POLICY REFERENCE MANUAL

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PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Successful education programs require the support of the school district community. The board addresses the importance of the role of the school district community in the school district in this series of the policy manual. The board recognizes this support is dependent on the school district community's understanding of participation in the efforts, goals, problems and programs of the school district.

In this section, the board sets out its policies defining its relationship with the school district community. In striving to obtain the support of the school district community, the board will:

- Provide access to school district records;
- Inform the school district community of the school district's goals, objectives, achievements, and needs;
- Invite the input of the school district community; and,
- Encourage cooperation between the school district and the school district community.

Approved 06/08/2015 Reviewed 05/11/2015 Revised

DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

NDE rules require the development of a written policy for annually preparing and distributing the district's performance report. One or more of the items in italics may be included in the policy at the district's option.

The superintendent or designee shall annually prepare a written report informing the public of the following areas of district characteristics and student achievement results:

- Student demographics, including enrollment by grade and site, number of students receiving free or reduced meals and number of special education students.
- District financial information including levy, total budget, valuation per pupil, per pupil costs and local, state and federal revenue.
- Student academic performance including results of standardized tests, average g.p.a. for elementary and secondary students, graduation rates and dropout rates.
- *Faculty experience and education data.*
- *Transportation and facilities summary data.*
- *Graduation requirements and survey results of recent graduating classes.*
- *College credits earned by 11th and 12th grade students.*
- *Parent-teacher conference attendance rates.*

The annual report shall be communicated to the public by *[publication in the newspaper of record, posting on school bulletin boards]*.

Legal Reference:	NDE Rule 10.005.02 NDE Rule 10.010.01
Cross Reference:	1001 Principles and Objectives for Community Relations 1004 Press, Radio and Television News Media 1005 Public Participation in the School District

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PUBLIC EXAMINATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT RECORDS

This policy is consistent with the Nebraska public records law regarding access to, copying of and charging for copies of public records. The board should specify the normal hours of operation for the office and may set a higher cost at which a deposit will be required, or waive it if preferred.

Public records of the school district may be viewed by the public during the regular business hours of the administration offices of the school district. These hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except for holidays and recesses.

Records defined by law as confidential records shall be viewed or copied by the administration office upon receipt of written permission from the person or entity whose confidential records are being requested. Lacking such permission, the superintendent will issue a written denial of the request.

Persons wishing to view the school district's public records shall contact the central administration office and make arrangements for the viewing. The office personnel will make arrangements for viewing the records as soon as practicable, and within 4 business days if possible.

Persons wanting copies may be assessed a fee for the copies not to exceed the actual costs. If the estimated cost of the records exceeds $50.00, the office will obtain an advance deposit equal to the estimated cost. Records will not be made available in any form in which that record is not already maintained or produced. Persons making requests to use their own copying equipment must make arrangements satisfactory to the administration office.

It shall be the responsibility of the administration office to maintain accurate and current records of the school district. It shall be the responsibility of the office to respond in a timely manner to requests for viewing and receiving public information of the school district. If the office is unable to provide the requested records within 4 business days, the secretary will issue a written explanation with a revised date for completion and an estimate of cost and will allow the requester to modify or prioritize the information request.

Legal Reference: Nebraska Statutes 84-712.0 et seq.

Cross Reference: 507.01 Student Records Access

Approved 06/08/2015 Reviewed 05/11/2015 Revised 05/11/2015

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

The board recognizes that concerns regarding the operation of the school district will arise. The board further believes constructive criticism can assist in improving the quality of the education program and in meeting individual student needs more effectively. The board also places trust in its employees and desires to support their actions in a manner that frees them from unnecessary or unwarranted criticism and complaints.

Procedures for dealing with complaints concerning programs or practices should be governed by the following principles:

- where action/investigation is desired by the complainant, or where it seems appropriate, the matter should be handled as near the source as possible;
- complaints should both be investigated and, if possible, resolved expeditiously;
- complaints should be dealt with courteously and in a constructive manner; and,
- individuals directly affected by the complaint should have an opportunity to respond.

The board, consistent with its board policy-making role, will deal with complaints concerning specific schools, programs or procedures only after the usual channels have been exhausted. Complaints regarding employees or complaints by students will follow the more specific policies 403.05 and 504.01 respectively.

When a complaint requiring attention is received by the board or a board member it will be referred to the superintendent. After all of the channels have been exhausted, any complainant wishing to appeal to the board shall appeal in writing. However, the board will only directly consider appeals dealing with policies, procedures and programs. Any complaints involving employee issues will be passed on to the board's legal counsel to determine whether district policies and procedures were followed by the administrator in attempting to resolve the conflict prior to board action.

Special Rules Regarding Educational Services and Related Services to Students with Disabilities.

Students with disabilities and their families have specific rights outlined in state and federal law, including administrative processes by which they may challenge the educational services being provided by the school district. Therefore, the appeal process contained in this policy may not be used to challenge decisions made by a student's individualized education plan (IEP) team or 504 team.

Complaints about the educational services provided a student with a disability, including but not limited to services provided to a student with an IEP, access to curricular and extracurricular activities, and educational placement must be submitted to the school district's Director of Special Education. The Director of Special Education will address the complaint in a manner that he/she deems appropriate and will provide the complainant with a copy of the Notice of IDEA Parental Rights promulgated by the Nebraska Department of Education.

Complaints about the educational services provided a student with a disability pursuant to a Section 504 plan must be submitted to the school district's 504 Coordinator. The 504 Coordinator will address the complaint in a manner that he/she deems appropriate and will provide the complainant with a copy of the Notice of Section 504 Parental Rights adopted by the board of education.

Complaints about the educational services provided to a student who is suspected of having a disability must be submitted in writing to the school district's Director of Special Education or to the district's 504 Coordinator. The Director of Special Education or 504 Coordinator will either refer the student for possible verification as a student with a disability or will provide prior written notice of the district's refusal to do so.

Cross Reference:	204.12	Public Participation at Board Meetings
	403.05	Public Complaints about Employees
	504.01	Student Due Process Rights
	606.03	Objection to Instructional Materials

Approved 08/12/2019 Reviewed 07/22/2019 Revised 07/22/2019

PARENT RELATIONS GOALS

It is the general goal of the district to foster relationships with parents which encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students. The board believes parents should be active participants in education by demonstrating interest in and support for their school and the district, by becoming informed about their role as partners in education, and by becoming involved in the education of their children; and

While parents are individually responsible for their children, the district provides direct services of education and indirect services of child care for students during the time when they are within the supervision of school personnel. Consistent with these shared responsibilities and as appropriate to the maturity of the student, members of the school staff will consult with parents regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of correction.

Additionally, parental involvement in the schools is encouraged through regular communication with the school principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, the school volunteer program, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and district programs. It is assumed that the relationship described in the general goal is fostered if the district will:

- consult with and encourage parents to share in school planning, in setting objectives, and evaluating programs;
- help parents understand the education process and their role in promoting this process;
- provide for parent understanding of school operations;
- provide opportunities for parents to be informed of their child's development and the criteria for its measurement; and
- help parents improve in their role as parents.

Cross Reference: 508.07 Custody and Parental Rights
611.01 Student Progress Reports
611.04 Parent Conferences

Approved 06/08/2015 Reviewed 05/11/2015 Revised

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

It is the policy of the district to provide full access to the parent 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.

Reasonable advance requests by parents 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.

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

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

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

The district will leave substantive decision making processes to the professional staff, administration and board of education, subject to an effort to receive information from parents as to any concerns, objections, or other information such parent would wish to provide to the school district concerning a parent's

access, involvement, and participation in all activities of the school as it relates to the students in the district.
The parent or guardian of a student may have access to that student's records during normal business hours of the district according to Policy JRA/507.01 Student Records Access.

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

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-530 to 533
No Child Left Behind, Title I, Sec. 1118, P.L. 107-110

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 06/08/2020 Reviewed 06/08/2020 Revised 6/23/2014

COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

Boards should personalize this policy to reflect the actual groups, organizations and associations operating regularly within the school district.

The school-community relations program is a responsibility of both the Board of Education and the total school staff. Within the bounds of legal and ethical responsibilities to pupils, the school district will attempt to keep the community well informed about the operations and needs of the school district. The school district recognizes the necessity of involving citizens in the work of the schools and of two-way communications with the schools' internal and external publics.

The board will work closely with school district-community groups, including, but not limited to, the booster club and parent-teacher organizations. The Board expects all district staff to demonstrate commitment to the involvement of parents and community members in education.

Prior to any purchase of, or fund raising for, goods or services for the school district, the group shall confer with the superintendent to assist the group in purchasing goods or services to meet the school district's needs.

Funds raised by these groups for the school district may be kept as part of the accounts of the school district.

It shall be the responsibility of the building principal to be the liaison with the school district-community groups affiliated with the building principal's attendance center.

Approved 06/08/2015 Reviewed 05/11/2015 Revised

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING

The Board endorses the concept that community participation in school affairs is essential if the school system and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students. It therefore intends to exert every effort to identify the community's desires and to be responsive, through its actions, to those desires.

All district citizens will be encouraged to express their ideas, concerns and judgments about the schools through such means as: (1) written suggestion(s) or proposal(s); (2) presentations at hearings; (3) responses to surveys made through interviews, written instruments or other means; (4) comments at Board meetings; and (5) service on citizens' advisory committees and school improvement teams.

The public advice will be given careful consideration. In evaluating such advice, the first concern will be for the educational program as it affects students. The Board's final decisions may depart from public advice when, in the judgment of staff and the Board, such advice is not consistent with goals adopted by the Board or with good educational practice or within available financial resources.

Approved 06/22/2015 Reviewed 06/08/2015 Revised _____

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS AND VOLUNTEERS

The board recognizes the valuable resource it has in the members of the school district community. When possible and in concert with the education program, members of the school district community may be asked to make presentations to the students or to assist employees in duties other than teaching. The school district may officially recognize the contributions made by volunteers.

Recruitment, training, utilization, and the maintenance of records for the purposes of insurance coverage or recognition of school district volunteers are responsibilities of the superintendent.

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VISITORS TO SCHOOL

The Board encourages parents and other district citizens to visit the school and classrooms at any time to observe the work of students, teachers and other employees. All visitors, which includes persons other than employees or students, must notify the principal of their presence in the facility upon arrival and request authorization to visit elsewhere in the building.

Persons who wish to visit a classroom while school is in session are asked to notify the principal and obtain approval from the principal prior to the visit so appropriate arrangements can be made and so class disruption can be minimized.

Visitors shall conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with mutual respect and consideration for the rights of others while attending school events. Visitors failing to conduct themselves accordingly may be asked to leave the premises. The board and administration will not tolerate any person or persons whose presence disturbs classes or school activities or hinders the instructional process. Children who wish to visit school must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult.

It shall be the responsibility of employees to report inappropriate conduct. It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent and principals to take the action necessary to cease the inappropriate conduct. If the superintendent or principals are not available, a school district employee shall act to cease the inappropriate conduct.

The Board discourages using the school as a site for parents without custody to visit their children. The principal may deny the parent without custody the opportunity to deliver packages, gifts, messages, etc., to the child and/or to see the child during the school day without the approval of the custodial parent or legal guardian. In this paragraph, "without custody" means the parent lacks joint legal custody under Nebraska law.

The district may restrict the use of its buildings and grounds or restrict access to school property by issuing no trespassing commands and/or stay away/no trespassing letters when deemed necessary by the superintendent when any individual or group:

1. is determined to present a risk to the safety of others,
2. presents a disruption to the learning environment,
3. fails to follow proper check-in and identification procedures, or
4. does not have a legitimate purpose to be present on school grounds or activities.

In the event a person prohibited by this or other board policies is on district property or is attending a district-sponsored event, the superintendent or building principal will tell the person he or she must leave and will notify the person they are not permitted back on district property, except if their presence is required by the district. The superintendent or building principal may contact the proper legal authorities if necessary to enforce this policy and may file a report or sign a complaint on behalf of the district.

Legal Reference: Neb. Statute 79-8,100

Cross Reference: 1004 Press, Radio and Television News Media

Approved 06/22/2015 Reviewed 06/08/2015 Revised 06/08/2015

PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PREMISES

No person on district property will:

- Injure or threaten to injure another;
- Damage the property of another or of the district;
- Violate parking regulations;
- Drive a vehicle in an unsafe manner;
- Impede, delay or otherwise interfere with the orderly conduct of the district's educational program or any other activity taking place on district property which has been authorized by the Board, superintendent, principal or other authorized administrator;
- Enter any portion of district premises at any time for purposes other than those which are lawful and authorized by district officials;
- Possess an unauthorized loaded or unloaded firearm or any other instrument used as a dangerous or deadly weapon as defined in law and Board policy;
- Consume, sell, give or deliver unlawful drugs including drug paraphernalia and alcoholic beverages;
- Smoke or use tobacco products;
- *[Wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign or other things which are evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang. Use speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang or gang activity. A "gang" is defined as a group that identifies itself through the use of a name, unique appearance or language including hand signs, claiming of geographical territory or the espousing of a distinctive belief system that frequently results in criminal activity;]*
- Willfully violate other district rules and regulations designed to maintain public order on school property.

Spectators are permitted to attend extracurricular activities only as guests of the school district, and, accordingly as a condition of such permission, they must comply with the school district's rules and policies. Spectators will not be allowed to interfere with the enjoyment of the students participating, other spectators or with the performance of employees and officials supervising the extracurricular activity. Spectators, like the student participants, are expected to display mature behavior and sportsmanship. The failure of spectators to do so is not only disruptive but embarrassing to the students, the school district and the entire community.

To protect the rights of students to participate without fear of interference, and to permit the sponsors and officials of extracurricular activities to perform their duties without interference, the following provisions are in effect:

- Abusive, verbal or physical conduct of spectators directed at participants, officials or sponsors of extracurricular activities or at other spectators will not be tolerated.

- Verbal or physical conduct of spectators that interferes with the performance of students, officials or sponsors of extracurricular activities will not be tolerated.
- The use of vulgar or obscene language directed at students, officials or sponsors participating in an extracurricular activity or at other spectators will not be tolerated.

If a spectator at an extracurricular activity becomes physically or verbally abusive, uses vulgar or obscene language, or in any way impedes the performance of an activity, the spectator may be removed from the event by the individual in charge of the event and the superintendent may recommend the exclusion of the spectator at future extracurricular activities.

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, the board shall cause a notice of exclusion from extracurricular activities to be sent to the spectator involved. The notice shall advise the spectator of the school district's right to exclude the individual from school district activities and events and the duration of the exclusion. If the spectator disobeys the school district's order, law enforcement authorities will be contacted and asked to remove the spectator. If a spectator has been notified of exclusion and thereafter attends an extracurricular activity, the spectator shall be advised that his/her attendance will result in prosecution.

Persons having no legitimate purpose or business on district property or violating or threatening to violate the above rules may be ejected from the premises and/or referred to law enforcement officials.

Cross Reference: 506 Student Activities
903.08 Vandalism
1006 Use of District Facilities and Equipment

Approved 06/22/2015 Reviewed 06/08/2015 Revised

SKATEBOARDING AND ROLLERBLADING

In the interest of maintaining a safe injury-free environment and preventing damage to school equipment, skateboarding and rollerblading are prohibited on the sidewalks, driveways and playgrounds of the school at all times.

Cross Reference: 905 Safety Program

Approved 06/22/2015 Reviewed 06/08/2015 Revised

DISTRIBUTION OR POSTING OF MATERIALS

The board recognizes that students, employees, parents or citizens may want to distribute materials within the school district that are noncurricular. Noncurricular materials to be distributed must be approved by the superintendent or his/her designee and meet certain standards prior to their distribution.

It shall be the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the building principals to draft administrative regulations regarding this policy.

Materials shall be reviewed based on legitimate educational concerns. Such concerns include: the material is or may be defamatory; the material is inappropriate based on the age, grade level and/or maturity of the reading audience; the material is poorly written, inadequately researched, biased or prejudiced; the material contains information that is not factual; the material is not free of racial, ethnic, religious or sexual bias; or the material contains advertising that violates public school laws, rules and/or policy, is deemed inappropriate for students or that the public might reasonably perceive to bear the sanction or approval of the district.

The superintendent or designee shall determine distribution procedures for noncurricular materials. Such procedures may include:

1. Distribution to each student before or after class if materials are not directly related to the instructional goals;
2. Notification to students or parents of the availability of the materials in a specified location if this procedure is deemed less disruptive to the educational process; or
3. Solicitation of school-related groups such as parent organizations to distribute materials.

The practice of distributing pamphlets, booklets, flyers, brochures and other similar materials shall be periodically reviewed to ensure that the mere volume of requests has not become an interruption to the educational process.

The facilities, the staff or the students of the district shall not be used in any manner to advertise or promote commercial, cultural, organizational or other nonschool interests except that the district may:

1. Utilize films and other instructional aids furnished by private sources when the advertising content is reasonable in the judgment of the building principal;
2. Cooperate through announcements and distribution of program material with nonprofit community organizations that supplement the school program when such cooperation will not interfere with the school program;
3. Permit participation on a student option basis in essay, art, science and similar contests sponsored by outside interests when such activities parallel the curriculum and contribute to the educational program;

4. Accept limited advertising on extracurricular activity schedules and programs at the discretion of the principal of the school involved;
5. Permit other exceptions when, in the judgment of the superintendent, students of the district will benefit. The superintendent may, at his/her option, refer specific cases to the board for decision.

Cross References:	504.03	Student Conduct
	504.08	Freedom of Expression
	506	Student Activities
	604.10	Academic Freedom

Approved 5/12/2008 Reviewed 4/29/2008 Revised 5/5/2008

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

According to federal law, all indoor facilities used for instructional services must be smoke-free at all times. As written, this policy applies to all indoor facilities, whether or not used for instructional services, and school vehicles. Boards have the authority to limit the policy to strictly comply with the federal law, to broaden it as written here or even broaden it to cover school grounds.

School district facilities, including school vehicles, shall be off limits for smoking. This requirement extends to employees and visitors. This policy applies at all times, including school-sponsored and nonschool-sponsored events. Persons failing to abide by this request shall be required to extinguish their smoking material or leave the school district premises immediately. It shall be the responsibility of the administration to enforce this policy.

Legal Reference: Goals 2000: Educate America Act, Pub. L. No. 103-227, 108 Stat. 125 (1994).

Cross Reference: 1006.01 Community Use of School District Buildings, Sites and Equipment

Approved 06/22/2015 Reviewed 06/08/2015 Revised