, because of its presence, presents an immediate danger of physical harm or illness to any person.

Locker/Desk/Storage Area

All lockers and other storage areas on school premises remain the property of the issuing agency and are provided for the use of the students and are subject to inspection, access for maintenance, and search pursuant to this policy.

No student shall lock or otherwise impede access to any locker or storage area except with a lock provided by or approved by the principal of the school in which the locker or storage area is located. Unapproved locks will be removed.

The principal, or a member of the administrative staff and a faculty witness, will search a locker and its contents when the person conducting the search has reasonable cause to conduct the search.

1. Personal Searches

The principal, or another member of the administrative staff designated in writing by the principal and acting at the direction of the principal, will search the person of a student while on the school premises and/or during a school activity if the principal has reasonable cause to conduct a search of that student for a violation of the policy herein. Searches of the person of a student shall be limited to the following:

- a. Searches of the pockets of the student
- b. Searches of the shoes and socks of the student
- c. Any object in the possession of the student, such as a purse or backpack
- d. A "pat down" of the exterior of the student's clothing

More extensive searches of the person of a student than those enumerated above shall be

conducted in a private room by a person of the same sex as the student being searched and witnessed by one other person of the same sex as the person being searched. Searches of the person of a student which requires removal of clothing other than coat or jacket and shoes and socks shall be conducted only upon grounds of probable cause.

2. Custody of Evidence

Anything found in the course of a search conducted in accordance with this section, which is evidence of a violation of the student conduct standard, may be:

- a. Seized and admitted as evidence in any suspension or expulsion proceeding if it is tagged for identification at the time it is seized and kept in a secure place by the principal or the principal's designee until it is presented at the hearing.
- b. Turned over to a law enforcement officer in accordance with the subsection of this regulation entitled "Involvement of Law Enforcement Officers."

3. Involvement of Law Enforcement Officers

Except in cases of extreme danger to life or property, or when notification is not possible through reasonably diligent efforts, the parent of any student shall be notified prior to requesting police to conduct a search of the person. In those instances when notification is not possible prior to requesting police to conduct the search, the student's parents shall be notified as soon as is reasonably possible thereafter. Upon finding probable cause for a search, the principal, or a member of the administrative staff designated in writing by the principal, may request the assistance of a law enforcement officer to conduct the following:

- a. Search any area of the school premises, any student or any motor vehicle on the school premises.
- b. Identify, retain, or dispose of contraband found in the course of a search conducted in accordance with this section.

Bicycles/Scooters

Children riding bicycles or scooters to school should park them in the bicycle rack or area designated by the principal. Bicycle racks are not supervised at all times during the day, therefore, for protection against theft, a method of locking the bicycle or scooter to the bicycle rack is a necessity.

Although school administrators and teachers are interested in protecting the property of students, they cannot assume responsibility for items such as bicycles or scooters for which they cannot provide supervision throughout the day.

Bicycles and scooters are to be ridden directly from home to the bicycle rack and vice versa when the school day ends. No bicycles or scooters are to be ridden on the playground or other school property, except when going to and from the bicycle rack.

Student Valuables

Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property. Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or items of value to school. If it is necessary to bring valuable items or more money than is needed to pay for lunch, leave the money or valuables with a staff member in the school office for temporary and safe keeping. Even then, the school is not in a position to guarantee that the student's property will not be subject to loss, theft, or damage. Administration has final authority on all items brought to school.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Students are asked to NOT bring cell phones, smart watches, and other personal electronic devices to school. If the students bring a personal electronic device to school, it should be kept in their backpack, cubby, or location designated by school staff during the school day. The school is not responsible for damaged, lost or stolen devices.

Lost and Found

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the office where the articles can be claimed by the owner. If the articles are lost at school, report that loss to office personnel.

Accidents

Every accident in the school building and/or on the school grounds must be reported immediately to school personnel.

Insurance

INJURIES AT SCHOOL

The Gering Public Schools does not pay for medical bills for students injured at school or while participating in extracurricular activities. The school provides information and enrollment forms for parents wishing to purchase medical insurance through an independent insurance company which is not affiliated with the Gering Public Schools. Parents are encouraged to review the insurance material.

Copyright and Fair Use Policy

It is the school's policy to follow the federal copyright law. Students are reminded that, when using school equipment and when completing course work, they also must follow the federal copyright laws. The federal copyright law governs the reproduction of works of authorship.

Copyrighted works are protected regardless of the medium in which they are created or reproduced; thus copyright extends to digital works and works transformed into a digital format. Copyrighted works are not limited to those that bear a copyright notice.

The "fair use" doctrine allows limited reproduction of copyrighted works for educational and research purposes. The relevant portion of the copyright statute provides that the "fair use" of a copyrighted work, including reproduction "for purposes such as criticism, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research" is not an infringement of copyright. The law lists the following factors as the ones to be evaluated in determining whether a particular use of a copyrighted work is a permitted "fair use," rather than an infringement of the copyright.

- The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes;
- The nature of the copyrighted work;
- The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and
- The effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

Although all of these factors will be considered, the last factor is the most important in determining whether a particular use is "fair." Students should seek assistance from a faculty member if there are any questions regarding what may be copied.

Toxic Substance Control Act

Gering Public Schools annually conducts asbestos inspections in its facilities as required by Section 203 of Title 2 of the Toxic Substance Control Act. 15 U.S.C. 2643. Management plans requiring those inspections are available for your review in principals' offices and in the Central Administration Office at 1519 10th Street, Gering, Nebraska during regular business hours.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance Policy

Regular and punctual student attendance is required. The Board's policies require such attendance, the administration is responsible for developing further attendance rules and regulations, and students and parents are responsible for developing behaviors which will result in regular and punctual student attendance.

Attendance and Absences

Absences From School - Definitions. An absence from school will be reported as: (a) an excused absence or (b) an unexcused absence.

1. Excused Absences. Absences should be cleared through the Principal's office in advance whenever possible. An absence or tardy, even by parental approval, may not be excused. All absences, except for illness and/or death in the family, require advance approval. An absence for any of the following reasons will be excused, provided the required procedures have been followed:
 - a. Attendance at a funeral for a member of the immediate family (parents, siblings, and grandparents),
 - b. Illness which causes a student to be absent from school,
 - c. Doctor or dental appointment which require student to be absent from school,
 - d. Court appearances that are required by a court order and the student is not responsible for needing to be in court,
 - e. School sponsored activities which require students to be absent from school,
 - f. Family trips in which student accompanies parents(s)/legal guardian(s),
 - g. Other absences which have received prior approval from the Principal.

The principal has the discretion to deny approval for the latter two reasons, depending on circumstances such as the student's number of other absences, the student's academic status, the tests or other projects which may be missed, and in the case of a family trip, whether the trip could be taken during non-school time and the educational nature of the trip.

2. Unexcused Absences: an absence which is not excused is unexcused. If a student's absence is unexcused the student may receive zeros for any class work missed during the absence, and may be required to make up work and the time missed.

A student who accumulates absences may be considered truant as per state law, Neb.Rev.Stat. § 79-201 to 79-209. Truancy is a violation of school rules. The student may be required to make up the time missed. Students who leave the school premises without permission during the school day will be considered truant.

Reporting and Responding to Truant Behavior. In all school districts in this state, any Superintendent, principal, teacher or member of the school board who know of any violation of section 79-201 on the part of any child of school age, his or her parent, the person in actual or legal control of such child, or any other person shall within three days report such violation to the attendance officer of the school, who shall investigate the case. When, of his or her personal knowledge, by report or complaint from any resident of the district, or by report or complaint as provided in this section, the building Principal believes that any child is unlawfully absent from school, the Building Principal shall immediately investigate.

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

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

Reporting Habitual Truancy. If the child is habitually truant, the building Principal will 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 this process to address excessive absenteeism.

Sec. 20. Section 79-2104, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2010

Tardiness

Students will be considered tardy to school if they are not in their assigned class by 8:20 AM. Students who arrive after 8:20 AM, but before 10:00 AM will be considered tardy. Five tardies will equal one absence. Students arriving after 10:00 AM will be considered absent for a half day. Students arriving after 1:00 p.m. will be considered absent for a full day.

Leaving School

Students who must leave school for any reason during the school day must check out at the office before leaving. Students leaving school must be cleared in advance by a note or phone call from the student's parent or legal guardian. Upon returning to school that same day, students are expected to sign in at the office. A sheet will be available on the office counter for this purpose. Appointments with doctors and/or dentists should be scheduled outside the regular school day. Early dismissal (leaving school prior to 3:05 PM) will count against student attendance in the same way as tardies (five early dismissals will equal one absence). Students who leave school before 1:25 PM will be counted absent for the afternoon.

Make-up Work

When a child returns to school after an absence, all make-up work should be completed as soon as possible. Generally, a student will be allowed two days to make up work for one day missed, except when make-up work must be completed sooner because it is impeding the child's progress. For example, if a student is absent for two (2) days, he/she will have four (4) days to make up the missed work before being required to give up recesses and other free time. Chronic absenteeism or students who have failed to make up work in the past may be required to stay in at recess or at lunchtime immediately upon their return to school from an absence.

Parents should work closely with the teacher to make the task of make-up as easy and profitable as possible for the returning student. If an absence is anticipated, arrangements should be made for the make-up work prior to the absence.

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT

Reporting to Parents

It is very important for students and parents to be informed about the student's progress in school. To understand themselves, to capitalize on their strong points and to remedy any weaknesses; students need to know what their strengths and weaknesses are. In order for parents to work cooperatively with the school in supporting educational endeavors, they need to know how their son or daughter is progressing, and they need information on the educational program. For these reasons, a good reporting system is a necessity.

The following procedures will be followed in reporting to parents:

1. Kindergarten through 5th grade will have two parent-teacher conferences during a school year. These conferences will be scheduled for parents before the end of the first nine (9) weeks of school and again towards the end of the third nine (9) week period. In addition to scheduled parent-teacher conferences, individual conferences may be scheduled when a need exists or upon the request of the parent.
2. Report cards will be issued at the end of each nine (9) week period. At the end of the other nine (9) week periods, report cards will be sent home with students. The school calendar included in this handbook designates the dates when each nine-week period ends. Report cards will generally be issued the following Thursday. Please remember these important dates.

Standards-Based Learning

The goal of the Gering Public School District is to report grades that are accurate, consistent, meaningful, and supportive of learning, and the change to standards-based grading is an effort to reach that goal.

Subjects will be assessed using a standards-based system. Standards-based learning measures your student's mastery of the essential standards for a class, or how well your student understands the material in class.

At the beginning of every unit, the teacher will break down the standards for the unit into smaller objectives and criteria using a detailed rubric. During the unit, students are assessed to see if they truly know the material using a variety of assessments, such as traditional pencil-and-paper tests, projects, discussions, or reports. The class grade will be based solely on the evidence the teacher collects demonstrating mastery of the essential standards.

The goal of this system is to provide the teacher, student, and parent as accurate a picture as possible of the student's learning to encourage a dialogue about how the student can master the material for the class. In particular, because learning is a process that takes place over time, each assessment will provide feedback for the student about what to focus on next, and the student will be allowed to retake assessments. If the new assessment shows a higher level of mastery, that new score replaces the old one.

Standards - Based Learning Scale

The following are general explanations of the levels of the rubric scales:

3 - Meets Standards/on Grade Level: The student consistently meets grade level standards and expectations. Performance is characterized by the ability to apply skills with accuracy, independence and quality with minimal assistance. This is an excellent level of achievement, and one that a student should be working toward as developmentally appropriate.	2 - Partially Meets Standards/Reaching Grade Level: The student is progressing toward grade level standards and expectations. Performance varies in consistency with regard to accuracy and quality. The student requires additional practice and support.	1 - Below Standards/Not at Grade Level: The student is not meeting grade level standards and expectations. Additional instruction, practice and support is necessary to move toward grade level standards and expectations.
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Promotion and Retention

The Gering Public School's administration and teachers have an interest in each individual student and all staff members are willing to work with students and parents to ensure that academic progress is achieved. When academic progress has not been achieved, the decision must be made as to whether or not to retain the child in a grade for another year. The following policy will be followed when considering the promotion or retention of a child:

Generally speaking, the District does not support retention of a student in the same grade for the next school year. Several significant factors should be considered and certain procedures should be followed during the retention process if it is considered:

1. The attitude of principals and teachers toward promotion and retention must be positive so that the best interests and the future of the student are the primary consideration for decisions regarding grade placement.
2. In reaching a decision to retain a child, the teacher and/or principal, and when necessary, the school psychologist and specialists involved, should study all available data before a decision is reached.
3. Poor attendance and physical and emotional immaturity may be justification for retention.

4. Teacher judgment should always be a prime factor in reaching a decision to retain a child; however, to help the teacher, principal, and specialist reach this decision, achievement test results may be considered.
5. The final responsibility for the promotion or retention of an individual student rests with the principal as with any other official action taken within his/her school.
6. As the study of all factors is carried out to determine whether to prompt or retain a child, close contact with parents should be maintained. Conferences with teacher, principal, and parents and/or guardians involved are necessary.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Summer School

Summer School may be provided for those students meeting district criteria. If you need more information regarding summer school, please contact your building principal.

School-Wide Title I

Students who receive a good education have a better chance for being successful in life. Title I is a federally funded program that helps students achieve academic standards and improve their scholastic performance.

Schools that meet income requirements can use Title I money to improve the whole school through school-wide programing. That means all students can benefit from Title I. Geil, Lincoln and Northfield elementary schools qualify for school-wide Title I programs. Each of these three buildings has a comprehensive plan to ensure high quality learning and continuous school improvement. The program currently focuses on the areas of reading/language arts, math, and behavior.

Parents are encouraged to be involved with the school and their children's education. This can be done by reading newsletters and notes, attending meetings and parent-teacher conferences, volunteering some time to the school, reviewing and updating the parent policy, pledging to support learning at home by signing the compact, and participating in activities sponsored by the school.

Positive Behavior Support (PBS)

In order to ensure a safe learning environment for all students, the school staff is committed to the following:

- Using a positive, preventative, and educational approach to student behavior
- Having a plan with clear direction for staff
- Explicitly teaching student behavior expectations
- Empowering all staff to implement the plan
- Students taking responsibility for their own behavior
- Using natural and logical consequences when behavior problems occur
- Seeking parent support for appropriate student conduct and disciplinary procedures

In order to carry out the philosophy and beliefs stated above, our school has chosen to implement the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) model. PBS is a program designated to teach students to build a more positive school-wide atmosphere. The ultimate goal is to teach students to be self-managers, who encourage and challenge each other to higher behavioral and academic standards.

This is accomplished through the use of clear expectations which are explicitly taught, regularly acknowledged and fairly corrected. Students are “set-up” for success in school.

Behavior Intervention Support Team (BIST)

BIST is an evidence based program adopted by the Gering School District to help staff implement the following systems.

- A communications system of regular meetings, checklists for student/administrator referral, information feedback and checkups.
- A proactive, rather than reactive, behavior system which fits with the goals of Positive Behavior Support.
- A common language which builds and develops responsibility.
- Safe places where students who are in trouble can go to process and get help.
- Mentors who will support teachers of difficult students. (Mentors can be teachers, colleagues, volunteers and others)
- A behavior intervention team of school staff to give back-up for teachers and administration.

BIST operates on these basic life goals:

- I can do something even if I don't want to or it's hard.
- I can make good choices when I'm mad or have big emotions.
- I can be okay when others are not okay.

Special Education Identification and Placement Procedures

What Does Special Education Mean?

Special education means specially designed instruction, curriculum, and services through the use of staff, facilities, equipment and classrooms which have been adapted to provide special instruction for students with disabilities.

In addition, special education provides the support services necessary for evaluation, placement and instruction for students with disabilities. These services are free to parents, unless they elect to place their child in a program other than one approved by the school district.

How are Students With Disabilities Identified?

The first step is for parents to provide written permission to have their child evaluated. The request for permission will include a description of the action to be taken and a description of each evaluation procedure. Written statements showing the results of the evaluation and the reasons for placement in a special education program must be kept on file. Within 30 days after a student has been verified as having a disability, a conference will be held with parents. Advance notice will be given. At the conference, an Individual Education Program (IEP) will be developed.

Students Who May Benefit

A student verified as having autism, behavior disorder, hearing impairment, mental handicap, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech language impairment, traumatic brain injury, or visual handicap may be placed in regular education with support services or may benefit from a special education classroom or service.

Independent Evaluation

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

Re-evaluation

Students identified for special education will be re-evaluated at least every three years by the IEP team. The IEP team will review existing evaluation data on the student and will identify what additional data, if any, are needed. The school district shall obtain parental consent prior to conducting any re-evaluation of a student with a disability.

Individual Education Program (IEP)

Each student with a disability must have a written IEP prepared by the staff in cooperation with parents specifying programs and services which will be provided by the schools. If necessary, the district will arrange for interpreters or other assistants to help parents in preparing and understanding the IEP. Once in place, the program is reviewed on a regular basis with the parent.

An IEP is developed in a conference setting. Parents will be notified of the persons who will be in attendance. The IEP conference shall include at least the following:

1. A representative of the school district;
2. An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results;
3. One or both parents or guardian;
4. The child (when appropriate)
5. At least one regular education teacher if the child is or may be participating in the regular education environment;
6. At least one special education teacher;
7. A representative of the nonpublic school if the child is attending a nonpublic school;
8. A representative of a service agency if the child is receiving services from an approved service agency; and
9. Other individuals, at the discretion of the parent or school district.

It is permissible for parents to bring other persons to the IEP meeting, but it is a good idea to inform the school before the scheduled meeting. The school district will provide parents with a copy of the IEP.

Special Education Placement

The student's placement in a special education program is dependent on the student's educational needs as outlined in the Individual Education Program (IEP). The school district must assure that students with disabilities are educated with students who do not have disabilities, to the maximum extent possible. Students with disabilities may be placed in special classes, separate schools or other situations outside the regular educational environment when the nature of the child's needs require specialized educational techniques which are not available in current settings. Determination of a student's educational placement will be made by a team of persons who know the student and who understand the tests and procedures that assess the student's learning abilities.

Parents are asked for written consent to determine whether or not they approve the educational placement recommended for their child. If the parent does not speak English or is hearing impaired, an interpreter may be requested. Written notice shall be given to parents a reasonable time before the school district: 1) Proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, verification or educational

placement of a child or the provision of a free appropriate public education; or 2) Refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the child.

Transportation of Students Receiving special Education

The district special education staff will make arrangements for transportation for eligible students to the extent such is required by the student's IEP. Students assigned to special education programs requiring attendance at schools outside their regular attendance area will be transported. Special conditions may warrant that special education students receive transportation to their assigned schools. If parents are dissatisfied with a transportation decision, they may contact the Superintendent for a review.

Access to Student Records

Parents have the right to inspect and review any education records relating to their child which are collected, maintained or used by the school district in providing educational services.

Parental Review of Programs

Parents who want to review their child's placement for any reason should request an IEP team meeting. If parents are not satisfied with the results of the conference, they may appeal to the Nebraska Department of Education for a formal hearing to be conducted by a state hearing officer. Parents dissatisfied by the findings and decisions made in a state level hearing have the right to bring civil action.

Plan and Budget

With the exception of personally identifiable student records, district special education plans and budgets are available for public inspection.

This is a summary of the Gering Public Schools district plan for special education students. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the complete district policy or a copy of the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51 (complaint procedures) or Rule 55 (appeal procedures) may contact the Director of Student Services at the Gering Public Schools District Offices.

Building Alternate Routes for Kids' Success (BARKS)

BARKS, formally DAWGS, is an alternative, in-district educational placement available to students who received services on an Individualized Education Plan, or IEP. It is an intensive behavior program within the district's continuum of least restrictive environments (LRE) for students in grades K-5th. BARKS is a placement option available to students with disabilities when exhaustive interventions have been implemented in less restrictive learning environments without meeting the desired level of positive outcomes for the student. Students may only be placed in the BARKS program through IEP team decision.

The mission of the program is to provide a positive environment with clear expectations and immediate consistent feedback to assist students in developing appropriate behavior management skills. BARKS believes that students should be served in the least restrictive environment allowing for academic and behavioral success.

Along with academic skills, students in BARKS will participate in individual and group social skills counseling.

Students attending BARKS will receive behavior intervention through the use of the Behavior Intervention Support Team (BIST), Crisis Prevention Institute strategies, and a four tier leveling system. When a

student has completed the requirements for exiting the BARKS program, the IEP team will meet to plan his/her transition to the next appropriate least restrictive environment (LRE).

The program is located at Lincoln Elementary. Classes are held from approximately 8:05 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. daily. For more information, contact Julie Siebke, Director of Student Services, or Jesse Neugebauer, Lincoln Elementary Principal.

Multi-Tier System of Supports Team (MTSS)

Gering Public Schools recognizes that students can have experiences, circumstances, or conditions that may affect their academic performance and overall success in the school environment. When concerns are presented to the school relating to a student's underperformance in an area or other challenges impacting his/her school success, one avenue of support the school may pursue with the student and his/her family is the MTSS process.

MTSS is a research-based, systematic approach required by the State of Nebraska used to respond to identified student needs and deficits. It involves a system of service delivery (a.k.a. RtI) designed to provide effective instruction for all students using a comprehensive and preventive problem solving approach. It employs a tiered method of instructional delivery in which the core curriculum addresses and meets the needs of most students (Tier 1), additional instruction is provided for those needing supplementary support (Tier 2), and intensive and individualized services are provided for the students who continue to demonstrate more intensive needs (Tier 3). Tiered instructional supports are available for academics (math and reading), social skills, and positive behaviors.

At the center of MTSS is the MTSS Team, or SAT Team (Student Assistance Team). This team is made-up of grade level teachers, special education teachers, building counselors and administrators, Title 1 interventionists, the school psychologist, and the families of referred students. The team meets regularly to plan and review additional services and interventions provided to the students with the ultimate goal of addressing whatever gaps exist in the students' skill sets and supporting their overall school success.

Often at the elementary level, SAT Teams may be formed to address one or more of the following issues affecting students: low attendance, underperformance in one or more academic areas, socio-emotional skill deficits, and behavioral concerns.

Referral to the MTSS process can be made by various concerned individuals including the student, family members, or school staff. Individuals wanting additional information about the referral process can speak to a school counselor or building principal. After the referral, information will be gathered to help identify the problem(s) the student is experiencing. The MTSS Team will then meet to formulate an appropriate plan of action.

A possible outcome of the MTSS process, following multiple attempts at intervention and support put in place by the SAT Team, is a team referral of a student for special education eligibility assessment.

Guidance Services

Gering Public Schools employs a guidance counselor(s) for the purpose of assisting with the District's testing program and to assist with scheduling and attendance and for students to discuss problems and resolve conflicts in classroom visits, small group counseling, and individual counseling. If you wish to see a counselor, stop by a counselor's office and make arrangements for an appointment.

Gering Public Schools also offers the services of an elementary licensed-mental health provider to prek-5th grade students at all three elementary locations. For additional information, please contact your building counselor or the district director of student services.

GPS Health Services

The Gering School District employs full time nurses or medical technicians working under a certified RN who cover the district's locations. Each school location has a First Responder Team and staff who are CPR/First Aid/AED certified, Attack on Asthma and Medication Administration trained to assist as the schools are not staffed with a full-time nurse. Basic first aid will be administered to a student, if more extensive care is needed, then the parent/guardian (or emergency contact) will be notified, or 911 will be contacted.

Information regarding GPS Health Services can be found at the following link to our Health Service Handbook:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Nm4BAzkY7CkyzhygFa1AOteBuiajtDyh047zBnJvw8/edit?usp=sharing>



~~As defined by the National Association of School Nurses, school nursing is a specialized practice of professional nursing that advances the well-being, academic success, and life-long achievement of students. School nurses facilitate positive student responses to normal development; promote health and safety; intervene with actual and potential health problems; provide case management services; and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy, and learning.~~

~~The school nurse role:~~

- Ensures compliance with school entry health requirements
- Provides care and case management for children with chronic health problems
- Monitors security and safe administration of medications
- Assures the health and safety of the school students and staff
- Manages disaster preparedness and emergency service plans
- Provides health education and staff wellness programs
- Provides resources and guidance in the areas of disease and infection control practices at school
- Assures student compliance with state and local regulations related to health and safety (Immunizations; Health Screens)
- Identifies school health needs and advocates for necessary resources

Parents and/or Guardians are responsible for the health care of their child, while the school is available to assist, assess, and monitor that care during regular school hours. Parents and/or Guardians are responsible for notifying the school of their student's:

- Chronic or Acute health related diseases, conditions, and/or issues (Examples include severe allergies, diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, urinary or bowel issues, etc.);
- Recent physical, vision, and/or dental exams;
- Updated immunizations (Records are reviewed annually, and summary reports are sent to Nebraska State Health Department);
- Need for medication administration during the regular school day (please refer to Medication Administration Policy);
- Absence from school due to illness. (please inform school of type of illness so that the number and type of illness and symptoms can be monitored and reported to local health department as necessary); Updated emergency contact information and a plan/arrangement in place if parent/guardian is unable to pick up their ill child from school and/or while the child is ill and needs to stay home.

Please note from the Health Services Handbook:

Parents and/or guardians have the following notification responsibilities:

- **All newly enrolled students** will need a physical/vision exam which was done within the last (six) 6 months of entering school. The school will also need to be provided the current immunization report that is compliant with the State of Nebraska guidelines. **Copies of these documents will be made and the originals returned to the guardians at the time they are brought in. All documents need to be turned in and approved by the health office prior to the student's first day of school.**
- Inform the school of PE or recess restrictions. If a student requires restricted PE or recess due to a health condition for more than (1) school day, then a healthcare provider note is required. If a student has a note limiting or restricting PE, this will include recess. If a student is out of school for five (5) consecutive days due to illness, a note from the student's health provider will need to be provided to the school's health office.
- Each school location has a First Responder Team and staff who are CPR/First Aid/AED certified, trained on Asthma & Anaphylaxis and Medication Administration to assist students. The schools are not staffed with full-time nurses. Basic first aid will be administered to students; if more extensive care is needed, then the parent/guardian (or emergency contact) will be notified, or 911 will be contacted.

In addition to listed contagious diseases which may require a student to remain home listed in the handbook, Gering Public Schools policy includes:

1. Elevated Body Temperature: A student with temperature over 100 degrees shall be sent home from school. The student can return to school once fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc.). A fever is defined as 100-degrees Fahrenheit or 37.8-degrees Celsius. Or student may return with documented physician approval.
2. Hepatitis B and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS): Determination of the school attendance status of a student with Hepatitis B or HIV/AIDS will be on a case by case basis.
3. Missed school days from illness: If a student is absent for five consecutive school days due to illness, then doctor note is required to allow for his/her return to school.
4. Nausea and/or Vomiting: If student has nausea and/or vomiting, then remaining out of school for 24-hours is strongly recommended.
5. MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus): May return with documented physician approval.

*Any student who becomes ill or injured during the school day will report to the school nurse. An ill or injured student may not leave school until permission of the parent, or the person designated by the parent, has been received. Ill or injured students are not to leave the building without the knowledge of the health office staff and without signing out properly in the office. The Health Office is to be used for the purpose of receiving First Aid treatment for injuries or illness.

Medication Administration Policy:

~~It is recognized that for effective treatment of chronic and/or acute illnesses, medication might need to be administered during school hours. A student who is required to take medication during the regular school day must comply with medication administration policy. The policy has been developed for the safety of the student receiving the medication and for the safety of all students. Medication will be administered by the school nurse, a registered Medication Aide, or other school staff member meeting the minimum competency standards for the Medication Aide Act.~~

~~For school personnel to administer prescription medication to a student, it is necessary to have a doctor and/or health care provider's authorization and written order and a parent/guardian's authorization. Medication must be brought to school in the original labeled prescription bottle by parent/guardian with proper label including child's name and an order from the healthcare providers with the student's name, medication name, instructions for use (time, dosage, duration) and the healthcare provider's signature. The authorization must be renewed on an annual basis and/or if the prescription changes. Loose capsules, tablets, unidentified or non-labeled medication will not be accepted for administration. Medication will not be administered without the above authorization and information.~~

~~A record of the medication administration will be kept for each student receiving medication including the student name, medication name, instructions for use, name and initials of personnel who administered medication, date, time and route of administration, drug count with signature of school personnel and parent/guardian to verify count, documentation of unusual circumstances, actions, or omissions. Administration of medication records shall be kept confidential. Records shall be available to the department of Health and Human Service Regulation and Licensure, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the State Department of Education.~~

- ~~1. Over the counter medication (such as Tylenol, ibuprofen, cough drops, saline eye drops, hydrocortisone cream, triple antibiotic ointment, insect sting swab, topical cooling gel) may be given with parents/guardians permission by trained school personnel by signing the pertinent section on the Student Health Information form at the beginning of the school year. That~~

~~permission releases Gering Public Schools and employees from liability in case of choking, allergic reaction, side effects and/or health risks related to the medication. Parents/guardians may also supply over-the-counter medication for their student to be kept at the school.~~

- ~~2. Medication will be kept in a secured area. Students may carry medication only with the approval of the parents and building principal and the appropriate paperwork completed. Emergency protocol for medication-related reactions will be in place. Medications must be picked up by an adult on the last day of school, or they will be disposed of.~~
- ~~3. Schools are not guaranteed to be staffed with a full-time nurse. The student has a responsibility to remember to report to the office at medication administration time.~~
- ~~4. The Superintendent shall be responsible, in conjunction with the school nurse or medication aide, for developing rules and regulations governing the administration of medication, prescription and nonprescription, including emergency protocols, to students and for ensuring persons administering medication have met the requirement of state statutes. Annually, each student shall be provided with the requirements for administration of medication at school.~~

Health Screenings

~~Health Screenings will be performed as recommended by the Department of Health and Human Services. Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing if medical, dental, vision, audiology, or other follow up is recommended after the screening is completed.~~

Contagious and Infectious Diseases

~~As recommended by the Nebraska Department of health and Human Services, please refer to the list below for minimum isolation periods and control measures:~~

~~Please note: Susceptible=person with disease; Contacts=those who have been in contact with the diseased person. Day of onset of specific symptoms is counted as "day zero"; the day after onset is "day1"~~

- ~~1. Chickenpox: Exclude for at least 5 days after the eruption first appears or until vesicles become dry; Avoid contact with susceptibles. No exclusion of contacts. Alert parents of immunosuppressed child(ren) of possible exposure.~~
- ~~2. Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): Exclude symptomatic cases. Urge medical care. May return when the eye is normal in appearance or with documentation from the physician that child is no longer infectious. No exclusion of contacts.~~
- ~~3. Common Cold: Exclusion unnecessary. No exclusion of contacts.~~
- ~~4. Diphtheria: Exclude cases. Return with a documented physician approval. Exclude inadequately immunized close contacts as deemed appropriate by school officials following investigation by the local and/or Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Report immediately by telephone all cases to local and/or state health departments.~~
- ~~5. Enterobiasis (Pinworm, Threadworm, Seatworm): Exclude until treated as documented by physician. No exclusion of contacts. Careful hand washing essential.~~
- ~~6. Fifth Disease: Exclude until fever and malaise are gone. May return with rash with documented physician approval. No exclusion of contacts; however, alert any students or staff who are pregnant, have chronic hemolytic anemia or immunodeficiency to consult their physician.~~
- ~~7. Hepatitis A: Exclude for no less than 7 days after onset of jaundice. Return with documented physician approval. No exclusion of contacts. Immune globulin (IG) prevents disease if given within two weeks of exposure. IG to family contacts only. Careful hand washing essential.~~
- ~~8. Herpes Simplex (Type 1): Exclusion unnecessary. No exclusion of contacts. Avoid contact with immunosuppressed or eczematous persons. Good hygiene avoids sharing toilet articles.~~
- ~~9. Impetigo: Exclude until brought under treatment as documented by physician. No exclusion of contacts. Good personal hygiene essential. Avoid common use of toilet articles.~~

10. Influenza: Exclude for duration of illness. No exclusion of contacts.
11. Lice: The student is not sent home from school; however, it is acceptable for the parent/guardian to pick up the student. The parent/guardian is instructed that the student should be treated before returning to school and that nits should be removed.
12. Meningitis (Bacterial and Viral): Exclude for duration of illness. Return with documented physician approval. No exclusion of contacts. Chemoprophylaxis appropriate for family and intimate contacts.
13. Measles (Rubeola): Exclude for duration of illness and for no fewer than 4 days after onset of rash. Exclude unimmunized students on same campus from date of diagnosis of first case until 14 days after rash onset of last known case or until measles immunization received or laboratory proof of immunity is presented or until history of previous measles infection is verified as per records or the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Report immediately by telephone all cases to local and/or state health departments.
14. Mumps (Epidemic Parotitis): Exclude until swelling has subsided. No exclusion of contacts. Inform parents of unimmunized students on campus of possible exposure and encourage immunization.
15. Pediculosis (head or body lice): Exclude until after appropriate treatment is started. No exclusion of contacts; however, they should be notified of exposure.
16. Pertussis (Whooping cough): Return as per written documentation.
Exclude adequately immunized close contacts as deemed appropriate by school officials following investigation by the local and/or state Department of Health and Human Services. Chemoprophylaxis may be considered for family and close contacts. Report immediately by telephone all cases to local and/or state health departments.
17. Poliomyelitis: Exclude until physician approves return.
18. Ringworm: Exclude until treatment started. No exclusion of contacts. Good sanitation practices and don't share toilet articles.
19. Rubella (German Measles): Exclude for duration of illness and for no less than 4 days after onset of rash. Exclude unimmunized students on same campus from date of diagnosis of first case until 23* days after rash onset of last known case or until rubella immunization received or laboratory proof of immunity is presented. Report immediately by telephone all cases to local and/or state health department.
20. Scabies: Exclude until the day after treatment started. No exclusion of contacts.
21. Shingles/Herpes Zoster: Exclude children with shingles/zoster if the vesicles cannot be covered until after the vesicles have dried. Individuals with shingles/zoster should be instructed to wash their hands if they touch the potentially infectious vesicles.
22. Streptococcal infection (Scarlet Fever, Scarletina, Strep Throat): Exclude until afebrile and under treatment for 24 hours. No exclusion of contacts. Early medical care is important and usually requires 10 days of antibiotic treatment. Screening for asymptomatic cases not recommended.
23. Tuberculosis Pulmonary: Exclude. Physician treatment essential. May return with documented physician approval. No exclusion of contacts. Skin test contacts and chemoprophylaxis with INH if positive (in absence of disease). Exclusion of non-pulmonary tuberculosis unnecessary.

Requirements for Physicals, Vision Exams, and Immunizations:

- Physical Examination

Physical examination by a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse within the six months prior to the entrance of a child into Early Childhood Education;

~~beginner grade or Kindergarten, and 7th grade, or in the case of a transfer from out of state to any grade, is required. The parent/guardian has the right to submit a written statement refusing such examination:~~

● ~~Vision Exam~~

~~Visual evaluation by a physician, a physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse, or an optometrist within six months prior to the entrance of a child into the beginner grade or Kindergarten, or in the case of transfer from out of state to any grade, is required. The visual evaluation must consist of testing for amblyopia, strabismus, and internal and external eye health, with testing to determine visual acuity. The parent/guardian has the right to submit a written statement refusing such an evaluation:~~

● ~~Immunization Requirements~~

~~The State of Nebraska has immunization requirements for children entering school. Students will not be able to enter school until the school has written proof of their immunization status.~~

~~To attend school, students in Nebraska are required to be immunized per current requirements from Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services:~~

~~All students K-12 must be immunized for D.P.T., polio, measles, rubella, varicella, mumps and Hepatitis B. The Tdap vaccination is required for incoming 7th graders. Dates of immunizations are required:~~

~~Students with a history of varicella disease (chicken pox) must provide evidence of immunity in the form of signature of parent with date of illness, signature of health care provider with date of illness, laboratory evidence of varicella immunity or a clinical diagnosis of shingles.~~

~~Students who do not receive immunizations for health reasons must have a statement signed by a healthcare provider stating that, in their opinion, the specified immunization(s) required would be injurious to the health and well being of the student or any member of the student's family or household.~~

~~Students who do not receive immunization due to religious reason must have a notarized affidavit signed by a legally authorized representative of the student, stating that the immunization conflicts with the tenets and practice of a recognized religious denomination of which the student is an adherent or member, or that immunization conflicts with the personally and sincerely followed religious beliefs of the student.~~

~~A student may be provisionally enrolled in school if he/she has begun the immunizations against the specified disease prior to enrollment and continues the necessary immunization against the specified disease prior to enrollment and continues the necessary immunizations as rapidly as is medically feasible. In addition, a student may also be 18 provisionally enrolled if he/she is the child of an officer or enlisted person, or the child of the spouse of such officer or enlisted person on active duty in any branch of military services of the United States.~~

~~For further information on immunizations, contact school health staff or refer to Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Control of Communicable Disease regulations:~~

Summary of the School Immunization Rules and Regulations for 2025-2026 School Year

Student Age Group	Required Vaccines
Ages 2 through 5-year enrolled in a school-based program not licensed	4 doses of DtaP, DTP or DT vaccine; 3 doses of Polio vaccine;

as a childcare provider	3 doses of Hib vaccine or 1 dose of Hib given at or after 15 months of age; 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine; 1 dose of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age. Written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted; 4 doses of pneumococcal or 1 dose of pneumococcal given on or after 15 months of age.
Students from Kindergarten through 12 Grade, including all transfer students from outside the State of Nebraska and any foreign students	3 doses of DTaP, DTP, DT or Td vaccine, one given on or after the 4th birthday; 3 doses of Polio vaccine; 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine or 2 doses of adolescent vaccine if student is 11-15 years of age; 2 doses of MMR or MMRV vaccine, given on or after 12 months of age and separated by at least one month; 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV if given on or after 12 months of age. Written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted. If the child has had varicella disease, they do not need any varicella shots.
Additionally, for 7th Grade Only	1 dose of Tdap (must contain Pertussis booster)

Source: Nebraska Immunization Program, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, 2011.
For additional information, call 402-471-6423

The School Rules & Regulations are available on the internet: <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/reg/t173.htm>
(Title 173: Control of Communicable Disease – Chapter 3; revised and implemented 2011)

Emergency Response to Life-Threatening Asthma or Systemic Allergic Reactions (Anaphylaxis) Protocol (NDE – Title 92 NAC Chapter 59):

The Nebraska State Board of Education mandated that this protocol be adopted and implemented in all accredited public schools, approved nonpublic schools and early childhood education programs. Through Attack on Asthma Nebraska and the Nebraska Department of Education, the protocol steps are designed to provide quick, effective care in order to prevent death due to severe asthma attack or anaphylaxis. Staff members have been trained to recognize signs and symptoms of a life-threatening breathing emergency, certain staff members are trained to respond to anyone experiencing a life-threatening asthma or anaphylaxis emergency at school.

The Emergency Protocol includes:

1. CALL 911
2. Summon school nurse if available. If not, summon designated trained, non-medical staff to implement emergency protocol
3. Check airway patency, breathing, respiratory rate, and pulse
4. Administer medications (EpiPen® and Albuterol) per standing order
5. Determine cause as quickly as possible
6. Monitor vital signs (Pulse, respiration, etc.)
7. Contact parents immediately and physician as soon as possible
8. Any individual treated for symptoms with epinephrine at school will be transferred to medical facility

If you know that your student has asthma or a known allergy, it is critically important that you communicate this information to school health staff. For each student with a known allergic condition or asthma, you must provide the school with (1) written medical documentation (Asthma/Allergy Action Plan), (2) medications as directed by a healthcare professional. In the event that your student experiences a life-threatening asthma attack or systemic allergic reaction, we will defer to the specific documents and medication that you have provided. If you do not have medical documentation and instructions on file with the school for your student, we will defer to the regulatory protocol as described above.

~~The protocol is in effect for the school day hours (7:40 AM — 3:20 PM) and after school programs sponsored by the school. Emergency medication remains on school grounds. If your child has an EpiPen and/or inhaler in the health office, it will be sent with school staff on field trips. If your child participates in after school activities (sports, clubs, etc.), complete appropriate paperwork for him/her to carry and self administer medication. In the event of an emergency, 911 will be called. If you do not want your student to receive the above described emergency medication, contact school health staff.~~

Concussions

~~A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. If your student has a concussion, his or her brain needs time to heal. After a concussion, physical and cognitive activities should be carefully managed and monitored with limited and gradual return to learn and play. If your student is diagnosed with a concussion, then please contact the school nurse, counselor, principal, athletic director, or coach. The student will follow the Return to Learn protocols for academic work. If the student is involved in sports etc. (This includes recess) the student will need to have a clearance note from a healthcare provider to Return to Play.~~

Procedure for Head Lice Detection and Management at School:

- ~~1. When a student is found to have live lice and/or nits:
 - a. The parent/guardian is notified, and information related to detection and elimination of head lice will be provided at that time or sent home with the student in a sealed envelope.
 - b. The student is not sent home from school, however it is acceptable if the parent/guardian picks up the student.
 - c. The parent/guardian is instructed that the student should be treated before returning to school and that nits should be removed.
 - d. When the student returns to school, the school health staff is to confirm that treatment has been completed. If lice and/or nits are found, the parent is notified to keep nit picking and combing.
 - e. Follow up head checks may be done by school staff to confirm lice management efforts. If future checks reveal an increased number of nits present or it is obvious to the screener that the student's hair has not been treated, the parent/guardian will be contacted for follow-up and support.~~
- ~~2. When to check beyond the identified student with live lice or nits:
 - a. If the student has siblings in the building and/or other buildings in the district, then the sibling(s) are to be checked.
 - b. Full classroom screenings for head lice or nits will not be done, unless otherwise determined by school nurse and/or building administrator.~~
- ~~3. Classroom Environment:
 - a. Notify the custodian to vacuum the affected classroom and all upholstered furniture within.
 - b. Stuffed animals and pillows can be bagged for two weeks.
 - c. No environmental pesticide treatments are to be used.
 - d. Encourage students to avoid sharing hats, combs, coats, pillows, or other personal items.
 - e. The school nurse and/or building administrator can use professional judgment to determine when unusual measures are necessary to respond to extraordinary cases.~~
- ~~4. Notification Procedures:
 - a. The customary notification for the presence of head lice is to be done on an individual/case by case basis to the parent/guardian of the infested student. Classroom notifications are not done with typical head lice cases.~~

- b. In very unusual cases, it may be appropriate in the professional opinion of the school nurse and in consultation of the administrator to consider a general parent/guardian notification for a high number of identified cases of head lice.
5. Exclusion Procedure Support:
- a. In the rare case that a student has either:
 - i. Chronic head lice infestation or
 - ii. Severe head lice infestation that is disruptive to the learning environment, the school nurse will be consulted.
 - b. If in the nurse's professional judgment, it is determined that exclusion needs to be considered, the nurse will consult with the administrator about implementing exclusion. This measure will be taken with careful consideration:
 - i. With chronic head lice infestation cases, the nurse will secure documentation of repeated and unsuccessful head lice management measures.
 - ii. The return of the student after exclusion will be predicated on a head check with evidence of progress in head lice management and progress toward eradication of the head lice. Evidence will look like elimination of live lice and a decrease in the number of nits.
 - iii. It may be appropriate in the judgment of the school nurse to monitor progress of lice management over a period of time. The goal is supporting the family in head lice eradication.

General Control Measures in Schools	
Recommendations	Rationale
Routine classroom or school wide screening for head lice is not recommended	The American Academy of Pediatrics discourages head lice screenings, which have not been proven to have a significant effect over time on the incidence of head lice in the school setting and are not cost effective. Children should be checked only when demonstrating symptoms of head lice.
The American Association of Pediatrics, the National Association of School Nurses, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advocate that "no nit" policies should be discontinued.	1. Egg cases farther from the scalp are easier to discover, but these tend to be empty (hatched) or nonviable and, thus, are of no consequence. 2. Nits are cemented to hair shafts and are very unlikely to be transferred successfully to other people. 3. The burden of unnecessary absenteeism to the students, families and communities far outweighs the risks associated with head lice. 4. Misdiagnosis of nits is very common during nit checks conducted by nonmedical personnel. 5. Research has shown that the survival of head lice when not on the head is usually less than one day and the eggs can only hatch when incubated by body heat found near the scalp.
Provide parent education program in the management of head lice in the school setting.	Head lice are not a medical or public health hazard as they are not known to spread disease. However, parents may have misconceptions and prejudices, which place pressure on school staff. Educating and supporting the child and parent with factual, nonjudgmental information is better than having policies and practices driven by misinformation.
School personnel involved in detection of head lice infestation should be properly trained.	The diagnosis of head lice infestation is best made by finding a live nymph or adult louse on the scalp or hair of a person. Because nymphs and adult lice are very small, move quickly, and void light, they can be difficult to find. The diagnosis should be made by a health care provider or other person trained to identify live head lice.
Individual Case Management	
Recommendations	Rationale

A child with an active head lice infestation should remain in class but be discouraged from close direct head contact with others.	A child with an active head lice infestation has likely had the infestation for one month or more by the time it is discovered and poses little risk to others from the infestation. Transmission occurs primarily through head-to-head contact and infrequently through indirect contact with shared belongings. It is the position of the National Association of School Nurses (NASN), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and The American Pediatric Association that the management of head lice in the school setting should not disrupt the educational process.
Notify parent or guardian by telephone or by having a note sent home with the child at the end of the school day stating that prompt, proper treatment of this condition is the best interest of the child and his or her classmates.	The school can be most helpful by making available accurate information about the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of head lice in an understandable form. Information sheets in different languages and visual aids for families with limited literacy skills should be made available by schools.
Maintain confidentiality when a child is diagnosed with head lice.	
Criteria for Return to School	
Recommendations	Rationale
Students diagnosed with live lice do not need to be sent home early from school; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun.	Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice. Do not check for nits (dead or alive) or enforce a no nit policy for those who have been treated. It is not productive.

Head Lice: Guiding Principles For School Policy. Rhode Island Department of Health. Divisions of Infectious Disease and Epidemiology, November 18, 2014.

LICE 101: MYTHS and REALITIES ABOUT HEAD LICE

Definitions	
Lice: more than one louse.	Nit: Eggs, dead or alive, of a louse
Louse: small insect that lives on the scalp	Parasite: Lives off another, in this case the blood of humans
Pediculosis: Having an infestation of lice	Infestation: Having an insect present, in this case, in your hair.
MYTHS	TRUTHS
Head lice are easy to get.	Lice are spread mainly by head-to-head contact. They are much harder to get than a cold, flu, ear infection, pink eye, strep throat, food poisoning, or impetigo.
You can get lice from your dog, guinea pig, or other animal.	Lice are species-specific. You can only get human lice from another human. You cannot get another animal's lice.
You can get head lice from hats and helmets.	Rarely, but possible. Hairbrushes, pillows, and sheets are also uncommon modes of transmission.
School is a common place for lice transmission.	School is an unlikely source of transmission. Much more common are family members, overnight guests, and playmates who spend a large amount of time together.
Poor hygiene contributes to lice.	Hygiene makes absolutely no difference. You get lice by close personal contact with someone else that has lice, not by being dirty.
Lice can jump or fly from one person to another.	Lice can only crawl. They can neither fly nor jump. They must crawl from one person to another.
Any nits left in the hair can cause lice	Any nits farther away than one quarter to one half on the hair shaft are ALREADY

to come back.	HATCHED and pose no risk to others.
Eggs or nits can fall out of the hair, hatch and cause lice in another person.	Nits are cemented on the hair and very hard to remove. They cannot fall off. Newly hatched lice must find a head quickly or will die.
Lice can live a long time.	Lice live only 1-2 days off the head. Each louse only lives about 30 days on the head.
All members of a family should be treated if one person has lice.	Only the person with lice should be treated. Lice shampoos are INSECTICIDES and can be dangerous if used incorrectly or too frequently. Household members and close contacts should be checked, but only treat those who actually have lice. The house should NOT be sprayed with insecticide, nor used on clothing or other items.
Checking a classroom when one student has lice can prevent lice from spreading.	Classroom transmission is EXCEEDINGLY RARE and checking students is a waste of valuable teaching time. Checking family members and close playmates is much more appropriate.
Avoiding lice is important as they spread disease.	Head lice do not spread any known disease. They are annoying and irritating, but not dangerous.

Pontius, Deborah J. (2014). Demystifying Pediculosis: School Nurses Taking the Lead. *Pediatric Nursing* 40(5), 226-235

Birth Certificate Requirements

State law requires that a certified copy of a student's birth certificate be provided within 30 days of enrollment of a student in school for the first time. You may obtain a certified copy from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state in which your child was born. Assistance in obtaining birth certificates may be obtained from Health Records Managements, P.O.Box 95065, Lincoln, NE 68509-5065. There is a fee per certificate.

Please note: The document parents receive from the hospital looks like a birth certificate, but it is not a certified copy. A certified copy has the raised seal of the state of Nebraska on it and is signed by the director of vital statistics.

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

High Ability Learning (HAL)

Pursuant to Nebraska Department of Education Rule 3 Regulations, Gering Public Schools identifies learners of high ability and seeks to address their unique needs through a variety of instructional methods. The Gering Public Schools HAL identification matrix incorporates criteria including nationalized achievement test scores to identify students above the 90th percentile district-wide.

Admission

A pupil must be five (5) years of age on or before July 31 to be enrolled in Kindergarten. All students entering the Gering Public Schools for the first time must present a valid birth certificate and a complete record of immunizations in addition to a physical examination requirement specified in the Nebraska Statute 79-214. In addition, a visual evaluation by a physician, a physician assistant, an advanced practice registered nurse, or an optometrist within six months prior to entering Nebraska schools for the first time.

All students are required to have the following: 3 doses of DtaP, DTP, DT, one given on or after the 4th birthday; 3 doses of Polio vaccine; 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine; 2 doses of MMR or MMRV vaccine, given on or after 12 months of age and separated by at least one month; and 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age.

Written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted. If the child has had varicella disease, he or she does not need any varicella shots.

008.02 From July 1, 1994, and thereafter, each student shall be protected prior to enrollment against the diseases listed, except as follows:

008-02A Immunization shall not be required for a student's enrollment in any school in this state if he or she submits to the admitting official either of the following:

008.02A1 A statement (attachment 3, Refusal of Immunization for Medical Reasons, which is incorporated herein by this reference) signed by a physician licensed under the Uniform Licensing Law stating that, in the physicians' opinion, the immunizations required would be injurious to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's family or household; or

008.02A2 An affidavit (attachment 4, Refusal of Immunization for Religious Reasons, which is incorporated herein by this reference) signed by the student or, if he or she is a minor, by a legally authorized representative of the student, stating that the immunization conflicts with the tenets and practice of a recognized religious denomination of which the student is an adherent or member or that immunization conflicts with the personal and sincerely followed religious beliefs of the student.

Student Fees

The board of Education of Gering Public Schools has adopted a student fees policy in accordance with the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act.

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

Fees will be collected in specific classes pursuant to Nebraska state law. Students will pay for materials used in class projects that become the student's personal property.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

Drug Free Schools

The District implements regulations and practices that will ensure compliance with the Federal Drug Free Schools and Communities Act and all regulations and rules promulgated pursuant thereto. The District's safe and drug free schools program is established in accordance with principles of effectiveness as required by law to respond to such harmful effects.

Comprehensive Substance Abuse Policy

PHILOSOPHY

All students have the right to attend school in a drug free environment conducive to good learning. The use of illicit drugs, alcohol, or other substances is not only illegal; but it interferes with both effective learning and the healthy development of young people.

The educational system has a fundamental and ethical obligation to prevent drug abuse and maintain a drug free and safe educational environment, not only throughout the schools, but also in all school related activities.

USE/POSSESSION OF HEALTH ENDANGERING SUBSTANCES

Pursuant to its statutory authority to adopt policies, rules and regulations necessary to protect the government and health of students in the School District, the Board of Education of the Gering Public Schools has determined that the possession or use by students of tobacco or tobacco products, vapor products (including e-cigarettes), alcohol, narcotics, or other dangerous and/or illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia shall be prohibited.

- A. During the school day
- B. On school grounds
- C. By a participant in school activities
- D. As a spectator at school activities involving Gering participants
- E. Off school grounds, if there is a substantial interference with school purposes

Students who possess or use tobacco or tobacco products, vapor products (including e-cigarettes) alcohol or narcotics, or other dangerous drugs or drug paraphernalia, except as directed by a physician during the school day, on school grounds or while participating in or attending school activities, shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions, including but not limited to expulsion or suspension.

Enforcement of disciplinary sanctions shall be in accordance with the procedures established by the Gering Public Schools' Comprehensive Substance Abuse Policy and Guidelines for Students Participating in Extracurricular Activities.

Disciplinary Procedures and Actions

Any student charged with having violated school rules or Nebraska State laws relating to possession, use, or sale of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, mood-altering drugs, controlled substances, or any drug "look-alike" substance, on school premises, at school sponsored/sanctioned activities, or when being transported in vehicles dispatched by the school district, shall be immediately notified (along with the student's parents) of the charge, given a full written statement of the charge and accompanying suspension, and advised of his/her rights to a review of the validity of the charge in the form of a hearing before the school's Board of Education within a reasonable time. In order to insure the student's right to due process, the procedural requirements of Nebraska State Law. Student Suspension or Expulsion Act sections 79-4170 to 79-4205 shall be followed. Those students found to have violated school rules or Nebraska State laws shall be subject to the following disciplinary actions and procedures under the direction of the school principal or the school's site administrative staff, as determined by the number of prior offenses by the student.

- A. **Procedures for Dealing with Students Under the Influence of Alcohol, Drugs or Other Harmful Substances Other than Tobacco**

1. Any Staff member who believes that a student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs will notify a principal or designee immediately.
2. The principal or designee will take the necessary disciplinary actions as outlined in the following section (Section B).

B. Disciplinary Actions for Students Under the Influence of Alcohol, Drugs or Other Harmful Substance Other Than Tobacco

1. First Offense
 - a. A meeting is held with student and parents.
 - b. The student is given a five (5) day out of school suspension, but shall be offered the option of in school suspension if he/she agrees to have immediate testing for drugs/alcohol in the body and to seek diagnostic evaluation for substance abuse if the tests are positive.

The student must follow those recommendations made by a resource specialist for substance use/abuse or related problems. If the student fails to follow treatment recommendations he/she shall be required to complete the remainder of the five-day out of school suspension. (The School District will provide a list of qualified specialists).
 - c. A recommendation for a long-term suspension or expulsion will be considered, depending upon the severity of the case.
 - d. In an emergency case necessitating immediate health care services, the above procedures shall be put in place as soon as the student is physically and mentally functional.
2. Second Offense (occurring within three years of the first offense).
 - a. A conference will be held with the parents as soon as possible. Immediate drug/alcohol testing will take place.
 - b. Upon confirmation of a positive drug/alcohol test, the student will automatically be suspended ten (10) days.
 - c. Parents will be provided with information on qualified substance abuse treatment resources.
 - d. The student will be required to undergo assessment by a qualified substance abuse specialist and submit proof of an assessment by that specialist before being allowed to return to school. The student must agree to fulfill those recommendations made by the substance abuse specialist.
 - e. Failure to comply with the above will result in long term suspension or expulsion hearings being initiated against the student.
3. Third Offense (occurring within three years of the first offense).
 - a. The student will be suspended pending expulsion proceedings which will be initiated according to the School district's expulsion policy.

C. Procedures for Dealing with Students in Possession

Students who possess alcohol, narcotics, other drugs, drug "look-alikes", or drug paraphernalia on school property or at school sponsored/sanctioned activities will be handled in the following manner:

1. Any staff member who comes in contact with evidence and/or contraband will notify a principal or a designee immediately.
2. Any staff member who has reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in possession of alcohol, narcotics, other drugs, drug "look-alikes", or drug paraphernalia will notify a principal or designee immediately.
3. The principal or designee may call the local police department and request assistance in conducting a search for any illegal substances. All substances (contraband) found in the

search will be given to the police department for analysis to determine if it is an illegal substance.

4. Upon notification by the appropriate agency for law enforcement that the contraband contains narcotics or other dangerous drugs, or if the possession of alcohol is involved, the principal or designee will take the necessary disciplinary action as outlined in Section E.

D. Disciplinary Actions for Students in Possession

Discipline is the same as outlined in the Disciplinary Actions for Students Under the influence of Alcohol, Drugs or Other Than Tobacco in Section B of Comprehensive Substance Abuse Policy.

E. Procedures for Dealing with Students Engaged in Selling, Giving or Exchanging

Students who are engaged in selling, giving or exchanging alcohol, narcotics, other drugs, drug “look-alikes”, or drug paraphernalia on school property or at school sponsored/sanctioned activities will be handled in the following manner:

1. If an employee is witness to any act in which alcohol, narcotics, other drugs, drug “look-alikes”, or drug paraphernalia is transferred from one person to another, the employee will immediately attempt to detain the student(s) involved and request that they accompany him to a principal or designee. If the student refuses, the employee will notify a principal or designee immediately.
2. The principal or designee will attempt to obtain evidence by directly requesting it from the student or through search procedures outlined in the Section titled- “Searches”.
3. Follow the same procedure for handling evidence and/or contraband as outlined above in Section C.

F. Disciplinary Actions for Students Selling, Giving or Exchanging

Any student found to be in violation of school rules or Nebraska State laws by selling, giving, or exchanging any substance stated herein, shall be immediately notified (along with the parents) of the charge, and shall otherwise be entitled to the same right to a hearing according to School District policy.

1. First Offense
 - a. Student is given a **TEN** (10) day suspension.
 - b. The principal or designee will conduct a conference with parents and/or police representatives.
 - c. A recommendation for long-term suspension or expulsion will be considered, depending upon the severity of the case.
 - d. The school administration will cooperate fully with local law enforcement agencies when investigations and searches, related to drug offenses, are in progress.
2. Second Offense
 - a. The student will be suspended, pending a long-term suspension or expulsion proceeding, which will be initiated according to the School District’s expulsion policy.

G. Procedures for Dealing with Students in Possession of Tobacco Products

1. First Offense and Second Offense
 - a. Student will be given a written warning.
 - b. Parents will be contacted and receive a copy of the written warning given to the student.
2. Third and Subsequent Offense(s)
 - a. The student will be suspended from school for three (3) days or must successfully complete a smoking cessation class/rehabilitative program.
 - b. The principal or designee will conduct a conference with the student and parent.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

High School Activities

Elementary students are welcome at all high school sporting events. There are, however, no elementary student sections at these activities. Students are to sit in the stands with an adult. Students are not to be dropped off at an event without adult supervision. If a student attends an event and is running around without supervision, the parent will be contacted and an adult will need to pick him/her up. Students may also have activity passes taken away for the rest of the year if it is warranted.

Conduct and Discipline

Students in the Gering Elementary Schools are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner as to reflect credit to the school system and their families. Failure to do so will result in corrective action by school officials.

The Gering School officials feel that a child should, at all times, show proper respect for school property, personnel and fellow students. The majority of students show this respect, but to ensure that all students comply, it is necessary to have certain rules and regulations.

Each elementary school and classroom teacher will specify to students reasonable rules and regulations which will apply in the classroom, lunchroom, halls and on the playground. Compliance with these regulations is required and will enhance the education of all students.

The administrative Regulations of the Gering Public School District outlines the procedures to be followed in cases where disciplinary action is a necessity. These regulations are approved by the Board of Education and govern action in all the elementary schools.

Administrative Regulations

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The primary objective of the public schools is the education of children and youth. It is recognized that this objective can be best realized with students who are happy, well-adjusted, law-abiding and healthy young citizens. Unfortunately, not all children and youth are socially adjusted to the extent that they conform to the recognized standards of good conduct. It is sometimes necessary for the schools to take disciplinary action, not only for the sake of the individuals who do not obey the laws and regulations of society generally, the schools particularly, but for the sake of their conduct on or in close proximity to the school grounds, on the playground and during an intermission, recess, field trips and all other school sponsored activities.

In the maintenance of a sound learning environment, the District shall expect acceptable behavior on the part of all students who attend school in the district. Discipline shall be enforced daily and consistently, regardless of race, creed, sex, color, age or national origin. Such discipline shall be consistent with applicable federal and state laws.

The overall responsibility for discipline and the welfare of the student is assumed by the principal. The principal will handle extreme behavioral cases.

The imposition of serious discipline on any student, including but not limited to suspension from interscholastic activities, suspension from school, and expulsion shall be governed by the provision of the Disciplinary Procedures for Students in the Gering Public School District as adopted by the Board of Education.

The primary responsibility for discipline in the classroom rests with the teacher. The teacher shall use reasonable and professional judgment in controlling and maintaining order and in administering prudent disciplinary measures.

Discipline Policy

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

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

The following process will apply to short-term suspensions:

1. The Principal or Principal's designee will make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. A short-term suspension will be made upon a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.
2. Prior to commencement of the short-term suspension, the student will be given oral or written notice of the charges against the student. The student will be advised of what the student is accused of having done, an explanation of the evidence the authorities have, and be afforded an opportunity to explain the student's version of the facts.
3. Within 24 hours or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, the Principal or administrator will send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardian describing the student's conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or standard and the reasons for the action taken.
4. An opportunity will be given to the student and the student's parent or guardian to have a conference with the Principal or administrator ordering the short-term suspension before or at the time the student returns to school. The Principal or administrator shall determine who in addition to the parent or guardian is to attend the conference.

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

2. **Long-Term 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 procedures will be those set forth in the Student Discipline Act.

- 3. 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 (a) the misconduct occurred within ten school days prior to the semester, or (b) the misconduct occurred 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) 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.

Suspensions Pending Hearing. When a notice of intent to discipline a student by long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment is filed with the Superintendent, the student may be suspended by the principal until the date the long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment takes effect if no hearing is requested or, if a hearing is requested, the date the hearing examiner makes the report of his or her findings and a recommendation of the action to be taken to the Superintendent. The suspension pending hearing may be imposed if the principal determines that the student must be suspended immediately to prevent or substantially reduce the risk of (a) interference with an educational function or school purpose or (b) a personal injury to the student himself or herself, or students, school employees, or school volunteers.

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

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

Suspension of Enforcement of an Expulsion: Enforcement of an expulsion action may be suspended (i.e., “stayed”) for a period of not more than one full semester in addition to the balance of the semester in which the expulsion takes effect. As a condition of such suspended action, the student and parents will be required to sign a discipline agreement.

Students Subject to Juvenile or Court Probation: Prior to the readmission of school of any student who is under 19 years of age and who is subject to the supervision of a juvenile probation officer or an adult probation office pursuant to a court order Court, who chooses to meet conditions of probation by attending school, and who has previously been expelled from school, the Principal or the Principal’s designee shall meet with the student’s probation officer and assist in developing conditions of probation that will provide specific guidelines for behavior and consequences for misbehavior at school (including conduct on school grounds and conduct during an educational function or event off school grounds) as well as educational objectives that must be achieved. If the guidelines, consequences, and objectives provided by the Principal or the Principal’s designee are agreed to by the probation officer and the student, and the court permits the student to return to school under the agreed to conditions, the student may be permitted to return to school.

The student may with proper consent, upon such return, be evaluated by the school for possible disabilities and may be referred for evaluation for possible placement in a special education

program. The student may be expelled or otherwise disciplined for subsequent conduct as provided in Board policy and state statute.

4. **Other Forms of Student Discipline:** Administrative and teacher personnel may 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; requiring that a student remain in school after regular hours to do additional work; restriction of extracurricular activity; or requirements that a student receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation. The actions may also include in-school suspensions. When in-school suspensions, after-school assignments, or other disciplinary measures are assigned, the student is responsible for complying with such disciplinary measures. A failure to serve such assigned discipline as directed will serve as grounds for further discipline, up to expulsion from school.

Section 4 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.

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

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

- a. Willfully disobeying any reasonable written or oral request of a school staff member or the voicing of disrespect to those in authority.
- b. 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.
- c. 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 fire of any magnitude;
- d. 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;
- e. 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;

- f. 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 devices, including fireworks;
- g. 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.
- h. Public indecency or sexual conduct.
- i. 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;
- j. 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;
- k. 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; or
- l. Violation of any rules established by the school district or school officials if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes;
- m. Truancy or failure to attend assigned classes or assigned activities; or tardiness to school, assigned classes or assigned activities;
- n. 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;
- o. 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.
- p. Willfully violating the behavioral expectations for those students riding Gering Public Schools buses.

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:

- a. 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
- b. The knowing and intentional possession, use or transmission of a dangerous weapon other than a firearm.
- c. Knowingly and intentionally possessing, using, or transmitting a firearm on school grounds, in a school-owned or utilized vehicle, or during an educational function or event off school grounds, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event. This conduct shall result in an expulsion for one calendar year. "Firearm" means a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, as that statute existed on January 1, 1995. That statute includes the following statement: "The term 'firearm' means (a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (d) any destructive device." The Superintendent may modify such one year expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis, provided that such modification is in writing.
- d. Bringing a firearm or other dangerous weapon to school for any reason is discouraged; however, a student will not be subject to disciplinary action if the item is brought or possessed under the following conditions:
 - i. Prior written permission to bring the firearm or other dangerous weapon to school is obtained from the student's teacher, building administrator and parent.
 - ii. The purpose of having the firearm or other dangerous weapon in school is for a legitimate educational function.
 - iii. A plan for its transportation into and from the school, its storage while in the school building and how it will be displaced must be developed with the prior written approval by the teacher and building administrator. Such a plan shall require that such item will be in the possession of an adult staff member at all times except for such limited time as is necessary to fulfill the educational function.
 - iv. The firearm or other dangerous weapon shall be in an inoperable condition while it is on school grounds.

2. 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 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.

Restorative Practice Policy

Our school district supports proactive and reactive evidence-based initiatives to manage student misbehavior. Restorative Practices are grounded in principles and values that: are needs based, hold students accountable, are focused on repairing harms, and support meaningful outcomes. Restorative Practices will be integrated within existing discipline measures and utilized as deemed appropriate.

Restorative Practice Process:

Restorative Practices reflect the philosophy that when a misdeed occurs within a school, it affects those harmed, those causing the harm, and the wider school community. The goal of Restorative Practices is to address conflict using open and respectful dialogue that focuses on the harm caused strategies to repair this harm and the relationships of those involved. Restorative Practices can include group conferencing, peer mediation, victim-offender mediation, or classroom peace circles, and can be formal or informal. These processes may be handled by district personnel, school resource officers, or others that support the district such as, contractors, ESUs, volunteers, and those serving through Nebraska Supreme Court-approved mediation centers. In a Restorative Practice Conference, students and parents/guardians agree to the following:

- **CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION:** The goal of restorative practice is to foster new understanding through dialogue that results in a mutually-agreed resolution to the issues at hand. Students and parents agree to speak honestly and to listen respectfully without interruptions. The mediator/facilitator's role is to manage communication and help the parties work to discover solutions that meet the needs and interests of all parties to the fullest extent possible. The mediator/facilitator will not make judgements, give legal advice, or present parties with solutions to their problems.
- **CONFIDENTIALITY, PRIVILEGED, AND VOLUNTARY COMMUNICATIONS:** Pursuant to Neb. Rev. §§43-247.03, parties agree not to record or create transcripts of sessions and acknowledge they are responsible to maintain confidentiality and agree that communications during preparation, process, and follow up will not be shared with others, excepting:
 - Agreements reached in the restorative process.
 - When written permission by all participants is given.
 - When statements regarding unreported allegations of child abuse or neglect or threats to harm self or another are revealed.
 - When process information must be shared with funding or referring agencies, such as Diversion, Probation, County Attorneys, or Courts.
- **AGREEMENTS:** No agreement can be forced upon any party. Parties agree to take responsibility for carrying out any agreements made during the restorative process.
- **PROGRAM EVALUATION:** Participants may be asked to take part in evaluations of the process to comply with reporting requirements.

Student Appearance

Students at Gering Public Schools are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for a 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. The following is a list of examples of attire that **will not be** considered appropriate; **this list is not inclusive of all items which may be excluded:**

- Clothing or jewelry that is gang related;
- Clothing that shows an inappropriate amount of bare skin or underwear (Midriffs, spaghetti straps, sagging pants);
- Clothing or jewelry that advertises beer, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs;
- Clothing or jewelry that could be used as a weapon (chain, spiked apparel) or that would encourage “horse-play”;
- Head wear including hats, caps, bandannas, and scarves;
- Clothing or jewelry that exhibits nudity, makes sexual references or carries double meanings.

Harassment and Bullying

One of the missions of Gering Public Schools is to provide safe and secure environments for all students and staff. Positive behaviors (non-violence, cooperation, teamwork, understanding, and acceptance of others) are encouraged in the educational program and required of all students and staff. Inappropriate behaviors (bullying, intimidation and harassment are to be identified and corrected. Students and staff are to avoid such behaviors. Strategies and practices are implemented to reinforce positive behaviors and to discourage and protect others from inappropriate behaviors.

“**Bullying**” is behavior in which one person or group engages in harmful action towards another person or group acting on a real or perceived imbalance of power or view of superiority over a period of time. The behavior typically includes verbal (e.g. teasing or name-calling) and physical aggression (e.g., hitting, pushing), threatening, excluding or ignoring, spreading rumors, or taking, defacing or destroying the others’ property. “**Harassment**” includes the same actions, though not necessarily from a standpoint of perceived power. Harassment is prohibited. Bullying/harassment is a violation of student conduct rules, and appropriate disciplinary measures, up to expulsion, will be enforced. When bullying or harassment is done on the basis of gender, disability, race or other protected status, it is considered a very serious offense for which expulsion may be a likely consequence depending on the severity of the conduct.

Students who are the victim of bullying or harassment or who observe such occurrences are to promptly report the problem to their teacher or to the Principal so the problem can be addressed. Students who make reports of bullying activity will not be retaliated against for making the report.

Elementary In-District Option Procedure

Gering Public Schools is happy to provide families with the opportunity to option between our three exceptional elementary locations: Geil, Northfield, and Lincoln. When families choose to explore their options for elementary enrollment, they should first report to their zoned elementary school and complete an in-district option request form. Once the form is completed, it will be shared between the principal of the zoned elementary, the principal of the requested elementary, and the district director of student services. Within a reasonable window of time, the district will communicate final placement decisions with the requesting family.

Transportation

For the 2025-2026 school year Gering Public Schools offers busing services within each zoned boundary. Families who choose to enroll in an elementary school other than their zoned school will not be able to participate in the busing program. In situations where a student is sent to another school within the district outside of the family’s zone due to classrooms already being at student capacity for the student’s grade, busing may still be provided.

The privilege of riding a school bus is contingent upon a student's good behavior and observance of established regulations for student conduct both at bus stops and onboard buses. Since bus transportation is provided to assist the education program, the board shall require students to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. The driver of a school bus shall be responsible for the safety of the students on the bus, both during the ride and while students are entering or leaving the vehicle. Therefore, it is the bus driver's duty to notify the supervisor of transportation and they notify the principal of the school involved if any student persists in violating the established rules of conduct.

After due warning has been given to the student and to parents/guardians, the principal may withhold from the student the privilege of riding the school bus. In such cases, the parents of the children involved will be responsible for seeing that their children get to and from school safely. The student may also face detention, suspension or expulsion, in accordance with established policies, for flagrant violation of school bus rider conduct regulations or conduct detrimental to the safe operation of the bus.

Bus transportation is a privilege offered for free to the students by the school district. Abuse of this privilege may result in a student being denied bus transportation.

See Application for Permission to Ride School Bus (distributed to all students who ride the bus)

Bus Etiquette

1. Students must get on and off the bus at their designated bus stop **ONLY**. (This is the bus stop closest to their home address.) **The district does not transport students to and from daycare addresses.**
2. Bus stops are at the side of the road or street. At these bus stops, order must be maintained to protect the safety of all students. There is to be no snowball or rock throwing, abusive language or horseplay.
3. Do not push or crowd when loading or unloading. Outside of ordinary conversation, classroom conduct is to be observed by students.
4. **Students must remain seated while the bus is moving. If the bus is equipped with seat belts they must be worn while the bus is in motion.**
5. The driver is in full charge of the bus and students. Students are required to comply promptly, cheerfully and fully with his or her requests.
6. There must be "**ABSOLUTE SILENCE**" at all railroad crossings.
7. Aisles are to be kept clear of anything that might prove to be hazardous. (Band instruments, books, backpacks, etc.)
8. Do not put hands, arms, or head out of windows. No litter is to be thrown on the bus floor or from the bus. Students are not to yell at anyone in the bus or outside the bus.
9. The emergency door is for emergency exits only. **DO NOT OPEN IT!**
10. Horseplay, wrestling, abusive language, harassing or infringing on other students' rights or safety **WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
11. When the students leave the bus, they should walk to a distance of approximately twelve feet in front of the bus before crossing the roadway. Do not hide, crawl under the bus to recover anything, or hold onto the bus. Do not cross behind the bus.
12. Always look both ways before crossing the street. Some drivers of cars ignore the bus signal, so be extremely careful with oncoming traffic.
13. Any damage to the bus is to be reported to the driver at once. **DO NOT** write on the seats or floor. Students will be held responsible for any damage they do to the bus.

14. **STUDENTS MUST BE AT THE BUS STOP ON TIME.** The bus **WILL NOT** wait for students who are tardy.
15. **NO FOOD OR DRINKS** are allowed on the bus (to avoid choking hazard) with the exception of **LONG DISTANCE** activity and field trips. Trash must be put into the trash containers. If you spill, clean it up! **ABSOLUTELY NO SUNFLOWER SEEDS OR GUM CHEWING.** If these rules are not obeyed, food and drink will be forbidden on the buses at all times.
16. **RESPONSIBLE USE OF ELECTRONICS.** Example: headphones, iPads, etc. Sound from electronic devices must be heard through ear buds or turned off. No photographs or videos while on the bus.
17. Students must abide by the rules posted in the bus.

PENALTY: Violations could be the cause of a student being suspended, temporarily or permanently from riding the school bus.

PUPIL SAFETY INSTRUCTION: During the school year, each pupil who is transported on a bus shall be instructed in safe riding practices and will be expected to participate in emergency drills.

PARENTS: We ask you to go over these regulations with your children so they have a safe trip to and from school.

FirstView

FirstView® by First Student is the industry's most comprehensive and secure bus tracking and parent communication app. FirstView® helps you better manage your time during the hectic before- and after school rush by putting your student's up-to-the-minute bus information in your hands. Easy to download, set up and use, FirstView® is packed with helpful features to give you peace of mind, including estimated bus arrival time, opt-in district messaging regarding delays or issues, customizable alerts for when the bus is chosen distance or number of minutes away, secure password protection and built-in customer support.

Acceptable Use Policy for Electronic Resources

The use of electronic resources is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of your privilege. Students using electronic resources are required to follow District policy and procedures. The supervising staff member will determine what is appropriate use in accordance with the following guidelines, and may deny, revoke, or suspend your access.

1. The use of your account and/or access must be consistent with the educational objectives of the Gering Public Schools. Use of electronic resources for recreational games is prohibited.
2. To transmit or knowingly receive any materials in violation of any United States or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: copyrighted material, threatening, harassing, pornographic or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.
3. Use for commercial activities is generally not acceptable. Use for product advertising or political lobbying is prohibited. Extensive use for personal and private business is also prohibited.
4. Abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited.
 - b. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.

- c. Do not reveal your full name, phone number, or home address, or that of other students.
 - d. Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Network storage areas will be treated as school property. Files and communications may be reviewed by District personnel. Material relating to, or in support of, illegal activities will be reported to the proper authorities.
 - e. The sending of "chain letters" is considered a misuse of the system and may result in the loss of the account.
 - f. *Talk, Write and Chat* commands may be intrusive and should only be used after receiving permission from the other party.
 - g. Permission of the supervising staff member must be obtained before "downloading" any files due to potential "virus" infection.
 - h. Be reasonable in the amount of time you use the system. Be considerate of other individuals using the system. Time limits may be imposed.
 - i. Classroom use will take precedence over independent use.
5. Respect the integrity of the computing system. Do not intentionally develop or activate programs that harass other users, infiltrate a computer system or alter the software components of a computer or computer system. These include, but are not limited to: viruses, forging email, hacking, and attempting to use administrative commands.
 6. Do not vandalize by harming or destroying the data or hardware on this system or any other system.
 7. Security of any computer system is essential. Access to electronic resources is intended for the exclusive use by authorized individuals. Any problems which arise from the use of an account are the responsibility of the account holder. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Trespassing in another's work or files;
 - b. Giving out your password or the password of others;
 - c. Attempting to login to another individual's account;
 - d. Failure to notify the supervising staff member of a security problem.
 8. The Gering Public Schools will periodically revise the *Acceptable Use Policy* and will make determinations on whether specific uses of the network are consistent with the intent of policy.
 9. Indemnity - Gering Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the Internet service. GPS will not be responsible for damages you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, miss-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors, or omissions. GPS will not be responsible for any financial charges incurred by an account user or someone else using the account. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. GPS specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.
 10. Failure to follow this Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension of account privileges as well as being subject to the school's discipline policies.

STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The United States Department of Agriculture's required nondiscrimination statement must be printed as follows:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants, for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex,

gender, identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9999 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing 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.

PLEASE NOTE: As stated above, all protected bases do not apply to all programs. *The first six protected bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability and sex are the six protected bases for applicants and recipients of the Child Nutrition Programs.*

School Food Authorities (SFAs) participation in the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, After School Snack Program or Special Milk Program must include this statement in full, on all program materials used for public information, public education or public distribution.

Nebraska SFAs must include the nondiscrimination statement in their student handbook in the section that addresses access to or information about the school meals program. It must also be included on the school's website if school meal information is available.

If the material is too small to permit the full statement to be included, the material will at a minimum include this statement in print no smaller than the text:

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The USDA "And Justice for All" poster must be displayed at each feeding site in a location that is visible to students during meal service.

Designation of Coordinator(s)

Any person having inquiries concerning this district's compliance with anti-discrimination laws or policies or other programs should contact or notify the following person(s) who are designated as the coordinator for such laws, policies or programs. The contact address for the coordinator is: Gering Public Schools, 1519 10th Street, Gering, NE 69341, 308-436-3125.

Law, Policy or Program	Issue or concern	Coordinator
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Title VI	Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin; harassment	Superintendent
Title IX	Discrimination or harassment based on sex; gender equity	Superintendent
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA)	Discrimination, harassment or reasonable accommodations of persons with disabilities	Director of Student Services
Homeless student laws	Children who are homeless	Director of Student Services
Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities	Safe and drug free schools	Superintendent

Notice to Parents of Rights Afforded by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act of 1973

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

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

Notification of Rights Under FERPA

The Gering Public Schools will on occasion release routine directory information (84-712.05) to the general public which includes: "Student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degree and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, and other similar information." The information released may be to military recruiters, newspapers, colleges & universities, athletic and activity programs, etc. Parents may have their student's name and information withheld from dissemination upon written request to the office of the principal.

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask that school district to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as disciplinary or grievance committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

Notice Concerning Directory Information

This district may disclose directory information. The types of personally identifiable information that the district has designated as directory information are as follows: student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date of and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status (e.g. undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors and awards received, and most recent previous educational agency or institution attended. A parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to let the district designate any or all of those types of information about the student as directory information. The period of time within which a parent or eligible

student has to notify the district in writing that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information about the student designated as directory information is as follows: two weeks from the time this information is first received. The district may disclose information about former students without meeting the conditions in this section.

The district's policy is for education records to be kept confidential except as permitted by the FERPA law, and the district does not approve any practice, which involves an unauthorized disclosure of education records. In some courses student work may be displayed or made available to others. Also, some teachers may have persons other than the teacher or school staff, such as volunteers or fellow students, assist with the task of grading student work and returning graded work to students. The district does not either approve or disapprove such teaching practices, and designates such student work as directory information and as noneducation records. Each parent and eligible student shall be presumed to have accepted this designation in the absence of the parent or eligible student giving notification to the district in writing in the manner set forth above pertaining to the designation of directory information. Consent will be presumed to have been given in the absence of such a notification from the parent or eligible student.

Notice Concerning Designation of Law Enforcement Unit:

The District designates the Gering Police Department as the District's "law enforcement unit" for purposes of (1) enforcing any and all federal, state or local law, (2) maintaining the physical security and safety of the schools in the District, and (3) maintaining safe and drug free schools.

Notice Concerning Staff Qualifications

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) gives parents/guardians the right to get information about the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers. Upon request, Gering Public Schools will give parents/guardians 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/guardians 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 to an administrator in your child's school building. The information will be provided to you in a timely manner. Finally, Gering Public 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.

Student Privacy Protection

Gering Public Schools protects the privacy of students in accordance with applicable laws which include the following:

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

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

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

Right of Parents to Inspect Instructional Materials: Parents shall have the right to inspect, upon reasonable request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for their child. Reasonable requests for inspection of instructional materials shall be granted within a reasonable period of time after the request is received. Parents shall not have the right to access academic tests or academic assessments, as such are not within the meaning of the term “instructional materials” for purposes of this policy. The procedures for making and granting a request to inspect instructional materials are as follows: the parent shall make the request, with reasonable specificity, directly to the building principal. The building principal, within five (5) school days, shall consult with the teacher or other educator responsible for the curriculum materials.

In the event that the request can be accommodated, the building principal shall make the materials available for inspection or review by the parent, at such reasonable time and place as will not interfere with the educator’s intended use of the materials.

In the event there is a question as to the nature of the curriculum materials request or as to whether the materials are required to be provided, the building principal shall notify the parent of such concern, and assist the parent with forming a request which can reasonably be accommodated. If the parent does not formulate such a request, and continues to desire certain curriculum materials, the parent shall be asked to make their request to the Superintendent.

Rights of Parents to be Notified of and to Opt-Out of Certain Physical Examinations or Screenings. The general policy and practice of the District is to not administer physical examinations or screenings of students which require advance notice or parental opt-opt rights under the applicable federal laws, for the reason that the physical examinations or screenings to be conducted by the District will usually fit into one of the following exceptions:

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

Protection of Student Privacy in Regard to Personal Information Collected from Students: The practice of the District is to not engage in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information. The District will make reasonable arrangements to protect student ;privacy to the extent possible in the event of any such collection, disclosure, or use of personal information. “Personal information” means individually identifiable information about a student including: (1) a student or parent’s first and last name, (2) home address, (3) telephone number, and (4) social security number. The term “personal information,” does not include information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

This exception includes the following examples: (i) college or postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment; (ii) book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products; (iii) curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary schools and secondary schools; (iv) tests and assessments used by elementary schools and secondary schools to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about student, or to generate other statistically useful data for the purpose of securing such tests and assessments, and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments; (v) the sale by student of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities; (vi) student recognition programs.

Parental Access to Instruments use in the Collection of Personal Information: While the general practice of the District is to not engage in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information, parents shall have the right to inspect, upon reasonable request, any instrument which may be administered or distributed to a student for such purposes. Reasonable requests for inspection shall be granted within a reasonable period of time after the request is received. The procedures for making and granting such a request are as follows: the parent shall make the request, with reasonable specificity, directly to the building principal and shall identify the specific act and the students for the purpose of marketing that information.

The building principal, within five (5) school days, shall consult with the school staff member or person responsible for the program which has been reported by the parent to be responsible for the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information is occurring or there is a plan for such to occur, the building principal shall consult with the Superintendent for determination of whether the action shall be allowed to continue. If not, the instrument for the collection of personal information shall not be given to any students. If it is to be allowed, such instrument shall be provided to the requesting parent as soon as such instrument can be reasonably obtained.

Annual Parental Notification of Student Privacy Protection: The District shall provide parents with reasonable notice of the adoption or continued use of student privacy. Such notice shall be given to parents of students enrolled in the District at least annually, at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in such policies.

Notification to Parents of Dates of and Right to Opt-Out of Specific Events: The District shall directly notify the parents of the affected children, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when any of the following activities are scheduled, or are expected to be scheduled:

The collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information. (Note: the general practice of the District is to not engage in the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information.)

Surveys of students involving one or more matters deemed to be sensitive in accordance with the law and this policy; and,

Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance; administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student or of other students.

(Note: the general practice of the District is to not engage in physical examinations or screenings which require advance notice, for the reason that the physical examinations or screenings to be conducted by the District will usually fit into one of the following exceptions to the advance notice requirement and parental opt-out right: (1) hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings; (2) physical examinations or screenings that are permitted or required by an applicable State law, and (3) surveys administered to students in accordance with the individuals with Disabilities Education Act).

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

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

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

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

Parental Involvement

General - Parental/Community Involvement in Schools

Gering Public Schools welcomes parental involvement in the education of their children. We recognize that parental involvement increases student success. Gering Public Schools fosters and facilitates, to the extent appropriate and in their primary language, parental information about, and involvement in, the education of their children. It is our philosophy to protect the emotional, physical and social well-being of all students.

1. Parental involvement is a part of the ongoing and timely planning, review and improvement of district and building programs.
2. Parents are encouraged to support the implementation of district policies and regulations.
3. Parents are encouraged to monitor their student's progress by reviewing quarterly report cards and attending parent-teacher conferences.
4. Textbooks, tests and other curriculum materials used in the district are available for review by parents upon request.
5. Parents are provided access to records of students according to law and school policy.
6. Parents are encouraged to attend courses, assemblies, counseling sessions and other instructional activities with prior approval of the proper teacher or counselor and administrator. Parents' continued attendance at such activities will be based on the students' wellbeing.

7. Testing occurs in this school district as determined to be appropriate by district staff to assure proper measurement of educational progress and achievement.
8. Parents submitting written requests to have their student excused from testing, classroom instruction and other school experiences will be granted that request when possible and educationally appropriate. Requests should be submitted to the proper teacher or administrator within a reasonable time prior to the testing, classroom instruction and other school experiences will be granted that request when possible and educationally appropriate. Requests would be submitted to the proper teacher or administrator within a reasonable time prior to the testing, classroom instruction or other school experience and should be submitted to the proper teacher or administrator within a reasonable time prior to the testing, classroom instruction or other school experience and should be accompanied by written explanation for the request. A plan for an acceptable alternative shall be approved by the proper teacher and administrator prior to, or as a part of, the granting of any parent request.
9. Participation in surveys of students occurs in this district when determined appropriate by district staff for educational purposes. Parents will be notified prior to the administration of surveys in accordance with district policy. Timely written parental requests to remove students from such surveys will be granted in accordance with district policy and law. In some cases, parental permission must be given before the survey is administered.
10. Parents are invited to express their concerns, share their ideas and advocate for their children's education with board members, administrators and staff.
11. School district staff and parents will participate in an annual evaluation and revision.

Title I Parent and Family Engagement

Gering Public Elementary Schools intend to follow the Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy guidelines in accordance with federal law, Section 1116(a-f) ESSA, (Every Student Succeeds Act) of 2015.

In General

Each school served under this part shall jointly develop with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy, agreed on by such parents, that shall describe the means for carrying out the requirements. Parents shall be notified of the policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language the parents can understand. The policy shall be made available to the local community and updated to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

- Schools shall provide opportunities for the participation of parents and family members including those with migratory children, limited English proficiency, or have disabilities. Parents shall be notified of the Parent and Family Engagement Policy, information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities in an understandable and uniform format and to the extent practicable provided in a language the parents can understand;
- convene an annual parent meeting scheduled at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating children shall be invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation under this part and to explain the requirements of this part, and the right of the parents involved;
- involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of the school Parent and Family Engagement Policy;

- provide opportunities for parents and family members to participate in decisions relating to the education of their children. The school shall provide other reasonable support for parental involvement activities;
- provide parents of participating children timely information about programs under this part, a description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress and the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standards. The school will provide assistance, opportunities, and/or materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement in a format, and when feasible, in a language the parents and family members can understand.
- educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, with the assistance of parents in the value and utility of contributions of parents, how to reach out to, communicate with and work with parents as equal partners;
- coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with other Federal, State and local programs, including preschool programs that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children.

Homeless Children and Youth

A homeless child or youth is defined as one who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes-

- (1) Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.
- (2) Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- (3) Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- (4) Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the ESSA of 1965, as amended), who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in this definition.

This definition includes both youth who are unaccompanied by families and those who are homeless with their families. The district will comply with state and federal law as it relates to homeless children or youth.

Assurances

1. The district adopts these policies and practices to ensure that homeless children and youths are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless.
2. The district will designate an appropriate staff person as the Local Educational Liaison (LEL) for homeless children and youths, to carry out the duties in compliance with state and federal law.
3. The district adopts these policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin. The "school of origin" means the school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled. This will be done in accordance with the following, as applicable:
 - a. If the homeless child or youth continues to live in the district in which the school of origin is located, the child's or youth's transportation to and from the school of origin shall be provided or arranged by that district.

- b. If the homeless child's or youth's living arrangements in the district served by the school of origin terminate and the child or youth, through continuing his or her education in the school of origin, begins living in an area served by another district, the school of origin and the local district in which the homeless child or youth is living shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs for providing the child with transportation to and from the school of origin. If the two districts are unable to agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs for transportation shall be shared equally.

Comparable Services

Each homeless child or youth shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other students in the school in which the child is placed including transportation services, educational programs for children with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency, educational services for which the child or youth meets the eligibility criteria, such as Title I, school nutrition programs, programs in vocational and technical education, and programs for gifted and talented students.

Local Educational Liaison

The Superintendent or designee shall serve as the district's Local Educational Liaison who will serve in tracking, monitoring and coordinating programs and activities for these children. The identity and duties of the LEL shall annually be provided to the NDE, school staff, providers and advocates of services to homeless persons, and to homeless students.

1. In general, the LEL shall coordinate:
 - a. The provision of services with local social services agencies, the NDE Homeless Education Liaison, community and school personnel, and other agencies or programs providing education, social and related services to homeless children and youths and their families; and
 - b. With other local educational agencies on inter-district issues, such as transportation or transfer of school records.
2. Coordination purpose- The coordination shall be designed to:
 - a. Ensure that homeless children and youths have access and reasonable proximity, to available education and related support services; and
 - b. Raise the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness.
3. The LEL shall receive appropriate time and training to carry out the duties required by law and this policy, and ensure that:
 - a. Homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
 - b. Homeless children and youths enroll in schools of the district, which includes attending classes and participating fully in school activities, and have a full and equal opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards as other children and youths;
 - c. Homeless families, children, and youths receive educational services for which such families, children, and youths are eligible, and referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health services, and other appropriate services;
 - d. The parents or guardians of homeless children and youths are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
 - e. Receive individualized counseling from counselors to prepare and improve their readiness for college, including college selection, application, financial aid, and on-campus support;

- f. Unaccompanied youths are informed of their status as independent students under the Higher education Act of 1965 and may obtain assistance from the LEL to receive verification of such status for purposes of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid;
- g. Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is communicated where such children and youths receive services under the federal laws for homeless children, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens;
- h. Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with state and federal law; and
- i. The parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin and is assisted in accessing transportation to the school that is selected for the youth.

Enrollment and Placement

The district will handle enrollment and placement of homeless children in compliance with state and federal law according to the child's or youth's best interest such that it shall:

- 1. Continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness-
 - a. In any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; or
 - b. For the remainder of the academic year, if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- 2. Enroll the child or youth in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.
- 3. The choice regarding enrollment shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.
- 4. Issues of guardianship, proof of residency, and dress code requirements shall not be cause for delay or denial of enrollment. The district is not prohibited from requiring a parent or guardian of a homeless child to submit contact information.
- 5. If the school district is unable to determine the grade level of the student because of missing or incomplete records, the child will be placed in the appropriate grade level by the same procedures used for non-homeless children.

School Stability

In determining the best interest of the child or youth the district shall:

- 1. Presume that keeping a homeless child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's or youth's best interest unless doing so is contrary to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth.
- 2. The district must consider student-centered factors related to a child's or youth's best interest including the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety, giving priority to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth.
- 3. If the district determines that it is not in a child's or youth's best interest to attend the school of origin, or the school requested by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, it must provide a written explanation of the reasons for its determination, in a manner and form that is understandable.

Enrollment Disputes

The dispute procedure must be made available for resolving disputes over eligibility, as well as school selection or enrollment. If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school:

1. The district shall immediately provide the child's parent or guardian or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth a written explanation of the decision made regarding the school selection including the right to appeal the decision. It shall be provided in a manner and form understandable to such parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth and include the LEL contact information. The child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of his dispute.
2. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of the initial complaint, the LEL shall carry out the dispute resolution process in accordance with 92 NEC 19-005.002
3. The parent/guardian (or student, if applicable) may file a written appeal of the decision to the Nebraska Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner or designee may file a written response to the appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the appeal.
4. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Commissioner's decision, the parent/guardian (or student, if applicable) may file a written appeal of the decision with the State Board of Education and shall be governed by 92 NAC Rule 61.

Records

Any record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluation for special services or programs, regarding each homeless child or youth shall be maintained:

1. So that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school or school district;
2. The district will treat the student's homeless status as a Student Education Record, not deemed to be directory information; and
3. In a manner consistent with the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act.

The LEL shall document the number of homeless children and youths receiving services, and maintain financial records regarding any federal funds used for providing such services.

Immunization Requirements

Homeless students will not be denied enrollment for lack of immunization records. The school district will make a reasonable effort to locate immunization records from the information provided or will assist the student in obtaining the necessary immunizations. Permanent exemptions for homeless students from the immunization requirement in this policy will be allowed only for reasons in accordance with the law.

Review and Revision

The district shall review and revise any policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youths in the district. In reviewing and revising such policies, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. Special attention shall be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school.

Legal Reference:

Neb. Statute 79-215
NDE Rule 19 and Rule 61
42 U.S.C. §11431 and §11432 (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) with amendments
20 U.S.C. §1232g Federal Education rights and Privacy Act

School Breakfast and Lunch Programs

Gering Public Schools uses an automated scanning system to record payments and charges to family accounts. Parents/guardians are expected to maintain a positive balance in their family lunch account, as the system works basically like a checking account, which requires money in the account to provide meals to students rather than a credit card amount.

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.

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 (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

At the start of the school year, a form will be provided online for parents including an application for free or reduced lunches and breakfasts. We encourage you to complete the form and return it as soon as possible, as benefits from the prior year expire on September 30 of the current school year . Any charges incurred from that point until the new form is approved are the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

GUIDELINES REGARDING THE COLLECTION OF DELINQUENT MEAL CHARGES

The Gering Public School food service department utilizes a computerized point-of-sale system, Infinite Campus. Upon enrollment, all students are given a Student account. Money deposited into this account can be used for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, milk and ala carte items. Parents can check their child's account balance and make deposits in the Parent Portal at <http://www.geringschools.net/parents/>.

Payment Options:

The food service department recommends that money is pre-paid into the account prior to the point-of-sale. The following payment options are available:

- 1. Major credit card through the Parent Portal.**
- 2. Check:**
 - a. Must be made to Gering Public Schools.**
 - b. Must have student's full name in memo.**
 - c. If more than one student is on a single check, the check must specify how much money is to be deposited into each account.**
 - d. If a check is returned due to non-sufficient funds (NSF), we will attempt to collect all money owed. In the event it cannot be collected, a third party collection agency will be utilized.**
- 3. Cash: Must be submitted in a sealed envelope with students' full name and amount on the envelope.**

Account Balance Information:

Gering Public Schools expects parents to be responsible for monitoring their student's Café account and maintaining a positive balance . Free and reduced price meal assistance is available to all patrons at any time throughout the school year. Applications may be obtained from any of our school offices. The building Principal's office will notify parents of negative account balances. In the event a student's account reaches a negative balance, no extra meals or ala carte items can be charged.

In the event a student's Café account reaches a negative balance of \$10, the following will apply.

An alternate lunch will be served, consisting of a peanut butter or cheese sandwich and milk. The student will continue to receive an alternate meal until all charges are paid and the account has a positive balance. Free and Reduced eligible students are entitled to one reimbursable meal. Extra meals and ala carte items will need to be purchased.

At the end of the school year, if a family no longer has children attending school, moves out of the district, or becomes eligible for free meals, the family may request reimbursement of any balance in the family account. Funds for families with students continuing the following school year will remain in the family account for the next school year.

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.

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 (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP AND COOPERATION AS WE WORK TOGETHER TO PROVIDE THE BEST POSSIBLE EDUCATION PROGRAMS! PROVIDING QUALITY PROGRAMS -- WE CARE!!!

Gering Public Schools
PARENT-STUDENT PERMISSION INFORMATION RECORD SHEET

****Please check all appropriate responses**, list all children at grade levels, sign the signature line and return to the school office. All forms are due back five school days after you have received them. The parent(s)/guardian(s) and child(rens) signatures and checked responses are the only signatures required for the below listed forms.

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK RESPONSE SHEET

- ____ Yes, I hereby acknowledge that I have accessed and reviewed the Gering Elementary Student Handbook available at geringschools.net on the Student & Family Portal or in print at my school's office.
- ____ I have reviewed the handbook with my children, including the behavior guidelines and expulsion procedures.

FIELD TRIP/HEALTH INFORMATION

- ____ Yes, I hereby give permission for my child(ren) to accompany his/her teacher on school trips during the year.
- ____ No, I do not give permission for my child(ren) to accompany his/her teacher on school trips during the school year.
- ____ Yes, I hereby authorize the school to obtain, through a physician of its choice, any emergency medical treatment that may become reasonably necessary by a qualified physician, in his office or hospital emergency room, in the event of an accident or serious illness for the student(s) in the course of any school activity.
- ____ No, I do not authorize the school to obtain medical treatment for my child during the course of a field trip.

PICTURE – NEWS RELEASE

- ____ Yes, I hereby give permission for my child to be photographed, filmed (school website), or videotaped for use by Gering Elementary Schools.
- ____ No, I do not give permission for my child to be photographed, filmed, or videotaped for publication.

ILLNESSES

- ____ I give permission for any relevant health information of my child, necessary for educational planning and/or student safety, to be shared among appropriate school personnel.

INTERNET POLICY

- ____ Yes, I hereby give permission for my child for Internet Access through educationally screened and/or filtered websites. The Internet and Safety Policy, as approved by the Gering Public School Board is available in the Gering Public School Elementary Handbook available at geringschools.net on the Student & Family Portal.

BUS REGULATIONS

- ____ Yes, I hereby acknowledge that I have read the Gering Public School transportation policy/regulations/etiquette in the Gering Elementary Student Handbook available at geringschools.net on the Student & Family Portal.

TITLE 1 REQUIREMENT

- ____ Yes, I have reviewed the Title I Parent Involvement Policy section of this handbook and the Elementary School-Parent Student Compact. I shall inform the school of any changes I would like to suggest be made to these documents.

EARLY DISMISSAL

- ____ Should severe weather occur, it is sometimes necessary to dismiss children from school early. It is important we know beforehand what you wish your child to do or where to go if an early dismissal occurs. Please make arrangements, other than having your child call you at the time of early dismissal, as we cannot accommodate all phone calls in such a short time. We only have one phone line and it must be kept open for incoming calls in such a situation. Should we need to dismiss early due to severe weather, you will be contacted by phone via Messenger with a recorded message from Gering Public Schools Central Office. Information will also be available on local radio and/or television stations. Please indicate below what procedure you expect your child to follow. Be specific – no phone numbers accepted.

Child's Signature

Date

Parent's Signature

Date

Parent - School Compact

Gering Public Schools 2025-2026 School Year

This Title I School-Parent Compact has been jointly developed with parents and outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high academic standards. At the annual parent-teacher conferences the compact shall be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.

Teacher:

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

1. Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment to enable children to meet the challenging state academic standards.
2. Regularly communicate with parents on their child's progress.
3. Demonstrate professional behavior and positive attitude.
4. _____

Teacher Signature _____

Parent / Caring Adult:

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

1. Communicate and work with teachers and school staff on an ongoing basis, be involved and support my child's learning.
2. Support my child's learning--volunteer in their classroom; participate, as appropriate, in decisions related to their education, guide positive use of extracurricular time.
3. Make sure my child is at school every day and on time, unless he/she is ill.
4. Provide a quiet place and time to do schoolwork and encourage my child to complete schoolwork.
5. _____

Parent Signature _____

Student:

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

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

Student Signature _____

It is the policy of Gering Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of gender, disability, race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin or genetic information in its education programs, administration, policies, employment or other agency programs.

TITLE 92 CHAPTER 27

Preamble:

The educator shall believe in the worth and dignity of human beings. Recognizing the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, the devotion to excellence and the nurture of democratic citizenship, the educator shall regard as essential to these goals the protection of the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator shall accept the responsibility to practice the profession to these ethical standards. The educator shall recognize the magnitude of the responsibility he or she has accepted in choosing a career in education, and engages, individually and collectively with other educators, to judge his or her colleagues, and to be judged by them, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter. The standards listed in this section are held to be generally accepted minimal standards for public school certificate holders in Nebraska with respect to ethical and professional conduct and are, therefore, declared to be the criteria of ethical and professional performance adopted pursuant to the provisions of Section 79-866 R.R.S. for holders of public school certificates. If the certificate holder is employed in a nonpublic school, that context shall be taken into account in the application of these standards.

Principle I

Commitment as a Professional Educator

Fundamental to the pursuit of high educational standards is the maintenance of a profession possessed of individuals with high skills, intellect, integrity, wisdom, and compassion. The educator shall exhibit good moral character, maintain high standards of performance and promote equality of opportunity.

Principle II

Commitment to the Student

Mindful that a profession exists for the purpose of serving the best interests of the client, the educator shall practice the profession with genuine interest, concern, and consideration for the student. The educator shall work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

Principle III

Commitment to the Public

The magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the education process requires dedication to the principles of our democratic heritage. The educator bears particular responsibility for instilling an understanding of and confidence in the rule of law, a respect for individual freedom, and a responsibility to promote respect by the public for the integrity of the profession.

Principle IV

Commitment to the Profession

In the belief that the quality of the services to the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to improve service, to promote a climate in which the exercise of professional judgment is encouraged, and to achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education. The educator shall believe that sound professional relationships with colleagues are built upon personal integrity, dignity, and mutual respect.

GHS LINKS Student Handbook Changes and Policy Review 25-26 School Year

1. Graduation
 - a. Allow juniors to graduate early if all requirements are met.
 - b. Still required to take the ACT
2. Hours of Attendance
 - a. Morning Session 8:30am - 11:30am
 - b. Afternoon Session 12:00pm - 3:00pm
 - c. Only arrive 10 minutes prior to first bell
 - d. Picked up 10 minutes after the conclusion of their session
3. Attendance Policy
 - a. A tardy is anytime after 8:30am for the morning session and anytime after 12:00pm for the afternoon session.
 - b. Any tardy of over 15 minutes will be considered an absence.
 - c. Five tardies equals one absence.
 - d. Each student is allowed 10 absences per semester.
 - e. Students unable to stay awake or keep their head up may be sent home and counted as an absence. Parent/guardian will then be notified.
4. Parking
 - a. Students who drive must park in assigned parking areas.
 - b. Parking will only be in designated areas. Inappropriate behaviors or driving will result in students not being allowed to park on school property.
5. Dances and School Events
 - a. LINKS students who would like to participate in a school event or attend a school dance will apply for approval to participate in the event. The principal of the building will review the application and approve it.
 - b. Students can apply for and try out for after-school activities and athletics at the high school.
6. Employment/Volunteer
 - a. LINKS students must be employed or volunteer a minimum of 15 hours per week. Pay stubs must be handed in every pay period. New students will have four weeks from their entrance date to be employed or have a volunteer position. Any student that does not

maintain employment or volunteer hours will be reassigned. One week will be allowed to change employment.

7. Tiered System

a. Implementation of a tiered system.

- i. Level 1: Cell phones will be turned in at the door for the entire session, use of headphones/earbuds will be prohibited, bathroom and drinks only during first/last 5 minutes, in classroom with desktops, in assigned seating and must remain in their assigned seats, no outside food or drink allowed, can move to level 2 by earning 40 or more percent for two consecutive weeks.
- ii. Level 2: Must achieve five percent progress to earn cell phone use, bathroom at teacher discretion (e-hall pass), in classroom with chromebooks, assigned seating (may have flexible seating at teacher discretion), outside drinks allowed, can move to level 3 by earning 40 or more percent for two consecutive weeks, not achieving weekly percentages for two consecutive weeks will result in a loss of a level.
- iii. Level 3: Students have full access to their electronic devices, bathroom at teacher discretion (e-hall pass), in classroom with chrome books, allowed to choose where they sit, allowed to leave thirty minutes early, maintain level 3 by earning 40 or more percent each week, not achieving weekly percentages for two consecutive weeks will result in a loss of a level.



2025-26
Substitute Teacher Handbook



GERING

BULLDOGS

Gering Public Schools exists to equip today's learners with the skills necessary to be tomorrow's leaders.

It is with a great deal of enthusiasm and deep, sincere appreciation that we welcome you as a valued part of the Bulldog Family!

As an education professional, there are many responsibilities that are oftentimes not known until a difficult situation arises. While the handbook serves as a source of information, the goal is to promote consistency among our schools, maintain continuity in the education process and establish clear communication. In the spirit of collaboration, never hesitate to reach out with questions!

Serving our community as a substitute is a wonderful opportunity to work with children and help them grow - Learners today, Leaders tomorrow! You will make indelible contributions to our school buildings, and the impact of your servitude will be lasting. It is our hope that your experience is successful and rewarding!

Committed to you,

Dr. Nicole Regan, Superintendent

308-436-3125

Scheduling Substitute Assignments

Gering Public Schools utilizes Unified Talent software (**SmartFind Express**) to manage employee absences and substitute assignments. To access the system, visit the **Staff Portal on the district's website** (www.geringschools.net).

An attempt is made to provide all active substitutes an opportunity to work as often as possible, however, teacher and principal requests for specific substitutes will be honored.

When a teacher has scheduled an absence in advance for such things as personal leave and coaching duties, the available dates will be displayed on the SmartFind Express dashboard. Substitutes may accept/schedule as many job assignments as desired in advance but should refrain from later canceling unless unavoidable circumstances arise.

Substitutes will likely receive regular phone calls between 6:00-7:30 a.m. and 6:00-8:30 p.m. for unexpected employee absences due to illness or family emergencies. **To avoid repeat calls, be sure to decline the assignment if you are unavailable.**

For your convenience, SmartFind Express does offer “Black Out” scheduling options to avoid unnecessary interruptions on days you are unavailable or when a temporary leave of absence is needed. Please contact Central Office for scheduling assistance at 308-436-3125.

Reporting For Duty

When reporting for a substitute assignment, immediately check in with the Building Secretary upon arrival. They will offer guidance and support as you familiarize yourself; consider them your own personal Bulldog Ambassador and be sure to treat them with a smile as they maintain “Grand Central Station!”

In the case of an emergent need for a substitute during the school day, the substitute may be asked to report on short notice. We realize having to report on short notice is inconvenient, but we do appreciate a substitute's willingness to accept such an assignment.

Substitute teachers should report 15 minutes before school starts and plan to stay 15 minutes after the school day or assignment ends. Planning periods are not guaranteed! Schedules for each building are provided within this handbook.

Dress Code

As a general rule of thumb, denim jeans are not acceptable, and business casual attire should be worn. Please check with the building administrator or supervisor for guidelines.

Identification Badges

Identification badges help staff and students recognize authorized individuals and increase school safety. Identification badges are to be worn by all Gering Public Schools employees when on duty, and are to be on full display at all times. Employees may either attach badges to a lanyard to be worn around the neck (breakaway lanyards suggested) or directly onto clothing using an alligator clip. The district will provide your preference upon request!

Pay Rate

As per Board Policy# 411.01, the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers is set by the Board of Education. **Effective August 1, 2025**, the rates of pay are as follows:

Days of Service / School Year	LOCAL Substitute Permits & Certified Nurses	CERTIFIED Substitutes	Substitute Secretaries & Paraprofessionals
1-30	\$150 / day	\$150 / day	\$15.00 / hour
31-60	\$150 / day	\$160 / day	
61+	\$150 / day	\$175 / day	

Long-term (continuous assignment) certified substitute teachers who are temporarily employed to provide substitute teaching services for an anticipated, planned period of time to exceed 30 working days. Beginning the sixteenth (16th) consecutive day in the same classroom, the per diem rate of pay will be 1/185 of the beginning teacher base salary.

All planned, continuous absences of contracted teachers must be known and approved by the Superintendent of Schools (or his/her designee) prior to the scheduling of a long-term substitute.

Substitute teachers do not have property rights to the position for which they are providing a service. They may be considered as candidates for the position for which they are substituting if the contracted employee is unable to return. However, in this event, the substitute teacher must meet all other hiring criteria in comparison to the other candidates for the position and are subject to approval by the Board of Education.

Payroll Procedures for Substitutes

All substitutes must complete the district's online employment application, successfully pass all pre-employment screenings and have licensure, if applicable, verified by the HR Coordinator (or his/her designee) prior to the first day of service.

Within the first 15-days of service, substitutes must complete the necessary orientation and/or employment paperwork. All documentation must be on file with the Central Office before payment for substituting can be made.

Please report all contact and/or direct deposit revisions to the district payroll administrator as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in delayed processing of deposits or important payroll documents (IE. USPS mailed W2's).

Paychecks are issued on the **20th day of each month for the preceding month's service days**; a copy of the district's payroll schedule is enclosed for your reference. If you feel that you have not been paid for the correct number of service days or have questions regarding your rate of pay or deductions withheld (garnishments), please contact the Central Office immediately at 308-436-3125 and ask to visit with the payroll administrator.

Early Release Pay

As a district, Gering Public Schools releases students early every Wednesday. Substitute teachers performing duties at any of our schools on these days will be paid for a full day.



School Building Information

Geil Elementary 436-2545	8:05 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m.
Lincoln Elementary 436-2350	8:05 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m.
Northfield Elementary 436-2545	8:05 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m.
Middle School 436-3123	8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m.
High School 436-3121	8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Early release on Wednesday at 2:15 p.m.
Preschool (Building Phone Number)	Full Day Programs follow building schedule
	8:05 a.m. to 11:10 a.m. (Half Day Programs) Monday – Friday
Central Office 436-3125	7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Monday - Friday)

Substitute Teaching Eligibility

The following certifications/permits are issued by the Nebraska Department of Education. Any one of these would fulfill the district requirement for candidates seeking substitute teaching assignments. It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to maintain current licensure and to ensure that a copy of the certification is on file with the Central Office. Expiration dates are recorded within the SmartFind Express system, so failure to update information will result in temporary deactivation.

- 1) **Local Substitute Teaching Permit:** A permit that is valid for ninety (90) substitute-teaching days per school year only in the Nebraska school system requesting the issuance. Candidates can apply for more than one Local Substitute Permit with, application, and fee for each school district. **The permit expires on August 31st the third year following the year of issuance of the permit.**
- 2) **State Substitute Teaching Permit:** A teaching permit is valid in all Nebraska school systems, but persons holding such a permit may not teach more than ninety (90) teaching days in the same school assignment and only on a non-contractual basis. **The Substitute teaching permit expires on August 31st in the fifth year following the year of issuance.**
- 3) **Conditional Permits:** A Conditional Permit is most often issued while an applicant is waiting to receive a Praxis II Content passing score or fingerprint clearance. **A conditional permit shall be valid for up to one (1) year from the date of issuance.**
- 4) **Professional Teaching Certificate:** This certificate requires a master's degree in the applicant's content endorsed area, educational technology, SPED OR in curriculum and instruction. This certificate is valid for teaching in all Nebraska school systems. **The Professional teaching certificate expires on August 31st in the tenth year following the year of issuance.**
- 5) **Standard Teaching Certificate:** A certificate issued based upon two (2) consecutive years of teaching half-time or more, in the same school system in the past five years while holding a valid regular teaching certificate. **The Standard teaching certificate expires on August 31st in the fifth year following the year of issuance.**
- 6) **Temporary Teaching Certificate:** The Temporary certificate is given to a candidate who has not completed Human Relations Training. **A Temporary certificate expires six (6) months from the date of issuance and cannot be renewed.**

Newly Retired Teachers

Teachers who retired at the end of the last school year must be careful not to jeopardize their retirement. It is the sole responsibility of the employee to protect their benefits. The following is a quote from the Nebraska Retirement System:

"A retiree who is asked to sub a day here and day there should not have a problem, but if that substitute work is for an employee who will be absent over a long period of

time, a retiree could jeopardize his/her retirement benefits. An example would be if a retiree worked as a substitute for someone on medical leave or military call-up.”

The following guidelines were established by NPERS to help guide new retirees:

1. For the first **180-days** of the next school year, it is recommended that employees do not work on a “regular basis” for the school district.
2. During this same time, scheduling should not show a “pattern”

Long-term substitute opportunities should not be accepted until the **180-day** rule is met.

See link below regarding FAQ’s for LB147

<https://npers.ne.gov/SelfService/public/otherInformation/legislation/LB147FAQ.pdf>

Professional Responsibilities and Relationships

Upon arrival, be sure to **review lesson plans** immediately and ask the Building Principal (or his/her designee) to clarify any points not understood. If you cannot find a teacher’s lesson plans, notify the Building Principal (or his/her designee) immediately.

Substitute teachers will be **responsible for taking attendance** and should make this a priority at the beginning of their job assignments. Unless otherwise directed, the substitute teacher should perform all the work of the teacher absent including playground and other similar school-related tasks such as grading papers. There are **other things with which you will have to familiarize yourself** such as seating charts, special seating for assemblies, fire, and civil defense drill information, and instructions to follow in case of accident or illness of pupils.

The substitute will also be introduced to one of the regular teachers who may be of assistance whenever the principal is not available for consultation.

It is a mark of professional ethics for a substitute teacher to **refrain from criticizing the work of the regular teacher or the work of the school**. Obviously, the teacher’s absence reflects an unusual condition that cannot be judged fairly on brief acquaintance. Furthermore, school regulations usually take on new meaning as the reasons for them become clear. Knowing this, the mature substitutes concern themselves mainly with their own contribution to a situation in which they were called upon to help.

A dignified, businesslike, sensitive, warm, and respectful attitude toward students usually merits the respect a teacher deserves. If there are students who become major discipline problems and/or disrupt the teaching atmosphere to the extent you cannot carry on your duties, know the procedure to use in contacting the Building Principal to have the student removed. In all normal teaching situations, the substitute is expected to be able to handle the routine discipline problems and any other behavior exhibited by students.

When you leave the classroom at the end of the day, please see that it is in an orderly fashion, the windows are closed and locked, and the room is locked. You should make a brief written summary of each class session including any problems encountered, areas of study

not adequately covered, assignments made – a general evaluation of what happened during that period.

Once your job assignment is completed, **check out with the school secretary**, letting her know anything that happened during the day that the principal should know.

These policies are general but very important, and they pertain to all Gering Public School buildings. Individual schools will also have more specific and detailed policies which you should know if you continue substituting.

- ✓ Substitute teachers are **NOT** to use school computers for personal reasons. Equipment is provided for official school business only. Accessing personal/home email accounts on school computers is classified as unauthorized use and could result in revocation of your Gering Public Schools substituting privileges.
- ✓ Substitutes are **NOT** to use personal cell phones (or any other personal communication devices) while supervising students. However, these devices may be used during lunch breaks, etc.
- ✓ Classroom materials and supplies should be used with discretion, properly cared for during the day, and left in an orderly fashion at the end of the day.
- ✓ All money collected in the classroom for any reason should be removed from the classroom as soon as possible and turned into the principal's office in accordance with building procedures.
- ✓ If a person not connected with the school wants information about a child or permission to take a child from the room, refer the person to the principal's office. Under no circumstances should a child be released without permission of the principal.
- ✓ In the event of major discipline problems, call the principal/assistant principal immediately. At no time should you ever administer corporal punishment.
- ✓ Students are not to be kept after school by a substitute without the principal's approval.
- ✓ All cases of accident or illness are to be reported immediately to the school office.
- ✓ Information concerning students, such as health information, etc., which may be confidential in nature, should be kept confidential by the substitute. Additionally, this information is not to be left out where others can view it, but returned immediately to the sub folder.

Substitute Teacher Tips

- 1) **Put together a substitute teacher bag.** It's a good idea to always be prepared when substitute teaching. Here are some things you can pack to bring to your substitute teaching jobs.

- * Water Bottle
- * Snacks
- *Stickers
- *Stress ball to pass around for a game
- * Sweater or jacket
- * Book
- * Extra pencils or pens
- * Cell phone (on but on silent mode)
- * Flash drive with PDF lesson plans, music, and educational videos

- 2) **Arrive early.** Try to arrive early on your first day, especially when you're substituting at a new school. Arriving early allows you to become familiar with the school, introduce yourself to the teachers in the neighboring classrooms and review the lesson plans left by the teacher for which you're substituting.

By Arriving early, you can also give yourself extra time to meet with the school administrators who can direct you to the classroom, show you where the lesson plans are located and inform you of schedule changes and other processes.

- 3) **Create a routine for the beginning of class.** You can create a routine that you can follow every time you enter a classroom. Make your plan fit your teaching style or subject and customize it for each teaching job if necessary. Here's a sample plan you can follow:

- *Introduce yourself and write your name on the board. You can use this time to share a bit about your personality by talking about your pets or telling a funny story.
- *Use and practice an attention-getter that you'll use throughout the class
- *Take attendance. Make sure to smile and make eye contact with each student.
- *Offer a game or activity at the end of the class to motivate students to behave.

- 4) **Be understanding.** Substitute teaching can be an enjoyable experience that allows you to interact with students and participate in various activities. However, some days may present more challenges than others, and remaining calm and making necessary adjustments can help the day run more smoothly. Practice an understanding of not just your own needs, but of the needs of your students. Keep in mind that having a substitute teacher is a change to the students' routines, too.

An effective method that many substitute teachers use to reduce the stress of changing routine is to share the day's schedule with their students. Preparing students for what's to come can make transitions between activities easier. You can also set aside time to speak with students individually should they need reassurance or assurance or assistance during this time.

- 5) **Use other teachers as a resource.** Getting to know the teachers in the neighboring classrooms can be helpful. Other teachers can answer questions about the schedule and school procedures and give you general advice on making your day successful. Some may suggest alternate activities or even loan you supplies.
- 6) **Maintain control of the classroom.** You may assume that students will behave the same way as they would with their regular teacher, but that won't always be the case. At the beginning of class, introduce yourself and learn each student's name. Set clear expectations for their behavior and work, and make sure they understand that your teaching methods and procedures may differ from those of their regular teacher. Here are some classroom management strategies you can use:

- *Explain your behavior management system. You can inform them that you want to make your time together as positive and productive as possible and that their participation can play a role in that.

- *Praise positive behavior. Depending on the grade level, you may reward good behavior with small prizes, stickers or treats.

- *Use reward systems. Fun rewards like erasers and stickers or extra recess can be simple, yet motivating.

- 7) **Consider any special needs students.** Read the lesson plans that the regular teacher left for you and consider any students with special needs. These students may follow a modified schedule, which may include leaving the room to work with other teachers and the need for additional accommodations. Be flexible and know how to adapt to the unique needs of each student.

- 8) **Have a backup plan.** Come with an open mindset and be ready for any situation in the classroom. Most teachers leave detailed lesson plans for substitute teachers to follow, but there may be situations where you require your own backup plan. For example, the teacher you're substituting for may have had an emergency and didn't have the time to put together a lesson plan or you may have completed an activity early and have a few extra minutes to fill.

9) **Have fun.** Even though substitute teaching may present new and potentially challenging situations, it's important to remember to have fun. Understand that not everything will always go as planned, so try to maintain a sense of humor and look for opportunities to make the day enjoyable for everyone.

An effective substitute teacher finds ways to positively engage with their students by getting to know them, introducing fun activities and keeping the overall mood of the classroom light-hearted and pleasant.

Drug-Free Schools and Workplaces

Gering Public Schools is committed to providing an employment environment that is safe and provides appropriate motivation to ensure a creative and productive workforce. To this end, the district unequivocally endorses the philosophy that the workplace should be free from the detrimental effects of illicit drugs and alcohol. It is unlawful and, therefore, absolutely prohibited for any employee of the district to:

- ✓ Engage in the unlawful manufacturing, possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs.
- ✓ Possess, use, or distribute alcohol on school premises.
- ✓ Be under the influence of illicit drugs and/or alcohol while directly supervising student activities off school property or as a part of any of the school's activities held on school property.

Inappropriate conduct outside the school environment may result in the termination of current, and/or disqualification from future employment with Gering Public Schools.

Smoke-Free Environment

It is the intent of the Board of Education to maintain a smoke-free environment within the Gering Public Schools. Our employees are one of the most valuable resources and in recognition of that, we promote the health, safety, and well-being of each individual.

Employees, substitutes, and visitors are expected to honor the non-smoking designation. Visitors will be asked to quit smoking or leave. Employees/Substitutes who violate this policy on smoking will be subject to the same disciplinary actions that accompany infractions of other school rules, up to and including termination.

NO Weapons Allowed at Gering Public Schools

While the State Legislature has passed a concealed handgun law, we want to remind you weapons are **NOT** permitted to be possessed in any of our schools, on school grounds, in a school-owned vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event.

Legal Aspects of Substituting

Supervision of Students: The substitute has a duty to keep children safe and orderly by a

standard of reasonable professional judgment.

Due Care and Caution: A teacher is required to exercise due care and caution for the safety of the students in his/her charge. This means acting reasonably and with safety in mind, being able to explain circumstances and your actions, and following school safety policies and procedures.

Release of Children: Children should not be allowed to leave the building during the school day without expressed consent from the office.

Administering Medication: Medication should only be administered by the school nurse or other appropriate health personnel.

Confidentially: It is unprofessional and against the law to disclose confidential information about your students. Avoid comments about individual students that convey private information, i.e. grades, medical condition, learning or discipline problems, etc.

Anecdotal Records: Maintaining notes on particular incidents in the classroom can protect you from problematic situations. If you feel that a classroom occurrence might be questioned, note the date and time, the individuals involved, the choices for action considered, and actions taken.

Discipline Policies: The school district's policy is NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT. When sending a student to the principal due to discipline matters, the substitute teacher maintains the duties of supervision and due care of both the individual child and the remainder of the class. Send a child to bring someone from the office to intervene, or have another teacher watch your class.

Dangerous Situations: A substitute teacher is responsible for making sure the learning environment is safe, such as the arrangement of desks so as not to block exits and proper supervision during the use of potentially dangerous classroom equipment. Planned activities in physical education, science, shop, or home economics class may be uncomfortable for the substitute teacher. In such cases, the substitute teacher may choose to do an alternative activity that they feel they can conduct safely. Notify the principal in advance if lesson plans are changed.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

Hepatitis B (HBV): In the United States, approximately 300,000 people are infected with HBV annually. Of these cases, a small percentage is fatal.

“Hepatitis” means “inflammation of the liver”, and, as its name implies, Hepatitis B is a virus that infects the liver. While there are several different types of hepatitis, HBV is transmitted primarily through “blood to blood” contact. HBV initially causes inflammation of the liver, but it can lead to more serious conditions such as cirrhosis and liver cancer.

There is no “cure” or specific treatment for HBV, but many people who contract the disease will develop antibodies that help them get over the infection and protect them from getting it again. It is important to note that infection with HBV will not stop someone from getting another type of hepatitis.

The hepatitis B virus is very durable and can survive in dried blood for up to seven days. For this reason, this virus is the primary concern for custodians. Knowledge of bloodborne pathogens is an important factor for the safety of Gering Public School employees and its students.

Symptoms of HBV:

The symptoms of HBV are very much like a mild “flu”. Initially, there is a sense of fatigue, possible stomach pain, loss of appetite, and even nausea. As the disease continues to develop, jaundice (a distinct yellowing of the skin and eyes) and darkened urine will occur. However, people who are infected with HBV will often show no symptoms for some time. After exposure, it can take one to nine months before symptoms become noticeable. Loss of appetite and stomach pain, for example, commonly appears within 1-3 months but can occur as soon as two weeks or as long as 6-9 months after infection.

Transmission

Infected blood can enter your system through open sores, cuts, abrasions, acne, and any sort of damage or broken skin such as sunburn or blisters. Bloodborne pathogens may also be transmitted through the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, and mouth.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV):

AIDS, or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, is caused by a virus called the Human Immuno-deficiency Virus or HIV. Once a person has been infected with HIV, it may be many years before AIDS actually develops. HIV attacks the body’s immune system weakening it so that it cannot fight other deadly diseases. AIDS is a fatal disease and while treatment for it is improving, there is no known cure.

Gering Public Schools custodians and employees who clean restrooms or assist with toileting procedures must be aware of HBV and HIV modes of transmission.

HIV is very fragile and will not survive very long outside of the human body. It is primarily of concern to employees providing first aid or medical care in situations involving fresh blood or other potentially infectious materials. It is estimated that the chances of contracting HIV in a workplace environment are only 0.4%. However, because it is such a devastating disease, all precautions must be taken to avoid exposure.

HIV infection essentially occurs in three broad stages. The first stage happens when a person is actually infected with HIV. After the initial infection, a person may show few or no signs of illness for many years. Eventually, in the second stage, an individual may begin to suffer swollen lymph glands or other lesser diseases which begin to take advantage of the body's weakened immune system. The second stage is believed to eventually lead to AIDS, the third and final stage. In this stage, the body becomes completely unable to fight off life-threatening diseases and infections. Symptoms of HIV infection can vary, but often include weakness, fever, sore throat, nausea, headaches, diarrhea, a white coating on the tongue, weight loss, and swollen lymph glands.

Modes of Transmission

HBV and HIV can be transmitted through

- ✓ Sexual contact
- ✓ Sharing of hypodermic needles
- ✓ From mothers to their babies at or before birth
- ✓ Accidental puncture from contaminated needles, broken glass, or other sharps
- ✓ Contact between mucous membranes and infected body fluids such as saliva (in dental procedures) and any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions are simple infection control measures that reduce the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens through exposure to blood or body fluids. Under the "universal precaution" principle, blood and body fluids from all persons should be considered as infected with HIV, regardless of the known or supposed status of a person. Infected blood can enter your system through open sores, cuts, abrasions, acne, and any sort of damage or broken skin such as sunburn or blisters. Bloodborne pathogens may also be transmitted through the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, and mouth. Some infections that can be transmitted through contact with blood and body fluids include:

- HIV
- Strep Infections
- Syphilis
- Malaria
- Chicken Pox
- Herpes
- Blood infections
- Hepatitis A, B, C
- Pneumonia
- TB
- Measles
- Gastroenteritis-Salmonella and Shigella
- Urinary tract infections

Universal Precaution in School

For the most part, the use of universal precautions will consist of the use of gloves when handling blood or body secretions. Make sure that you have gloves, available to

you, and they should be worn when there is potential for mucous membrane, hand or skin contact with blood, body fluids containing visible blood, other body fluids, other potentially infectious material or items, and surfaces contaminated with these materials. Gloves should be worn any time a provider (that is you):



- ✓ Has an open lesion on the hands
- ✓ Handles contaminated disposable items such as tissues, diapers, clothing, etc.
- ✓ Has any hand contact with blood or body fluids
- ✓ Especially when providing clean-up of body fluid spills such as vomit, blood, feces, urine, etc. when rendering first aid and diapering assistance

Remember to remove your soiled gloves and wash your hands before touching any cabinets, doorknobs or items other people may come in contact with.

Avoid accidental injuries by sharp items. Puncture-resistant containers marked with the biohazard symbol should be used for the disposal of used needles, syringes, and other sharp items. Red trash bags must be used and disposed of properly for any items containing blood or other body fluids.

Begin by attending to the injured person:



- ✓ Whenever blood and body fluids are present, a barrier (latex rubber gloves, thick layer of paper towels or cloth) should be used to minimize exposure of the attending person while the injury is cleaned and/or dressed.

Wear face protection (face shield) during procedures that are likely to generate droplets of blood or body fluid to prevent exposure to mucous membranes of the mouth, nose, and eyes.

- ✓ Wear protective body clothing when there is a potential for the splashing of blood or body fluids.
- ✓ Soiled clothes of the injured person must be bagged to be sent home.
- ✓ Place waste in a plastic bag for disposal.
- ✓ Remove gloves, dispose and secure in a plastic bag.
- ✓ Change clothing if another person's blood or body fluid gets onto your clothes.
- ✓ Immediately apply soap.
 - o Thoroughly wash hands with soap by rubbing hands together (avoid scrubbing hands).
 - o Pay particular attention to fingertips, nails, and jewelry.
 - o Rinse with fingers pointing downward.
 - o If running water and soap are not immediately available, a waterless antiseptic cleaner or moist towelette may be used until hands can be thoroughly washed (use of antiseptic cleaner or towelette is NOT a substitute for hand washing). WASH HANDS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Clean and disinfect environmental surfaces:

- ✓ Whenever cleaning and disinfecting environmental surfaces in which blood

and body fluids are present, a barrier (rubber utility gloves durable enough to withstand environmental cleaning and disinfecting, a thick layer of paper towels or cloth) should be placed between the blood and the attending person. Use disposable paper towels or other disposable materials to remove blood and body fluids.

- ✓ Disinfect the affected area(s) and cleaning tools with a commercial tuberculocidal disinfectant (mixed according to manufacturer's specifications) or bleach solution (approximately ¼ cup of common household bleach per gallon of tap water, mixed fresh daily). The affected surface being disinfected should remain wet for several minutes.
- ✓ Secure all waste in a plastic bag for disposal.

Wash your hands:



- ✓ Before drinking or eating
- ✓ Before handling clean utensils, equipment, or food
- ✓ After going to the bathroom
- ✓ After contact with body secretions
- ✓ After handling any soiled diapers, garments, or equipment
- ✓ After caring for kids – especially those with any body secretion discharges

Protect Yourself from Contracting an Infectious Disease

- Avoid rubbing or touching your eyes.
- Refrain from kissing or being kissed.
- Use your own personal care items such as drinking glasses and utensils (unless shared items are properly cleaned).
- If you are working in an area where there is a reasonable likelihood of exposure, you should never eat, drink, smoke, apply cosmetics or lip balm or handle contact lenses.

LINKS Handbook

2025-2026



LINK'S Mission Statement

LINKS will provide equal access opportunities for struggling students to earn the necessary credits to graduate. A collaborative approach will be taken to support students through various forms of credit recovery strategies. This is a targeted intervention for but not limited to: students who are credit deficient, dropout students, students who have significant barriers that prevent them from attending school in a regular setting.

Eligibility Criteria

LINKS students who are interested in enrolling will fall under one of five categories of eligibility and must follow all steps outlined in their individual category below for consideration in the LINKS program, students must meet the age requirement of 14-21 years of age to be considered.

1. Internal – students who have passed their senior cohort year of graduation from GHS and are recommended by high school administration.
2. Any students 18-21 who have dropped out of school.
3. Transition Students – transient or temporarily placed students preparing to enter GHS
4. Expulsion/Long-Term Suspension – late afternoon support program

All currently enrolled students (in GPS, as well as other school districts) who want to start LINKS will need to begin the process with an initial meeting with their counselor to 1) evaluate credit 2) determine the courses needed to graduate, and 3) make a recommendation to LINKS.

Internal Students (current/former GHS students of high school age)

Geing High School students who are interested in LINKS must follow and complete all 5 steps below before they are considered.

1. **Must be over 14 years old.**
2. **Receive approval from the administration at GHS.**
3. **Schedule and Complete an admissions interview** with Links Administrator.
4. **Parent/Student view and sign the LINKS Learning Contract.**
5. **Complete an enrollment application** (with a parent present) with LINKS secretary.

Option Students from other districts (of high school age)

Students from other school districts who are interested in attending the LINKS program must follow all 7 steps below before their application to LLINKS is considered. (*Board Policy 502.2*)

1. **Provide us a letter from your home high school** principal or counselor requesting that you be considered for admission into LINKS.
2. **Complete an “Application for Student Transfer”(Option)** and have it signed by your home district superintendent.
3. **Schedule and complete an admissions interview** with LINKS Administrator.
4. **Parent/Student review and sign the LINKS Learning Contract.**
5. **Provide transcripts that confirm completion of at least 150 credits.**
6. **Provide a letter from your parent requesting admission** into LINKS.
7. **Complete enrollment application** (with a parent present) with the LINKS secretary.

Please note that follow through with the process above does not guarantee enrollment into the LINKS program. Students should consult with their high school guidance counselors, administrators, and parents to determine if LINKS is the best placement.

Students 18-21 (whose cohort class has already graduated)

Students who are 18-21 years of age can come from any home location and are not bound by their home school district. These students must complete the 5 steps outlined below to qualify for the LINKS program.

1. **Students must provide all high school transcripts and school records** such as immunization records, IEP's and birth certificates.
2. **Schedule an admissions interview** with the Links administrator to review transcripts and the student's graduation plan.
3. **Students must complete option enrollment** if they live out of district.
4. **Complete all admissions paperwork**
5. **Schedule an enrollment meeting and sign a LINKS Learning Contract.**

Transition Students

Transition students may be referred to LINKS on a short-term basis when they are entering or returning to school late in a semester. Examples that constitute a temporary LINKS placement may be but are not limited to the following:

1. **Long term illness**
2. **Legal issues**
3. **Homelessness**

4. **Relocation**
5. **Treatment**

A decision to place a student temporarily at LINKS will be made through a collaboration effort with the LINKS Administrator, GHS Guidance office and GHS Administration. All such students who are placed at the Links program **will be required to attend 4 hours a day Monday through Friday** and will be considered a full time student through their transition period at LINKS.

Expulsion/Long Term Suspended

Expelled Students

Students who have been expelled from GHS **will be required to attend LINKS 4 hours a day Monday through Friday for their entire expulsion period.** This will allow an expelled student to continue his/her education through an online learning system. Students will be offered assistance in their studies through tutoring assistance offered by LINKS. This gives the student an opportunity to earn credit through the time of expulsion.

Long-Term Suspended Students

Students who have been “long-term suspended” from GHS **will be required to attend LINKS 2 hours a day Monday through Friday for their entire suspension period.** This will allow suspended students the opportunity to catch up on work and assignments they will miss during their suspension, LINKS will coordinate with GHS staff to gather homework for students at LINKS. Students will receive assistance with work.

Program Components

- Interventions to help students who have fallen behind.
- A collaborative approach to support students facing multiple barriers to educational success.
- An educational environment that is safe and nurturing to both students and their families.
- Student accountability and a commitment to graduate from high school.
- Successful student transition to post graduation, employment or continuing education.

Program Costs

All services are offered free of charge to the Gering Public School students we serve. The only cost that a student may or will be responsible for is the cost associated with any college credit taken by the student, unless the student qualifies for the ACE (Access College Early) grant.

Connections to Graduation

- Drop-out prevention and drop-out retrieval outreach
- Academic and Career Advising

- Educator assistance with online learning system
- Home-Based Instruction
- Work credit when possible
- Tutoring
- Curriculum compacting
- Credit acquisition for prior knowledge and skills
- Individualized learning/graduation plans
- Flexible hours and extended hours
- Campus off site
- Online courses and face-to-face instruction
- Ongoing admission
- Credit recovery through college course offerings

Program Expectations

- Completion of program admission requirements
- Establishment of goals and timeline to complete graduation initiatives
- Willingness to complete online learning pre-testing and post-testing
- Commitment to attend all scheduled tutoring sessions and credit opportunities
- Motivation to attend all scheduled class days and meetings
- Respectful attitude to all LINKS staff and compliance with all Gering Public Schools rules, regulations and code of conduct
- Taking advantage of special services as appropriate

Graduation Requirements (Title 92; 003.05)

LINKS students must have 200 credits to graduate, 80% of the total 200 credit requirements must be from core curriculum areas. Students must meet the minimum core education requirements listed below:

- **40 credits of Language Arts** (composition, verbal communication, literature, research skills and technical reading and writing)
- **30 credits of Math** (algebraic, geometric, data analysis and probability concepts)
- **30 credits of Science** (biological, earth/space, and physical science concepts)
- **30 credits of Social Science** (civics/government, geography, US and world history, personal finance and economic concepts)
- **30 credits of Core Curriculum Courses** (language arts, social science, science, math, health, physical education, visual and performing arts, world language, career or technical education)

- **40 credits of Elective Courses** (combination of college coursework or core/elective curriculum, internships, career development and work experience credit)

Graduation from LINKS

Graduates of LINKS will receive a **district diploma** certified through Gering Public Schools. Students who enter the LINKS program must meet all LINKS graduation requirements to graduate from LINKS with a district diploma. No student who enters the LINKS program can graduate ahead of their cohort class from which they entered their freshman year. Links students who have completed the credit requirements prior to the first school day of their cohort senior year will be required to attend the 1st semester of school year in one of the following ways: work based learning, additional LINKS coursework, college courses or an apprenticeship/internship. Students must meet attendance requirements set forth by the LINKS program. LINKS will hold graduations each quarter of the semester and throughout the summer.

State Testing

All LINKS students must take all required state testing prescribed to their individual cohorts.

Hours of Attendance

LINKS students are considered full time if they regularly attend a total of 20 hours per week, half time students are considered ½ time if they attend a total of 10 hours per week. Work/volunteer/internship opportunities will be counted as part of the full or half time school day. Work/volunteer/internship hours will be split at the discretion of the LINKS staff and may be set up in any combination of work and class room hours. Students who work on online learning courses at home may be given credit for hours worked towards their 10 or 20 hour school week as per LINKS administrative discretion.

LINKS Attendance Policy

- Attendance will be taken daily upon students arriving at the LINKS building.
- Students are expected to be punctual when reporting back from breaks; tardies will be reported for students who do not return on time.
- If students miss a class, need to arrive late, or depart early, s/he must inform a LINKS staff member in advance.

LINKS Non-Attendance Procedure

Attendance records will be kept by the staff at LINKS. Students under age 18 who do not attend on a regular basis will be reported as truant and in violation of the Nebraska State Statute 79-201 Attendance Law if applicable. Students with attendance issues will be required to follow the process below before a decision is made to dismiss a student from LINKS.

1. Initial LINKS excessive absence letter is sent at 10 days.
2. 1st Attendance follow-up meeting (Review cohort graduation timeline).
3. 2nd Attendance follow-up meeting (Review education options).

Individual Graduation Plan

An Individual Graduation Plan will identify the learning opportunities and modes of credit recovery that an individual student must complete in order to earn a high school diploma from Gering Public Schools. It is a written plan that becomes a signed agreement between the student and the LINKS program. It will set clear learning goals and include the proficiency equivalent to a successful high school curriculum. The Individual Graduation Plan will provide each student a challenging and engaging array of learning activities. This may include work opportunities, college course offerings and assessments that align with the life goals of the student and increase the student's knowledge base.

Components of the IGP will include:

- Profile of current transcript and requirements to graduate
- List of student's career, educational and personal goals beyond high school
- List of learning goals that must be accomplished in order to earn diploma
- Description of learning activities which may include online learning courses and college credit opportunities
- Description of assessments
- Signatures of LINKS representative, student, and student's parent or legal guardian (if available)
- Anticipated date of graduation

LINKS Program Model

All students will follow one or more variations of this program model to earn credit, the LINKS Model will require one or more of the following interventions to successfully complete graduation requirements:

1. Using the online learning course system or other district approved on-line/paper pencil curricular opportunities for core high school credit (Ex. Algebra, Speech, Science, etc.)
2. Career Development or Link Experience component(s) to fulfill elective requirements (one or both is highly suggested).
3. Taking advantage of elective or core credit offerings offered by the LINKS program, offerings could include and are not limited to video discussion sessions, college prep programming, health and wellness course offerings and other elective or core course opportunities.

4. Core and elective courses can also be taken through credit and community education courses offered by Western Nebraska Community College. Students who want to fast track their educational goals and work on college credit while earning their diploma should consider this option.

Online Learning Curriculum

The online learning system will be one of the primary ways in which students can earn credit. Students will complete online learning courses on site at the LINKS building. There will be opportunities for students to accelerate their credit accumulation through the use of proficiency assessments. LINKS students will be given education support, instruction and tutoring throughout their online learning experience.

College Courses

LINKS students will be given the opportunity to take college courses through Western Nebraska Community College. A combination of college and high school credit can be used to meet graduation requirements in either core or elective areas of content. Students may also qualify for reduced tuition rates and grant opportunities to cover costs. LINKS staff will assist students with course selection options that fit their graduation plan. With approval, college course hours may be set up in any combination of college and high school attendance hours that total either a 2 hour or 4 hour school day.

Work Experience

LINKS students will be given the opportunity to earn credit through the work experience program. Students may earn 5 credits for every 180 documented work hours. The hours must be verified by the LINKS staff, verification can occur through a signed work log from a supervisor or verified check stub from the students place of employment, etc. Only regular hours will count towards the 180 verified work hours, overtime hours will NOT be counted. Only hours worked during the specified school year will count towards work experience credit. Hours worked during the summer when LINKS is not in session will NOT count. Work experience credits will be posted every quarter.

Grading Policy

Elective, work experience or core credit courses offered in person through the LINKS program will typically be graded on a Pass/Fail grading scale. The Pass/Fail grade will be based on all completed assignments, projects and attendance. Courses that are taken through the online learning system will be given the grade assigned at the end of any given course. Any college courses taken by LINKS students will be graded according to the college grading scale.

Special Education Services

Students who have special education needs such as an IEP/504 placement will be given services through Gering Public Schools.

LINKS Staff

Mario Chavez - Administrator

Karee Klassen - Teacher

Kaylee Pierce - Teacher

Peter Hernandez - Special Education Teacher

Contact Information

Phone - 308-633-LINK

Email - links@geringschools.net

1500 U Street, Gering

Business Office

Gering Public Schools

Memo

To: Dr. Nicole Regan and Board of Education
From: Stacy Rodriguez, Director of Finance
Date: July 14, 2025
Re: School Lunch Prices

As part of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296), Section 205 addresses equity in school lunch pricing. Effective July 1, 2011, School Food Authorities (SFA) participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to provide the same level of support for their paid student lunches as they are for lunches served to students eligible for free and reduced priced meals.

With the ongoing requirements from USDA we must continue to include serving more fresh fruits and vegetables, serving more products with whole grains and not utilizing breaded meat food products, reduction in sodium and fat, all of which increase our costs. To help ensure we can address our costs and meet these compliance requirements, USDA provides a “Lunch Price Calculator” tool to establish meal prices. Based on the recommendation from the tool we propose the following with a 0.05 cent increase: Milk price will stay the same.

	2024-2025		2025-2026	
	Breakfast	Lunch	Breakfast	Lunch
Elementary	\$2.15	\$3.20	\$2.20	\$3.25
Secondary				
GHS	\$2.40	\$3.45	\$2.45	\$3.50
Middle School	\$2.40	\$3.45	\$2.45	\$3.50
Adult	\$4.00	\$4.75	\$4.05	\$4.80
Milk	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$0.65



Board of Education

2025-26 Meeting Schedule

Board Approval: July 14th, 2025

REGULAR MEETINGS WILL BE HELD @ THE FRESHMAN ACADEMY at GHS

	Regular Meeting	Special Meeting	Curriculum Personnel Committee Wiese Maser Trautman	Middle School Improvement Committee Trautman Kautz Barrett	Facilities Finance Committee Barrett Lacy Kautz	Policy Committee Trautman Maser Kautz
	2nd Monday	4th Tuesday	1st Tuesday	1st Wednesday	1st Thursday	1st Thursday
Aug 2025	8/12	8/26	8/5	8/6	8/7	—
Sept 2025	9/8	9/23	9/2	9/3	9/4	9/4
Oct 2025	10/13	10/21	10/7	10/1	10/2	10/2
Nov 2025	11/10	TBD	11/4	11/5	11/6	11/6
Dec 2025	12/8	TBD	12/2	12/3	12/4	12/4
Jan 2026	1/12	TBD	1/6	1/7	1/8*	1/8*
Feb 2026	2/9	TBD	2/3	2/4	2/5	2/5
March 2026	3/9	TBD	3/3	3/4	3/5	3/5
April 2026	4/13	TBD	4/7	4/1	4/2	4/2
May 2026	5/11	TBD	5/5	5/6	5/7	5/7
June 2026	6/8	TBD	6/2	6/3	6/4	6/4
July 2026	7/13	TBD	7/7	7/1	7/2	7/2
					*Changed for the Holiday	*Changed for the Holiday

RESOLUTION APPROVING CERTAIN STAFF TRAININGS

WHEREAS, the School District is required by various state and federal laws to train staff on numerous topics; and,

WHEREAS, during the 2024 legislative session, the Legislature enacted LB 1329; and,

WHEREAS, LB 1329 defers to each Board of Education to determine the reasonable length of time for certain staff training requirements; and

WHEREAS, to ensure that the District's planned training requirements for the 2025-2026 school year comply with these statutory requirements, the Board of Education adopts this Resolution to find and determine that the following training requirements are reasonable in scope and length.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education hereby determines as follows:

1. The following trainings are reasonable in both length and scope and the Superintendent or designee shall identify the District staff who shall be trained as follows:

Subject	Required by	Source of Training	Approximate Length of Training	Participants
Behavioral Awareness	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-3603	ESU 13	60 Minutes	Behavioral Point of Contact
Dating Violence Prevention	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2,141	ALICAP	34 Minutes (<i>annually</i>)	Grades 6-12 Staff
Suicide Prevention	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2,146	Building a Suicide-Safe School Community	60 Minutes (<i>annually</i>)	All Staff
Standard Response Protocol	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2,144(5); NDE Rule 10.011.01B	District Safety Team	1 Hour	All Staff
Fire Drills	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-527; Nebraska State Fire Code	District	15 Minutes	All Staff
Tornado Drills	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 2,144(8)	District	15 Minutes	All Staff
Intruder Drills	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2,144(5); NDE Rule 10.011.01B	District	2 Drills (<i>60 Minutes Each</i>)	All Staff
Bullying Prevention	Neb. Rev. Stat. Title IX § 79-2,137; NDE Rule 10.011.01F; NDE Guidance	ALICAP	30 Minutes	All Staff
Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Requirements for Designated Title IX Positions	Title IX, 20 U.S. Code § 1681	KSB School Law	1 Hour	All Staff

CPR/First Aid	Coaches, Preschool and Other Identified Staff	PPHD	2 Hours	Coaches & Preschool Staff
Trauma-Informed Practices	District Requirement	Educational Impact	2 Hours	All Staff
School Resource Officers and Building Administrators	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-2704	NASRO - Basic SRO Course SRP and Multiple Trainings	40 Hours - SRO 20 Hours - Admin	School Resource Officers and Identified Building Administrators
District Assessment Contact - State Assessments	NDE Guidance	NDE Training	60 Minutes Annually	Proctors, Teachers and Principals
Concussion Awareness	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 71-9104	ALICAP	45 Minutes	All NSAA Coaches - GHS and GMS
Pupil Transportation Drivers	NDE Rule 91.003.02	UNK	3 Hours	All Staff that Drive Students
Safe Seizure Schools	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-3204	ALICAP	75 Minutes	All Staff (Every Two Years)
Concussion Awareness	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 71-9104	ALICAP	25 Minutes	Coaches
FERPA	20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99	District	25 Minutes	All Staff
Psychological First Aid	District Requirement	NDE	16 Hours	New Crisis Response Team Members

2. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to implement additional training requirements for staff if the Superintendent or designee determines that additional training would be in the best interest of the District and/or is otherwise required by law.

3. The Superintendent or designee is further authorized to deviate from the source of these training requirements if any unexpected circumstances arise and the Superintendent or designee determines that it is in the best interests of the District to require a different training(s).

4. All District staff who are directed to attend or participate in any training requirement(s) must complete such training(s) in good faith and in accordance with this Resolution and the directives of the Superintendent or designee.

This Resolution shall continue until or unless modified by a vote of the majority of a quorum of the Board of Education.

DATED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

_____ **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

BY: _____
President

ATTEST:

Secretary